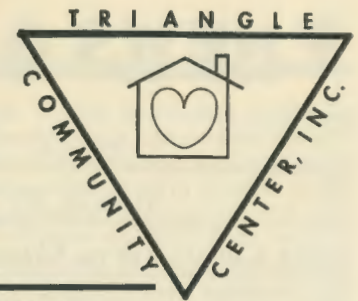


# Triangle Community Center News & Views

Free to Members and Subscribers

Vol. 9, No. 4  
April 1998

MANY HEARTS ♥♥♥ ONE COMMUNITY



## THE HOMOSEXUAL EXCEPTION

...In the course of in-depth interviews with 200 people in the suburbs of Tulsa, Atlanta, San Diego and Boston, I did not find Americans morally divided among themselves. I found them instead divided within themselves; they honor God, family and country, yet they also want to accommodate themselves to the realities of contemporary America. ....(But) however much they are willing to accept almost anything, most of the middle-class Americans I spoke to were not prepared to accept homosexuality

To be sure, there are plenty of middle-class Americans who care not a whit what people do in private. As one might expect, people in the Boston suburbs are not as condemning of homosexuality as people in Oklahoma. Although polls show that Southern blacks are among those most hostile to homosexuals, the middle-class African-Americans with whom my research assistant and I spoke in Georgia, who knew a thing or two about discrimination, were among the most tolerant toward gay people....

But these were minority voices. The furthest most people were willing to go in the direction of toleration was to say that while they did not like homosexuality, gay people deserved respect because all people deserve respect. Four times as many people we spoke with condemned homosexuals as were willing to offer them positive acceptance. Some simply refused to discuss the subject. Others responded with nervous laughter or an obvious desire to change the topic as quickly as possible. Still others, ever reluctant to use a word that implies a judgment about someone else's behavior, had no trouble finding these words, ....when the subject of homosexuality was raised, "abnormal .....immoral .....sinful. ...Unacceptable .....sick. ...Unhealthy ..... mentally deficient." In all likelihood, Americans are less homophobic than they were before the gay rights revolution, but middle-class Americans have not come to the conclusion that homosexuality represents an alternative that is the moral equal of any other.

How do people reconcile their willingness to pass judgment on homosexuality with their strong support for moral individualism? A fairly frequent response was articulated by a conservative Christian woman from Cobb County, Ga.: "God said to love everyone, so you hate the sin but love the person." This formulation sounds fine, except if you believe, as many homosexuals do, that sexual identity is a big part of what defines who you are. For another group of middle-class Americans, homosexuals are asking for "special rights," something more than what other groups want.

A general manager at a tool factory from Cobb County is vehemently put off by conservative Christian preachers because of their "in your face" tactics. Surprisingly, homosexuals are, in his view, quite similar to them because both interfere in the lives of others. As he understands the matter, gay people are not asking for the right to be left alone. They want instead his acceptance of them, and that he is not prepared to give....

....Americans simply do not accept the idea that sexual preference is like gender or race. In this belief they find support, oddly enough, in the early rhetoric of gay liberation itself. Initially reluctant to blame any behavior on biology or genetics, many gay activists....once argued that homosexuality, like all forms of sexuality, was "socially constructed." Those middle-class Americans most hostile to homosexuality, I found, were those most willing to see it as a conscious choice..... Make something a natural condition or a syndrome, and Americans are quick to empathize. Make it a choice, and people feel that they have the similar choice of condemning it.

If we listen to these opinions, we are likely to come to two conclusions. The first is that many homosexuals are correct to suggest that they, perhaps more than any other group in America, are severely stigmatized. But the second is that those Americans who have qualms about homosexuality are also correct if they believe their views to be widely shared. There is no culture war in America, but on the question of gay rights, fairly severe battles are likely to be fought for the foreseeable future.

## ANTI-GAY VIOLENCE INCREASES

Violence and harassment of homosexuals increased by 2 percent nationwide last year, a coalition of gay groups said. It attributed the increase to heightened publicity of events like the February 1997 bombing of a gay and lesbian nightclub in Atlanta and the coming-out episode of the TV show "Ellen."

The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs compiled the report based on statistics obtained from local groups that track crimes against homosexuals, bisexuals and people with blurred sexual identities. The report is not based on police statistics and is not considered comprehensive because it only tracks 14 areas across the country. But officials of groups within the coalition said the report should be taken seriously.

According to the report, there were 2,445 documented cases of anti-gay violence and harassment last year in the 14 areas, including New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles. The number of murders related to anti-gay violence dropped to 18 in 1997 from 27 in 1996. New York City had the most reports of anti-homosexual violence (658), followed by the San Francisco Bay area (402) and Los Angeles (350). More than a third involved harassment - verbal or by mail or phone. About one-fifth involved assault, and close to a third intimidation. Among the more brutal examples of harassment include a gay Chicago man who reported a year's worth of violent assaults by an elderly neighbor. One night he said, she attacked him with garden shears, cut him 22 times and yelled "die of AIDS..." Police response was indifferent to hostile, the report said, with officers once threatening to arrest the victim if he kept complaining. Eventually the neighbor was charged with misdemeanor assault.

New York Police Commissioner Howard Safir said the department has worked closely with the gay and lesbian community "not only to encourage the reporting of bias crimes, but also to help raise awareness of any potential dangers faced by the community." But Safir added that the report includes figures that were compiled without the use of any uniform or generally accepted method of reporting. He says the New York group "did not attempt to reconcile their figures with those of this department." The department's figures, based on accounting methods used by the FBI, show that the number of citywide gay bias incidents dropped to 59 in 1997 from 61 in 1996.

## GAY-BASHING IN CONN.

In Stratford, Connecticut's most recent gay bashing incident, a 33 year old Bridgeport gay man was assaulted and beaten by three men in the early morning hours of Thursday, March 12. The trio punched and kicked the victim as he exited the Village Pub, a neighborhood bar on Success Avenue in Stratford just a short distance from the victim's home in Success Village. One of the three men had been a customer in the Pub and began harassing the victim because he was gay. The bartender told the rude customer to leave. Once outside, the customer evidently recruited a couple of "friends" to wait with him for the victim. When the victim stepped out of the bar the three attacked him. Stratford police were called to the scene but the attackers had already fled. The victim, punched in the face and kicked several times, declined medical attention.

-John DeVecchio

## ANTI-GAY VIOLENCE RISES IN DC

The number of people who complained that they were the victims of anti-gay violence in the Washington area jumped last year, part of a slight increase in reported anti-gay hate crimes nationwide that has occurred even as violent crime has dropped significantly, a coalition of watchdog groups said. Gay Men and Lesbians Opposing Violence, a DC group that runs a hate-crime hot line, documented 86 victims of anti-gay violence in 1997, compared with 69 in 1996, a 25 percent increase. Although more than half of the incidents were classified as

Continued on next page

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assaults, a majority of victims reported that they escaped without injury. Though Johnson said there was no "typical" victim, more than three-quarters of the incidents were reported by men. The attacks were most likely to occur on the street or in the victim's own home. Nearly half of the victims reported that they were attacked by strangers.

## HATE CRIMES UP IN MASS.

Hate incidents reported against gays and lesbians in Massachusetts surged in 1997, increasing 42 percent despite a sharp dip in overall crime, according to a study released yesterday by the Violence Recovery Program of Fenway Community Health Center. The study also showed that while about 35 percent of the threats, harassment, assault, and vandalism occurred in Boston, which reported 80 incidents as opposed to 10 in 1996, the most dramatic rise occurred in Worcester County, which reported 33 incidents as opposed to four in 1996. In all, Massachusetts reported 228 such incidents in 1997, an increase of 70% over 1996. Forty-nine people were assaulted, up from 41 in 1996. Homicides dipped, however. While the report speculates that the February 1997 murder in Boston of Lee Thompson may have been related to his sexual orientation it identifies three such murders in Massachusetts in 1996.

The report's results were considerably more alarming than national figures released by the National Coalition of Antiviolence Programs, which incorporates the Violence Recovery Program's number and data from other states. It found just 42 percent overall increase in violent attacks against gays. Forty-eight percent of the Massachusetts incidents included threats, intimidation or harassment, 27 percent involved physical assault, and 6 percent, involved vandalism or graffiti. Two incidents involved the setting of fires and a bomb threat to a gay nightclub.

## VIOLENCE & GAY RIGHTS IN MAINE

In what was billed as a rally to "speak out against fear and violence," nearly 200 people crowded into a small rural church to denounce the results of a Feb. 10 referendum overturning the state's gay rights law. The meeting was the first of what gay leaders say will be dozens across Maine in anticipation of an effort to pass a new gay rights law in 2000. By 51 percent to 49 percent.

The rally was also held to support Charles Mitchell, a gay psychiatrist who was attacked and beaten recently while jogging in Falmouth. At the rally, a half-dozen speakers said violence and discrimination exist side by side in Maine. One gay man told of having his car vandalized, others of being called "faggot." Margery Clement of Falmouth explained how her son faced threats and abuse at high school because he is gay.

## CRIMES AGAINST GAYS RISE IN MICH.

The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs reported in a study that violence against gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transsexuals and victims of AIDS increased at a rate of 2 percent in 1997. The situation was even worse in Michigan, where crime against gays and lesbians increased 12 percent over 1996.

According to the survey, there was a dramatic increase nationally in the number of incidents in police precincts and jails. Also up were reports of unjustified arrests and offenders who were police officers. As a result, he said, it is not surprising that many victims are reluctant or unwilling to seek help from the police or to file police reports for an incident. Another marked increase occurred in what the report referred to as "serial incidents," or those of continuous violence and harassment by one offender against a single victim over a period of time. According to the survey, such crimes increased "a frightening" 36 percent last year. Incidents at schools and colleges were also up, by 34 percent.

## ANT-GAY STUDENTS IN MINN.

Minnesota students felt a little safer last year than they did a year earlier, but most said they still witness misbehavior at school, a new state report says. Stealing, name-calling and cursing were the acts most frequently identified as a "major problem" in the fourth-annual survey, conducted by the state attorney general's office. Fifty-three percent of those questioned in the 1997 random-sample survey of 1,800 students said they felt safe at school, up from 46 percent in 1996. About 60 percent said that they saw between one and five violent acts at school last year, and about 18 percent said they saw violent acts from five to 10 times. The survey's definition of violence ranges from verbal insults to pulling out a knife or a gun. Twenty percent of the students said sexual harassment was a major problem in school, and 50 percent said gay and lesbian students were the most likely victims of violence.



TCC NEWS

## TCC FRIENDRAISER

The April Friendraiser will be held on Saturday, April 25 from 6 PM to 9 PM in the Bridgeport apartment of Tom Mariconda and Walter Dembowski (Executive House, 3900 Park Avenue, Apartment 4-E). A buffet meal and non-alcoholic beverages will be provided. Feel free to Bring Your Own Bottle of...whatever. Any questions? Call Tom or Walter at (203) 374-6934.

**DIRECTIONS:** It was easier to reach Tom and Walter for their last Friendraiser, when it was one straight ride (so to speak) down Park Avenue. They haven't moved, but road construction still-in-progress as of the "News and Views" deadline means a detour and different (though not difficult) directions.

Take the Merritt Parkway (either direction) to Exit 47. Turn left at the end of the exit ramp onto Park Avenue. Drive .8 (eight-tenths) of a mile on Park Avenue, through two traffic lights (preferably green) and past Sacred Heart University to the "Road Closed" sign at Eckart Street (the point beyond which you really can go no further). Turn left onto Eckart and ride one-half mile to the second stop sign, which is the end of Eckart. Turn right onto Madison Avenue and drive 1.5 miles, past one stop sign and one traffic light to a second, four-way stop sign at Queen Street (No Comment!) Turn right onto Queen Street and drive the short distance to the traffic light at Park Avenue. Turn right onto Park Avenue, four blocks (two-tenths of a mile) later, on the right (just before the Italian Community Center) is Executive House (3900 Park Avenue).

Park on either side of the street (except near the bus stops) or in the Visitor Parking spaces on the side of the building (but not in the Emergency spaces in front). Take an elevator to the fourth floor. Turn right, head to Apartment 4-E, and walk right in! It'll be good to see you!

## SOFTBALL

There's still time to start a TCC lesbian softball team. League play starts on April 27 in Norwalk. All lesbians are encouraged to join regardless of ability. For more information call Christine at (203) 847-8476.

## CENTER FORUM

TCC's Center Forum will be held on Tuesday, April 21 beginning at 7:30 PM. Topic and guest speaker to be announced.

## LESBIAN LIT GROUP

The Lesbian Literature group has chosen "On My Honor: Lesbians Reflect on Their Scouting Experiences" edited by Nancy Manahan as the book for discussion at their May 5 meeting. The book gives real life accounts of the scouting experiences of several lesbians.

The Literature group meets the first Tuesday of each month at TCC beginning at 7:30 PM. Copies of "On My Honor..." are available at local libraries as well as Bloodroot (203) 576-9168. For more information call Christine at (203) 847-8476.

## NEW BOARD MEMBER

Heather M. Weimann has been voted in by the Board at their Feb. 24 meeting. Heather has been involved in TCC's youth group, Outspoken, since March 1994, with P-Flag since 1994, a member of TCC since 1995, and served on the P-Flag Board in 1996. She has given talks on being gay and growing up gay, to public school students. "I would like to see more activities for youth and would like to bring all groups together at TCC," she said during an interview. Commenting on Heather's new position, Board member Denyse Burke said, "we are very pleased to have the fresh energy of Heather Weimann on our Board. Welcome!"

## SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD

Four years ago this winter, I discovered the Triangle Community Center for the first time. At the suggestion of a friend, I called Dan (Woog), one of the facilitators of the newly-formed youth group, OutSpoken. He was outgoing, kind and eager for me to come down for a meeting. I didn't know any other gay people at the time. Did they exist? Were there any my age? Did they all live in big cities, like New York? That Sunday afternoon, with a racing heart and sweaty palms, I made the long walk down the corridor to Suite 7-C.

I don't recall saying much during the meeting, but I do remember Dan (Kelly) making conversation with me afterwards. Because of that, I went back the following week and have continued to attend OutSpoken nearly every Sunday afternoon for the past 4 years. In the early days of the youth group, teens new to the Center (and themselves) would come to the meetings and talk about problems with family or work, or secret crushes on the kid next to him/her in class. They found support in the facilitators, took comfort in their soothing words and reassurance that everything would be O.K. Throughout the years, OutSpoken members themselves have provided the advice and stories of similar experiences to their peers. Newcomers to the group these days are, I think, more confident and sure of themselves. They speak of starting gay/straight alliances at school, or coming out to their parents, P-Flag literature in hand. I started going to the youth group for advice, to search for the gay community. Now, though I sometimes give advice, I still learn from the young adults who are so much more together than I was when I came out. It's empowering to see young adults helping each other, to see the positive changes, the suggestions heeded.

OutSpoken provides a safe place for young adults to be themselves, to ask questions and voice concerns. More importantly, there is much needed dialogue between gay adolescents and adults. Because of the dedication of its members, OutSpoken recently celebrated its 4 year anniversary. I'm determined to see that OutSpoken exists for the next generation of gay teens, so that they may benefit from the guidance and support I continue to receive every Sunday from 4 pm to 6 pm.



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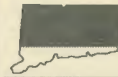
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## CONNECTICUT NEWS

### CONN AHEAD IN SUPPORT OF YOUTH

In a national assessment of how well states are meeting the needs of teens, the Advocates for Youth, a Washington, DC based teen advocacy group, gave Connecticut a 60 percent score out of a possible 100 percent. The rating covered subjects ranging from school attendance and after-school programs to sex education, AIDS prevention, support for gay and lesbian teens and access to confidential health care. Susan Flinn, author of the study, said the state-by-state analyses were based on information provided by state agencies, including copies of statutes and educational guidelines. Researchers also used reference materials provided by youth advocates.

Connecticut tied Washington, DC, for fourth place. California came in first with a score of 69 percent. Illinois, Maryland and Minnesota tied for second with 64 percent, and New York placed third with 63 percent. Georgia came in last with 48 percent. According to the study, Connecticut's policies were strongest in the area of support for gay and lesbian youth, gaining a score of 100 percent in that category. The state also did well with giving teens access to confidential health care and providing school-based health clinics. The study said Connecticut's weakest policies are in the area of child abuse and neglect. The state tied with New York for last place with a score of 25 percent.

### DEPT. OF EDUCATION CHANGING CURRICULUM

The state Dept. of Education is in the process of revising its recommendations to local school districts about what health topics should be covered and when including sexuality education. After some parents objected to the content of a preliminary draft, and enlisted the support of the governor, a considerably watered down set of recommendations was submitted to the state Board of Education for their consideration. Changes included shifting puberty education from 4th grade to Grades 5-8, deleting all reference to HIV/AIDS, deleting all reference to sexual orientation, and deleting any reference to sexuality as "a natural part of life." These changes have been loudly criticized by Planned Parenthood of CT, the CT Chapter of the American Pediatric Association, the Sexuality Information and Education Council of CT, the CT Association for School Health, the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Educators Network and the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of CT.

At its February 4 meeting, the state Board of Education and Commissioner Theodore Sergi announced that they would revisit their recommendations and prepare a new draft for consideration in May. They announced that they would solicit public and educator comments from individuals and groups. **HERE'S WHERE YOU COME IN!** Won't you please take the time TODAY to write a letter to Commissioner Sergi and another to Governor Rowland expressing your support for comprehensive, reality-based sexuality education in our schools?

Theodore S. Sergi  
Commissioner of Education  
State Dept. of Education  
165 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable John Rowland  
Room 200  
State Capitol  
Hartford, CT 06106

-Jon Clark, PPC Education Director

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## DENYING GAYS MARRIAGE IS A VIOLATION

[Ed Note: The author of this editorial in the Connecticut Post is David Piotti. He is a tenth grade student at Trumbull High School.]

The issue of same sex marriages is becoming much more common in the United States, and recently Hawaii's state legislature has passed laws allowing gays the right to marry. A gay marriage will not affect you directly in any way so there is no reason to be against if it is not your concern. People who are gay are born that way, so society cannot deny a person their rights if they cannot help it. Besides, if gays already live together, what does it matter if they are married? It has been argued that allowing homosexual couples to get married is morally wrong. Many people feel the Bible forbids same sex marriages. Despite peoples' beliefs or religious state, under the United States Constitution all people are created equal, which entitles everyone to equal rights.

Although some people might have a personal problem with gay marriages, one must understand not only their own point of view, but a gay person's as well. Why should something bother people if it does not necessarily concern them, everyone should concern themselves with their own matters. The topic of gay marriages or relationships has already been blown out of proportion. If people would stop obsessing about gay issues, they would realize that there would be less of an impact on society.

According to many scientists, people are born with a specific sexual identity and there is nothing they can do in their power to change it. If there are to be equal rights among all people you cannot deny persons' rights because they are born a certain way. Denying homosexuals the right to marry is like prohibiting heterosexual people from being married to the opposite sex. If one thinks in these terms, it may be easier to see how gays are denied their rights. My final point is a very simple question: What difference does it make if gays live together unmarried or married? It should make no difference either way to anyone. It shows how ridiculous this entire argument is. If gays are already carrying on relationships and living in the same home, then why not allow them to be married? There would be virtually no difference, except to the gay couples. Many partners would get health benefits if married and file income taxes together as a couple to save money just as heterosexual people do.

Denying gays marriage is a violation of their equal rights as American citizens. As a whole, America's heterosexual population has only put off the decision on whether to allow gay marriages. At this moment, America is truly not a land of equality although our Constitution declares this. As the world's leading democratic nation, we should set an example as the first completely equal nation.

## THE GAY GOURMET

### CUBES STEAKS PARMIGIANA (FOUR SERVINGS)

- 4 CUBE STEAKS, POUNDED THIN
- GARLIC POWDER
- COARSE GROUND PEPPER
- 3 TBSP OLIVE OIL
- 4 SLICES MOZZARELLA
- 1 CUP TOMATO SAUCE
- 1 SMALL CAN MUSHROOMS, DRAINED

HEAT OIL IN LARGE SKILLET. ADD CUBE STEAKS AND BROWN ON BOTH SIDES, SEASONING WITH GARLIC POWDER AND PEPPER. TRANSFER THE CUBE STEAKS TO A BAKING DISH, COVER WITH TOMATO SAUCE, MUSHROOMS, AND A SLICE OF MOZZARELLA. HEAT IN A 350 DEGREE OVEN UNTIL THE CHEESE IS MELTED. SERVE, PREFERABLY WITH A SIDE OF PASTA IN A MARINARA SAUCE.

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<http://members.aol.com.tcccenter/index.html>

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 "Many Hearts, One Community"  
 Serving the lesbian/gay/bisexual community of southwestern Connecticut  
 Last update 03/22/97

On this page:  Welcome to the Triangle Community Center  
 Who Are We?  Groups that Meet at the Center  Community Events  Resource Room  Monthly Newsletter   
 How to Find Us  Becoming a Member

On other pages:  
 Center Calendar  TCC News & Views  What's Happening?  
 Other Groups  Political Action  Internet Links

Phone or fax (203) 853-0600 or e-mail [TCCcenter@aol.com](mailto:TCCcenter@aol.com)

## MEDIA NEWS

### GET THEE TO THE JOHN HOUSMAN

Go see a remarkable production of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* retitled *R & J*. Four, twenty-something actors enact the Shakespearean tragedy as a play-within-a-play. They play the roles of schoolboys at a repressive Catholic boys school where love is merely a Latin verb to be conjugated. These schoolboys in turn, play all the roles in *Romeo and Juliet*. Sounds queer, but it works. It beautifully illuminates corners of the (what is to me at least) all-too-familiar story in ways I didn't think possible. Special mention must be made of the two Dannys in the cast. Mr. Gurwin plays Lady Capulet, Mercurtio, Friar John, the Prince and a number of other parts and does them all differently and with a great skill at the language. Then there is the remarkable Mr. Shore's Juliet. (He also plays Benvolio). He does indeed teach the torches to burn bright. He brings a passion to the part which makes all the other Juliets I have seen as listless in comparison. His Juliet is a young girl who finds herself subsumed by love and with her eyes wide open, rushes headlong where her heart leads her. It is a production - and a performance - not to be missed. *R & J* is showing in the John Housman Studio Theater (the basement space) at 450 West 42nd Street.

-Marianne Seggerman

### CIRCLES MAGAZINE DEBUTS

Circles Magazine, a new publication for the national and international lesbian community, has made its official debut. Copies are available by subscription, in women's, feminist, gay and lesbian, independent, and other bookstores across the United States and in Canada. Subscriptions are \$24.95 in the US. Circles is currently accepting feature-length and shorter submissions revolving around the myriad issues that involve and engage the lesbian and bisexual women's communities, as well as crossover issues that engage the gay community at large.

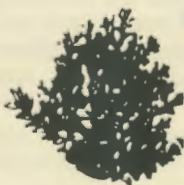
The first issue, dated March/April, contains features on political and legal issues; essays on civil marriage; an adaptation of the traveling photo-text exhibition *Love Makes A Family*; families; The Lesbian Health Advocacy Movement; an excerpt from Ellen Bass and Kate Kaufman's book *Free Your Mind: The Book for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Youth and Their Allies*; as well as short stories by Su Penn and Lauren Crux.

Kit McChesney, Publisher - Circles Magazine - Circles Publishing, Inc. - 1705 Fourteenth Street, Suite 326 - Boulder, Colorado 80302 - Tel (303) 245-8815 - Fax (303) 245-8816.

### ELLEN'S BYE, BYE?

Ellen DeGeneres has wrapped production on the last episode of *Ellen* for this season. The hour-long episode, set for the May sweeps, spoofs DeGeneres' own career, with Ted Danson, Woody Harrelson, Jennifer Aniston and Bea Arthur reminiscing about her (fictitious) days in vaudeville before *Ellen*. Also seen: Christine Lahti, Jada Pinkett Smith, Helen Hunt, Julianna Margulies and Cindy Crawford, all auditioning for the role of *Ellen Morgan*. Another episode, also set to air during sweeps, has *Ellen* and her lover discussing a commitment ceremony as *Morgan's* parents renew their vows.

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## A BEST-SELLER

On last week's best seller list in the New York Blade (the New York edition of the Washington DC gay paper) under books for gay men is *Jocks* by Dan Woog. It is not just for gay men, though. Dan interviewed dozens of athletes on the high-school and college level and compiled their stories into an anthology. The athletes he found were mostly swimmers or runners, with a smattering of team-sports participants and one gymnast. The two public figures he interviewed were famous for other reasons, but had a life-long interest in a particular sport. Anyone with an interest in sports will enjoy the stories of everyday athletes trying to reconcile their involvement in sports with their gay identities. Woog, in his decades as a columnist at the Westport News, writes human interest stories that bring out the private suffering of his subjects. I have sometimes felt in his columns that he too often wrote about people whose privilege of race and class left them little to feel sorry about. In *Jocks* at least, style meets worthy substance. Sports in the Western world is the basis for the concept of masculinity and a gay athlete challenges and confronts that image and culture just by living his life. When Woog extemporizes in his writing he keeps his editorializing narrowly focused on the individual at hand and never feels it necessary to step back and comment on the broader picture. This strengthens his work. Since this book is all about their stories and not at all about what he thinks, the reader is able to come to his or her own judgments. Some of the popularity of *Jocks* might be attributed to the fact that it's the first of its kind. But even if it covered an area that others had written about; it is in its own right informative, touching and heartwarming.

-Marianne Seggerman

### Play Group Forming

I am a lesbian mother with a 2 yr. 9 mth. old daughter interested in starting/developing a play group for 2 1/2 to just 4 year olds in the Fairfield County vicinity. If you are a lesbian, gay, or gay friendly with children in this age group or have the same interest, please give me (Hilary) a call at (203) 324-6785. If there is enough interest, I would love to start the group in May.

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# ▼ NEWS & VIEWS

## TRANSGENDER VIEWS

### POCONO VACATION

Come to the all new "Paradise In The Poconos" weekend. The new facility is fabulous! Every room is a deluxe accommodation with a double canopy bed in nearly every room. The facilities available include a heated indoor pool with an adjacent jacuzzi, an authentic English pub, and our very own night club for the talent show. Two separate game rooms provide video game entertainment as well as pool and ping-pong. There are also large meeting rooms for workshops. All of the services and facilities are accessible through enclosed walkways without ever going outside and the entire resort is exclusively ours for the weekend! This is a perfect venue for us.

The Poconos Weekend will run from November 5 - 8 and is designed to give you an opportunity to live out your fantasies. Dress to your heart's content. Bring your entire wardrobe! The people you'll meet at the Poconos are some of the nicest you'll ever meet anywhere. They come from different backgrounds but they all share the same desire: to get away and let "her" roam free. If your partner wonders if there are other women who accept this, here's where she'll meet them.

This weekend will give you an opportunity to refine your skills in makeup, hair styling, and dress. Attend one of the free workshops and learn new techniques. Buy and sell clothes at the Tag Sale. Leave with a whole new wardrobe. Whip up your wildest outfit for the Costume Party and win a prize. Maybe you'll be the next Princess of the Poconos. Get your registration form and send it in now, before there's no room at the inn. People have been turned away for the last three years.

"Paradise In The Poconos" runs from Thursday, November 5 through Sunday, November 8—4 days & 3 nights of fun and festivities. The complete package includes: welcome reception, 3 parties, 9 meals, 3 nights lodging, workshops, tax, and gratuities. The cost per person (double occupancy) is \$350. A limited number of single occupancy rooms are available at \$475. For more information, a brochure and registration form write to: Creative Design Services, PO Box 61263, King of Prussia, PA 19406.

## CYBER NEWS

### HOME PAGE FOR LIVING POSITIVELY!

The Living Positively! HIV/AIDS groups of New Haven now have a public information site at <http://www.outinct.com/livingpoz/index.html>. On this site you will find the group's preamble, steps, traditions and some member sharings, as well as some other pages.

## LESBIAN NEWS

The National Academy of Sciences is on the Internet. Their Journal, The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences which contains the article on the differences between the inner ears of lesbians and straight women can be found in abstract form at: <http://www.pnas.org/cgi/content/abstract/95/5/2709>.

## GAY EGYPT

If you want to read about the first tomb built for ancient gay Egyptian lovers take a look at <http://www.sirius.com/~reeder/niankh.html>.

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## TRIVIA QUESTION

**ANSWER TO MARCH - DAVID WHITNEY IS THE LOVER OF 90-SOMETHING ARCHITECT PHILIP JOHNSON AND JON ANDERSON IS THE LOVER OF 90-SOMETHING ARTIST PAUL CADMUS. BOTH THE COUPLES HAVE BEEN TOGETHER FOR THIRTY-FIVE YEARS.**

**QUESTION FOR APRIL - WHICH OF THESE DO NOT BELONG TO THE OTHERS? GENE SHALIT, ROBERT MACNELL, ROBERT MOSBACHER, PHYLLIS SCHAFFLY, (THE LATE) ROY LICHTENSTEIN.**

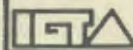
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## LETTERS

### MAINE RESPONDS

[Ed. note: Below is a copy of the letter received by Lester and Elaine Sharlach in response to a postcard they sent expressing their dismay over Maine's rejection of their gay's right's law.]

The Maine Publicity Bureau, Inc.  
PO Box 2300  
325B Water Street  
Hallowell, Maine 04347-2300

February 24, 1998

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Sharlach,

To say the least I was very distressed to receive, your postcard in today's mail. I regret that the media coverage of this vote gave a somewhat distorted view of the vote's purpose.

I do not know of any documented cases in our state that show that gay and lesbians are being discriminated against. I do not pretend to understand why some people treat other people differently or unfairly. I was taught to treat all people as my equal and I think most Mainers do just that. I would hate to lose you after 18 years as visitors, may I offer a suggestion? Consider planning your vacation at a gay or lesbian owned property in Maine. That way you are supporting their efforts as a viable part of our tourism industry. At the same time (sic) you are speaking with your economic power and supporting a group that is important to you. I appreciate your concerns and we do value you as a guest for the past 18 years. If I may be of any assistance please call.

Sincerely, Vaughn Stinson, Executive Director

### "LETTER TO THE EDITOR" - MILLENNIUM MARCH ON WASHINGTON

In the spring of 2000, our lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender community will once again "March on Washington." The last March was held after the presidential elections. That was too late. We relied on the promises of political parties that were not kept. This time, we will show our strength, our unity and our commitment, and our goals before the elections.

In 1979, 100,000 of us attended the first march, and we wept as we embraced each other ....and demanded our rights. The rally was heard over national radio. We knew we had made history. The second March (attendance 1 million) gave birth to "The Quilt" and "The Wedding Ceremony." ....Television and newspapers covered the March. By the 3rd March in 1993, we still had no rights, but more and more people, including famous personalities, were beginning to come out. Melissa Etheridge, Martina Navratilova, Sir Ian McCallen, the Indigo Girls, as well as straight celebrity supporters such as Cybil Sheppard and Judith Light appeared on stage. We honored those of our community who had served and were forced out of the military, and wept, as the mother of Alan Shindler, the young gay man who was murdered in the navy, and one million of us, paid tribute to his memory. And for the first time, CSPAN covered us, and we were seen all over this Nation, and on CNN, all over the world.... Since that third March, the media has given us tremendous coverage and recognized us as a community.

We must March on Washington in Spring of 2000. ....This march will be televised nationally and all over the world, so millions of people who cannot afford to participate in any March, can be a part of this great experience. We will put our children on stage, and our parents, and show our diversity, and our unwavering commitment. We will honor our youth and our elders. We will not stop until we have equal rights. ....Until that happens, like the Phoenix, against all odds, we have and will continue to rise, again and again, and to March on Washington, and to never stop the struggle until we have full equality. We owe it to our future generations....

-Robin Tyler, Executive Producer, Millennium March on Washington for Equal Rights 2000 (LGBT).

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### MORE HARASSMENT FOR GAYS IN MILITARY

The number of gays facing harassment in the military has risen for the fourth consecutive year, despite the Clinton administration's pledge to prevent further discrimination of homosexuals in the armed services, according to a gay rights advocacy group. The Servicemembers Legal Defense Network attributed the increase to "a climate in many commands where 'anything goes' in the pursuit of suspected gay personnel."

In its annual report, the group cited 563 "command violations" that servicemembers had reported to it, including instances where commands asked, pursued and harassed service members in direct violation of President Clinton's "don't ask, don't tell" policy, which sets limits on gay investigations. In contrast, the number of violations reported in 1996 by members of all the services was 443, the group said. The Navy was the worst service in anti-gay harassment and asking, with 193 violations. Last year's report said a total of 850 people had been discharged from the military for homosexuality in 1996, a five-year high. No figures were given discharges of gays in 1997 because the Pentagon would not release them.

### GAY DOCTORS GROUP NOT WELCOME

The nation's leading group of gay and lesbian doctors is furious over being rejected for participation in the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists annual conference, saying the snub is a reflection of how little attention the medical establishment pays to lesbian health. The Gay and Lesbian Medical Association, a 2,000-member organization, said it was tersely dismissed by the ACOG when it asked to be exhibitors at a May 11 conference in New Orleans. The ACOG said that the gay doctors' "service would not benefit or be of interest to the majority of our membership."

The group's spokesman, Greg Phillips, said the gay doctors seemed to be a "special issue advocacy group." Such groups are banned under the organization's guidelines. The gay doctors' organization, however, suspects a different motivation. "ACOG's statement reflects homophobia by effectively discounting the specific medical needs of lesbian patients and the existence of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered obstetricians and gynecologists."

### LESBIANS LOSE

February 29's Dateline NBC featured the story of the lesbian foster mother who had her foster child removed by a social worker who disagreed with her lifestyle. The child ended up with his uncle and aunt, even though the foster mother continues to raise other foster children and the social worker was demoted. Dateline's "Question of the Week" was "When should lesbian couples be allowed to adopt?" The sample of 503 people answered as follows: Not sure 7%; When a suitable heterosexual couple cannot be found 13%; Same rules should apply for gays and straights 30%; Never 50%.

### NJ COURT BACKS GAY SCOUT LEADER

Homosexuals can be Boy Scouts — even troop leaders — a state appeals court declared forcefully in a ruling that has national implications. The court, in a 2-1 opinion, ruled in the case of a Monmouth County assistant scoutmaster (Dale) ousted from his troop. The decision could force Scout troops in New Jersey to accept gays, something the Boy Scouts of America considers inconsistent with its 90-year tradition of asking boys to remain "morally straight."

The appeals court said the Boys Scouts is a public institution much like the Little League, or libraries and colleges. Forcing the organization to accept gay boys and scoutmasters won't undermine its core mission of teaching self-reliance, patriotism, courage, and other virtues, the judges said. The ruling overturns a decision by Superior Court Judge Patrick J. McGann, who quoted from the story of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Bible, and criticized Dale for his "moral depravity" in ruling that the Scouts had a right to exclude the assistant scoutmaster. This decision is the first appeals court ruling in the nation to take the side of a gay troop leader, lawyers for both sides said. Legally, it remains an open case, but both sides said the ruling could have profound effects.

### NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL: THE INVISIBLE VICTORY

The Boy Scouts would never have known if James Dale hadn't told them. That has always been the difference about the movement for gay rights. Homosexuals aren't visible. They have to stand up and identify themselves in order to be discriminated against. They may be monogamous by nature. They may want to fall in love and marry. There are plenty of such people in the United States. They are all the things their critics wish that homosexuals were. They are good Scouts. But every time they stand up to declare themselves in some new place, they get rejected. That has been the pattern in religion, in the military, in business and the law. The value of James Dale's case against the Boy Scouts of America, which threw him out in New Jersey when he said publicly that he was gay, is to remind us what fights for civil rights in this country are usually about. They are about the right to do the usual thing. James Dale might in fact have an easier run in life if, like some gay men and lesbians, he spent his private time in the gay bars, churches, athletic clubs and interest groups that formed a shelter for a whole population rejected from the usual places. But he didn't want an exclusively homosexual life. He wanted an ordinary one, and that has been the rub.

Homosexuals were segregated out by a society that saw them as different; sinfully, criminally, mentally flawed. Those old definitions are fallen, or falling back. But they all grew from religious teaching. And it is in the most fundamentally religious and patriotic realms that American homosexuals have had to fight the hardest for acceptance. Progress is sometimes inch by inch. In San Francisco last month the Alexander Hamilton Post, the only American Legion post in the nation that describes itself as mainly gay, finally won a 15-year fight with the California Legion. The parent Legion agreed to acknowledge publicly the post's existence, to refrain from saying bad things about it, to pay its legal bills, and even to let other veterans who might want to join know about it.

The fight for gay veterans and Boy Scouts, for gay Catholics and Baptists, for gay and lesbian members of the American military is a long way from over. Accepting homosexuals as normal is the last thing their most tenacious religious and ideological opponents want to do. But that, in fact, has been the main thrust of all the individual men and women who have become so visibly gay in recent years — not segregation, but assimilation. They have come out so that they can stay out, if they choose, or go back in on their own terms, as themselves. If they succeed, they may surprise their critics by becoming largely invisible again. It could be a very long time, but the success of the gay rights movement may be most obvious the day it disappears.



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# ▼ NEWS & VIEWS

## SOME SCOUTS EXEMPT FROM CODES

The Boy Scouts' national executive board has quietly voted to make significant changes in its Explorer programs — changes that may avert some court challenges to the Scouts' requirement of a belief in God and its ban on gay youths and gay adult leaders. National Scout leaders say the changes will allow for better management while expanding the reach and impact of the programs that serve boys and girls from ages 14 through 20. They insist the decisions were not made in response to lawsuits.

In an action that has not yet been publicly announced, the Scouts' national executive board decided in February that Explorer units with a focus on hobbies or outdoor adventure — or with a religious component — will be put into a newly created Venturing division. Details of the program are still being worked out, but a national spokesman confirmed that Venturing will continue the traditional codes, values and requirements for leadership and membership. Explorer units that focus on career exploration will be put under the administration of Learning for Life, an existing Boy Scouts subsidiary that helps schools provide career information to students. These Explorer posts often are sponsored in the workplace by private businesses or government agencies. Gregg Shields, a national Boy Scouts spokesman, confirmed that these Explorer units would no longer be subject to the traditional codes and requirements that have applied to Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Explorer Scouts.

## THE EARS HAVE IT

Researchers say they have found the first strong evidence of a physical difference between lesbians and straight women — a finding that the inner ears of gay women work more like those of men. The discovery adds new support to the theory that sexual orientation may be predisposed before birth. Previous research has found that two parts of the male brain are different in gay and heterosexual men. Other studies have found that some genes differ between gay and straight men.

In the study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, researchers at the University of Texas, Austin, said they found the inner ears of female homosexuals have undergone "masculinization," probably from hormone exposure before birth. The inner ear difference between homosexual and heterosexual women was detected using a test that measures the function of the cochlea, a key sound amplifier in the inner ear, said McFadden, a professor of experimental psychology. The cochlea amplifier in women is more sensitive than that of men, giving women an increased ability to detect very soft sounds in a very quiet room.

What is clear is that there is a dramatic difference in the development of the hearing systems of lesbians and of heterosexual women. It also is known that development of the inner ear is affected before birth by androgens, a male hormone. Androgens may also alter the brain centers that produce sexual orientation.

## HORMEL UPDATE

James Hormel, heir to the meatpacking fortune and a founding board member of the Human Rights Campaign has pledged to resign and give up gay-rights activism if confirmed. The Clinton administration maintains its support for Hormel and is accusing a small group of Republican senators of discrimination for blocking the confirmation of the San Francisco philanthropist who would be the first openly gay US ambassador. But conservative lawmakers who are preventing a Senate vote on James Hormel's bid for the Luxembourg post contend it's his gay rights activism and not his sexual orientation they find disturbing.

Sens. Tim Hutchinson, R-Ark., and James Inhofe, R-Okla., have placed open holds on Hormel and others have done so anonymously, said Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss. As a result, Hormel's name isn't expected to reach the floor without a fight, if at all.

## LESBIAN HEALTH CARE

For 20 years, Nayla Rolle lived with a paralyzing disease that doctors dismissed as stress-related. It wasn't until she started seeing Joan Waitkevich — a specialist in lesbian health issues — that her ailments were diagnosed correctly, as lupus and asthma. Waitkevich, who began seeing Rolle nine years ago while she was in private practice, is now director of

the Beth Israel Medical Center's Gay Women's Focus in New York. Health care networkers say it is the first hospital-based health-provider in the country for lesbians. The connection to the hospital, proponents say, could give lesbian patients better access to specialists and more comprehensive insurance, than they would otherwise have.

Gay Women's Focus is a primary care provider and gives referrals. Since opening in 1996, it has treated more than 3,000 patients 30 percent of them lesbians. Experts say gay women have special medical concerns: They may be at higher risk of developing coronary disease, breast and colon cancer, and some vaginal infections, research shows. And sexual practices can have an effect. Teresa Cuadra, the center's gynecologist, said many lesbians may go years without visiting a gynecologist, for example, because they think they are not at risk for sexually transmitted diseases.

Pat Troy and her partner began seeing Waitkevich more than 16 years ago, after Troy's previous gynecologist molested her. Experts say such stories are common. In addition, lesbians may avoid doctors for fear they will be denied insurance coverage or be forced to reveal their sexual orientation at work. According to a 1994 survey of members of the American Association of Physicians for Human Rights, 67 percent of doctors and medical students said they knew of a lesbian, gay or bisexual patient who had received substandard care or been denied care because of sexual orientation.

## FIRM MATCHES GAY MEN AND SURROGATES

The longed-for package from Denise in Tulsa, Okla., arrived in the mail. The anxious Manhattan Beach couple popped the enclosed videotape of the ultrasound into their VCR and anxiously scrutinized the grainy image. Their baby looked healthy, and he certainly appeared to be a boy. The parents-to-be—Jim and Brian—were delighted. Denise had agreed to carry a baby for Jim and Brian after she was introduced to them by Gail Taylor, founder of Growing Generations, a 1 1/2-year-old West Los Angeles company that matches gay men who want to have children with surrogate mothers. Growing Generations is the only surrogate-parenting agency in the United States exclusively serving gay men. Taylor, herself a lesbian and the mother of a 6-month-old daughter, said she has received hundreds of inquiries nationwide since starting her service, most from people who heard about it via the Internet or word of mouth.

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California does not regulate surrogate agencies. Taylor says her basic fee is \$47,000, including medical screenings, legal costs of terminating the surrogate's parental rights, adoption by the non-biological parent and compensation of \$15,000 that is paid to the surrogate over the course of the pregnancy. Growing Generations has recently added the option of using an egg donor. Couples might opt to use an egg donated by one man's sister, for example. This choice, which necessitates in vitro fertilization, significantly increases costs.

## POPE TAKES AIM AT SAME-SEX MARRIAGES

Pope John Paul II used a visit by Spanish bishops to condemn same-sex marriages as an attack on the institution of the family. "We are seeing today a trend, very widespread in some circles, that threatens the very characteristics of the family," the pope told the bishops from Catalonia and Asturias. He denounced those who "want same-sex unions recognized as families," and urged the bishops to "proclaim with pastoral firmness the truth about marriage and the family, as God made it to be."

## ELDERLY GAY HOUSING

It was 25 years ago that the seeds of a novel idea were first planted in the mind of Brenda Cole. Now a Massachusetts entrepreneur, Cole is laying the groundwork for what would be one of the first chains of assisted living and retirement facilities marketed to elderly gay men and lesbians in the nation. Boston is one of several cities Cole is targeting for the \$75 million, for-profit project, which would include a bevy of amenities: a health club, wellness center, and hair salon at each site.

Cole says she is "very close" to closing a deal with an investor that will leave her with \$6.5 million in seed money to break ground for the first 120-unit facility, which would be located in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. - a growing area with a large gay community. Slated to open after that would be sites in Atlanta and Boston - if Cole can locate a suitable space in the city's tight and expensive housing market. Depending on the market and the size of the units, condominiums could cost anywhere from \$160,000 to \$275,000; assisted living services such as meals and physical therapy would likely run an additional \$2,000 to \$3,500 per month, Cole said. The units would be split evenly between assisted and independent living quarters.

## GAY BOOMERS AND RETIREMENT

Peter Lundberg's vision for a Bay Area retirement mecca would boast many of the niceties of a Sun City resort. As many as 500 older residents would stroll hand-in-hand along its extensive walkways past shops, a central plaza and homes with spacious porches for frittering away an afternoon. They'd relax at its pool, tennis courts and recreation center. And those in failing health would be tended to at its on-site nursing home or assisted-care facility. But "Our Town," as the 48-year-old San Francisco financial planner dubs his dream, would differ in one significant way from the typical retirement community. Like a growing number of seniors-oriented developments being proposed around the nation, it would be tailored specifically to lesbians and gay men.

Our Town is one of at least three such projects under consideration for the Bay Area and other spots in California. Similar developments, including several mobile home parks aimed primarily at older lesbians, already have opened or are in the works in Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, North Carolina and Washington state, according to stories in gay and lesbian publications and people involved.

The whole idea intrigues Mary Thorndal, executive director of the Gay and Lesbian Association of Retiring Persons, which was formed last year in Los Angeles. In fact, Thorndal is so enthusiastic that she and her partner for the past 15 years, Veronica St. Claire, are proposing to build a similar project themselves. But it may not be simple. Like Lundberg, Thorndal and St. Claire have discovered potential hitches from the market surveys they've done. Among the biggest is that older gays and lesbians are much less likely than their younger counterparts to have stepped out of the closet. As a result, such projects may have to wait until Baby Boomers get a little older, since many of those already of retirement age would resist moving to a place that would openly advertise their sexual orientation. Another tricky factor in selling such projects is that many gays and lesbians enjoy living around straight people and that some prospective tenants would resist moving anywhere that's only for seniors.

That sounds like what Bill Laing is developing on 22 acres near Tampa Bay, Fla. The Palms of Manasota, which the 67-year-old retired psychology professor began building in August, is primarily geared toward gay and lesbian seniors. But "20 percent of our population can be under 55," says Laing, who is gay. A straight person recently expressed interest in living there. The Palms' initial plans call for 21 single-family homes starting at \$117,000, 44 apartments and an assisted-living facility able to accommodate 45 people. They also include everything from recreation hall and swimming pool to shuffleboard courts and horseshoe pits. A third of the homes already have been sold, according to Laing.

Lundberg, Thorndal and Laing all have Web sites to promote their plans. Other developments, including two Arizona mobile home parks, Superstition Mountain Resort and The Pueblo, rely more on word-of-mouth. Since 1994, several hundred women, many of them retired lesbians, quietly have moved into the Apache Junction parks. The park has plenty of amenities: game rooms, a pool and even an auditorium, where gay entertainers from the Phoenix area show up to perform. But more than anything, it is a kind of sanctuary.

For more information :

Our Town, (415) 566-4100, <http://www.ourtownvillages.com/>

Metropolitan Community Homes Inc., (415) 453-5653.

Gay and Lesbian Association of Retiring Persons Inc., (310) 966-1500,

<http://www.gaylesbianretiring.org/>

Palms of Manasota, (941) 722-5858, <http://www.prideworks.com/palms.htm>.



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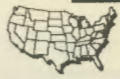
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### AK - SAME-SEX MARRIAGE BAN

About 60 people signed up to testify against a proposed constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriages in Alaska. The proposal's main proponent, Sen. Loren Leman, told the committee the amendment is needed to head off a redefinition of marriage, which he said runs contrary to every law in every state and in every country. Leman's move for a constitutional amendment on marriage was prompted by a court ruling 10 days ago in the case of two Anchorage men suing the state for a marriage license. Superior Court Judge Peter Michalski ruled that the constitutional right to privacy extends to choice of spouse, even if a person's choice is to marry someone of the same sex. In spite of their efforts, the committee voted 5-1 in favor of adding to the constitution a definition of marriage as a union "between one man and one woman."

### AZ - GAYS FEAR LINKS IN MURDERS

Robert Hernandez was minding his own business, walking alone through the parking lot of Valle Cita Gardens apartments on Union Hills Drive. A group of teenagers saw him and thought he was gay. One of them, Armen Harutiunian, 15, allegedly approached Hernandez, pulled out a handgun and ended the man's life with a single shot to the chest. Police officers said Hernandez's death was the second fatal attack in north Phoenix in the past two months against men thought to be gay. Detective Mike McCullough of Phoenix police said that he didn't know whether the cases of Hernandez and Thomas Moffatt, who was slain in January, are related. But said that they believed that the Jan. 10 death of the 71-year-old Moffatt was caused by a person or persons with bias against gay males.

### IA - PROTESTERS: NO LAW PROTECTING GAYS

A City Council member was among 600 people who turned out for a rally against expanding Des Moines' anti-discrimination law to protect homosexuals. Several pastors prayed around Councilman Michael McPherson at First Assembly of God Church to give him strength to continue to oppose the proposal. "The truth will set you free," McPherson said. The council, which has shot down similar proposals twice before, is expected to consider the protection in a few weeks. If the council passes the proposal, Des Moines would join Ames and Iowa City, which protect homosexuals from discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations. The city already prohibits such discrimination based on race, gender, religion or any of five other characteristics.

### IA - SIOUX CITY SAYS, "NO"

By a 3-2 vote the Sioux City Council defeated a controversial proposal that would have given homosexuals legal protections from discrimination. The action capped hours of public debate on one of the most emotional and contentious issues in the city's history. Nearly 150 people packed the council chambers. Hundreds more called or wrote council members in the last few weeks, with the overwhelming majority opposed to adding sexual orientation to the list of groups protected in the city code from discrimination in the areas of employment, housing and public accommodations.

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Many opponents agreed that discriminating against homosexuals is wrong. But they argued gays and lesbians do not deserve the same protections as other groups in the city human rights ordinance, such as race. "These people are not born this way like a man is born black, or red or yellow," Odell Nelson, a retired schoolteacher, said. "These people chose to live this way." The largest opposition came from religious conservatives, who argued the ordinance would violate their personal beliefs. Many called the ordinance an attempt to sanction an immoral lifestyle.

### IL - RED LOBSTER SUED

Dale Hall said he was fired from Red Lobster because of his sexual orientation. Hall has filed suit charging Red Lobster Restaurants with violating Cook County's human rights ordinance. The 5-year-old ordinance protects people from discrimination based on sexual orientation and other parameters.

Dale Hall, 34, who now works as a waiter at a downtown Chicago restaurant, had been an associate manager at Red Lobster, one rank below general manager. The incident that led to his termination occurred in April 1996. A waiter, who admitted in testimony that he referred to Hall and other gay employees as "(expletive) faggots," became angry when Hall told him he could not leave work when he wanted to. The waiter threw the night's money at Hall and walked off the job. Hall said that days later, he heard the restaurant manager was trying to find the waiter. Hall ultimately was fired. "They terminated me," Hall said. "They rehired the other guy." Two restaurant staffers testified in the hearing that the general manager would stand behind Hall during meetings, doing "the limp-wrist thing," an allegation the manager denied.

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## IN - AIDS/HIV PHARMACY OPENS

Statscript Pharmacy has opened its first store in Indianapolis, a somewhat dubious distinction for the city. That's because Statscript specializes in treating people with HIV or AIDS, entering new markets only after an exhaustive study to measure the need for such a service. It seems enough people were diagnosed with the deadly disease here to convince Statscript it was time to come. There have been 2,014 HIV cases reported in Marion County since 1985, and 1,188 AIDS cases since 1982, according to The Damien Center, a local HIV/AIDS social service center.

Statscript pharmacies do a lot more than just fill prescriptions, said Brad Plunkett, the lone pharmacist at the company's Downtown store. The pharmacies work closely with private and government social service agencies and gay and lesbian organizations, referring clients where appropriate for financial, emotional or medical assistance. And the company says it brings a special sensitivity to its work, insisting on such features as closed rooms where clients can receive counseling in private. Statscript has 22 locations nationwide and three more in development.

## MA - MUST REPORT HIV CASES

For the first time, Massachusetts health-care providers will soon have to report all cases of HIV infection to the state, according to a Department of Public Health decision to be announced today. The policy is part of a growing acknowledgment nationally that the epidemic must be tracked earlier, rather than reported only after HIV infection has turned into AIDS. But Massachusetts is breaking ranks with 31 states by adopting an HIV reporting system that uses a number identifier, not a person's name, in the state records.

AIDS activists welcomed the decision, saying that HIV reporting is needed with the new drug treatments available, and that using the number better protects a person's confidentiality. Massachusetts will be joining only Maryland and Texas in requiring HIV reporting by identifier number rather than name, while the states with some of the biggest numbers of HIV and AIDS cases - California and New York - are in the midst of a name vs. number debate.

## NB - CHURCH FINDS MINISTER INNOCENT

A Methodist pastor in Nebraska was found innocent by a church panel of disobeying church rules for performing a lesbian unity ceremony. Had he been found guilty by the jury of fellow ministers, the Rev. Jimmy Creech could have lost his position as senior pastor of Omaha's largest United Methodist Church and be stripped of his ministerial credentials. The case was the first challenge to United Methodist policy on homosexual marriage, and the jury's decision could shape how the 9.5 million-member denomination interprets rules governing its treatment of gays.

The jury was made up of four women and nine men, all ministers from Nebraska. The 53-year-old Creech conducted a same-sex commitment ceremony in Kearney, about 185 miles west of Omaha, in September. He was suspended from the leadership of his congregation on Nov. 10. Creech testified that he was simply serving the spiritual needs of two women church members.

The Rev. Loren Ekdahl of Lincoln, who argued the church's side, said Creech went wrong by conducting the ceremony as if it were an official rite. "We're not talking about a simple prayer or blessing here," he said. In Creech's defense, the Rev. Douglas Williamson of Nebraska Wesleyan University argued that the church's Social Principles, amended in 1996 to prohibit "ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions," are merely guidelines.

## NY - GAY SYNAGOGUE

The Congregation Beth Simchat Torah in Manhattan is the world's largest gay synagogue. In February the 800-member congregation celebrated its 25th anniversary. For the last five years it has been led by a young lesbian rabbi ranked among the nation's top 50 Jewish leaders in 1997. Congregation Beth Simchat Torah quickly became a magnet for gay Jews who had felt painfully cut off from their religious roots. For New Yorkers such as Michael Levine, discovering the gay synagogue seemed like a miracle. "The second I walked through the doors I felt I had come home," he recalls.

So overcrowded in its original meeting hall that some members had to sit on kiddy chairs, the synagogue moved to an artists' complex. For nearly 20 years, the synagogue was led entirely by volunteers. As the AIDS crisis hit, the congregation's needs grew at the same rapid pace as its membership. In 1992, the congregation hired Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum, whose Yom Kippur service attracts 3,000. She has found a congregation "thirsty to learn." Her class on contemporary Jewish philosophy regularly pulls in more than four times the 20 people she anticipated. Study retreats are sold out and a second trip to Israel is set for next year.

## TX - OPEN DOORS

Outside the University Baptist Church, across the street from the University of Texas, a sign proudly proclaims: "Our Doors Are Still Open." Inside over a chicken dinner, about 50 church members talk out their feelings after the Baptist General Convention of Texas voted Feb. 24 to oust the small congregation for embracing gays and lesbians. Church members are not happy about how they were treated. But neither are they deterred from what they see as their ministry to spread God's love for all people. The church was ousted from the Austin Baptist Association after the 1994 ordination of Hans Venable, a deacon who is gay. Since then, the church has invited homosexuals to participate in Open Circle, a ministry for gays and lesbians.

## TX - ANTI-DISCRIMINATION ORDER

Mayor Lee Brown fulfilled a campaign promise by signing an executive order banning discrimination in Houston's city government on the basis of sexual orientation. Brown established the new policy through his executive order authority, which does not require a vote by the City Council. But the issue's strong association with the gay and lesbian community has generated controversy — both at City Hall and in public debate. Noting that Houston voters overwhelmingly repealed an ordinance granting job protection to gay and lesbian city workers in 1985, some opponents of the policy called on Brown to put the measure to a vote of City Council.



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## WORLD NEWS

### AFGHANISTAN - THREE BURIED ALIVE FOR SODOMY

Three Afghan men convicted of sodomy survived an attempted execution in which they were buried alive for 30 minutes, a news agency reported. Taliban's supreme leader Mullah Mohammad Omar ordered the three to be left for half an hour under the rubble of a stone wall which was felled on top of them by a battle tank. Their lives would be spared if they survived. Pakistan-based AIP said the men were found alive when the pile of stones was removed, and were taken to hospital to be treated for their injuries. Fazalur Rehman, Ahmad Shah and Abdul Qahir had all been convicted by an Islamic court of committing sodomy with young boys. Orthodox Afghan Islamic scholars believe a sodomite must be executed either by being pushed from a hill or by having a wall felled on top of him, Afghan sources in Pakistan said.

### CANADA - LESBIAN COUPLE SETTLES

An estranged lesbian couple who fought for years over alimony payments have reached a settlement just as the Supreme Court prepared to hear their landmark case. But the former lovers will still be at the center of a high court hearing that will deal with whether Ontario law governing alimony should be expanded to include same sex couples. The story of M and H began in 1980, when the two met and fell in love while vacationing in Nepal. They lived together for more than 10 years, pooling assets, buying a country vacation home and starting an ad agency. M tended mostly to the household chores while H took care of business matters. When it all fell apart in 1992, M found she couldn't sue for support payments under Ontario's Family Support Act.

### JAMAICA - MORE DEBATE

On the Caribbean island of Jamaica, the Village People's performance at the Negril Music Festival sparked outrage from the anti-gay activists. "To promote a music festival of that nature, which is going to highlight a behavior repugnant to the majority of people in this country, is disrespectful," said the Rev. Stanley Clark, president of the Jamaica Council of Churches. Homosexuality has become a hot issue throughout the Caribbean in recent months following British pressures on its colonies to abolish anti-gay laws and prison riots in Jamaica over the distribution of condoms to guards and prisoners.

Inciting the most controversy was a decision by the Cayman Islands to prohibit a cruise ship carrying some 900 gay passengers from making a one-day stop there in February. Religious groups in the Bahamas protested after the government announced it would allow the landing of the ship rejected by the Cayman Islands. The ship never landed though, due to bad weather that Bahamian clergymen deemed an act of divine intervention.

"We have been surprised by all the anti-gay behavior in the Caribbean," said David Smith, senior strategist with the Human Rights Campaign. Smith said he, "wouldn't be surprised" if right-wing groups in the US, particularly the American Family Association, were responsible for fomenting anti-homosexual sentiments in the Caribbean, a historically religious and conservative area. Allen Wildom of the American Family Association denied trying to influence Caribbean countries. But he admitted his group's web site does encourage readers to contact the British government and the US State Department to voice opposition to efforts to persuade Caribbean governments to liberalize anti-gay laws. "We haven't yet asked for a boycott of England, but it's a possibility in the future if Britain continues to push for the repeal of sodomy laws," said Wildmon.

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### NASSAU - ANTI-GAY PROTEST

A cruise ship that sparked a noisy, anti-gay protest in the Bahamas was not chartered by a gay vacation group, the ship's operator said. The vessel, the Veendam, left Miami early for a stop at Half Moon Bay, a remote Bahamian island, on the first stage of a seven-day Caribbean cruise. Hundreds of placard-waving demonstrators took to the streets in Nassau to protest the Veendam's visit.

Hours before the protest, Bahamian Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham called a news conference to say that all tourists were welcome in the Bahamas. The protest was led by Save the Bahamas, a group formed in February to protest the scheduled visit of another cruise ship. Demonstrators called on the government to acknowledge the "outrage" of its citizens. The group asked Bahamians to sign a petition calling for the reinstatement of sodomy laws, a ban on facilities for "sodomites" and a ban on "open sodomites" holding government office.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### GAY CHRISTIAN RETREAT

Gay, Lesbian and Christian: Many Rooms -Thursday, June 11 thru Sunday, June 14 at the Kirkridge Retreat and Study Center in Bangor, PA. - Cost \$300. John's Gospel speaks of many rooms in God's house and we come to our Christian spirituality from many different traditions and experiences within and outside the church. This event will provide our community the opportunity to share expressions of our unique experiences of God's grace and love. Facilitators include: John McNeill, Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, Christine Smith and Melvin Deal. For more information call the Kirkridge Retreat at (610) 588-1793.

### GAY & LESBIAN WORKSHOPS

The Omega Institute for Holistic Studies in Rhinebeck, New York, is hosting several workshops for lesbians and gay men from Monday, June 22 thru Friday, June 26. The workshops include "Reclaiming Our Inner Wisdom: A Lesbian Retreat" with Elizabeth Roebuck, Ph.D. (cost \$290). "Honoring Our Journey: A Workshop for Gay Men" with Terry Flynn (cost \$290). "Touching the Body, Healing the Spirit: A Workshop for Gay Men Using the Rubinfeld Synergy Method" with Bob Bauer, C.S.W. (cost \$275) and "Getting the Love You Want: For Gay and Lesbian Couples" with Patricia Zorn and Sharon Kleinberg, C.S.W. (cost \$195). For more information contact the Omega Institute at 800-944-1001.

### CONFERENCE - MAN & MASCULINITY

The National Organization for Men Against Sexism (a pro-feminist, gay affirmative, anti-racist organization) is holding its 23rd conference on Men & Masculinity entitled Pro Feminist 2000 from Friday, August 6 thru Sunday, August 9 at SUNY Stony Brook in Stony Brook Long Island, New York. Areas to be covered are: Ending Men's Violence, Homophobia Issues and Men's Studies. For more information call (516) 399-4229.

### GAY & LESBIAN BUSINESS EXPO

On April 25 and 26, the largest gay and lesbian trade show in the country will take place at the Jacob Javits Center in New York City. This annual event gives gays and lesbians the opportunity to shop and discover businesses (local and national) that target the gay community. Sponsors include major corporations such as Subaru, IBM and American Airlines. Last year there were 15,000 visitors. For more information on the trade show call 800/243-9774.

### OUT AND EQUAL '98

Rochester, New York will host a national conference on how sexual orientation and gender identity shape workplace dynamics. Out and Equal '98, the National Conference on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Workplace Issues, is considered the preeminent event of its kind. Over three days in April, an expected 400 attendees will discuss benefits and policies, discrimination and harassment, understanding and awareness.

Among the topics to be covered April 17-19: same-sex sexual harassment, what employment law does and does not protect, and the

importance of schools teaching acceptance of all diversity. "This is not going to be a 101 conference, which is what they usually are," David Kosel, conference chair, said. "We'll talk about what happens to a gay person in interviews, how they're perceived. We have companies coming to recruit and show support. That's not happened at these conferences before." For additional information call David Kosel, (716) 328-5986.

### INFECTED AND AFFECTED BY HIV/AIDS

"Soul Connections," a retreat for persons living with HIV/AIDS and their friends, family, or significant others will be held at Saint Edmund's Retreat Center on the weekend of May 15, 16, 17, 1998. Located in Mystic, CT, this retreat will give participants a chance to relax on the safe, comfortable, and scenic grounds of Enders Island as they explore ways to contact and communicate with their own selves, each other, and the God of their own understanding. The weekend will also include good food, massages, Yoga and a variety of activities that nourish and enhance a person's well being. There is a fee of \$25.00 per person for the entire weekend and includes food and lodging. Space, however, is limited and due to the popularity and demand for these retreats, it is suggested reservations be made as soon as possible.

The weekend will also feature a special presentation on Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) by Seph Mayo. Mr. Mayo was one of the founders of "Together Through Touch" a free massage program for people living with HIV/AIDS. Ellen Rubin, currently working on YOGA classes for AIDS Project New Haven and stress reduction workshops for the Connecticut AIDS Residence Program, will also be leading a session on Yoga and ways partners can assist each other. For more info. please contact: Br. Thomas Berube (860) 572-8548 or TOMBSSSE@aol.com

### LESBIAN ROCK CONCERT

On Saturday April 25 roads to Westport will be jammed with lesbians. The place to be: the Unitarian Church in Westport; when: 8 p.m.; why: The Concert: "She's A Rebel - Fearlessly going where no woman has gone before!" Suzanne Sheridan, the "One Night Stand Band", "The Undertones", and members of "Another Octave" are coming out for the first leg of the "Rebel Tour". Singing songs only previously done by men, Suzanne is reclaiming the territory of old time rock 'n roll for you. Songs like "Pretty Woman", "Delilah", "Lay Down Sally", and "Young Girl. You will also be treated to a gala party after the concert. Tickets are only \$15. Call 203-227-7205, ext. 22 for more information or you can send your check or money order and a SASE to the Unitarian Church in Westport, 10 Lyons Plains Road, Westport, CT. 06880, attn: Rebel.

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Free Association of Fairfield County - John 268-8858 x304

Gay Men's Rap Group - Dave 838-1881; John 389-7391

Gmosaic (People of Color) - Nasheed 854-7726

Lesbian Literature Reading Group - Christine, 847-8476

Out & About (20's & 30's) - Heather 924-2930; Ashley 576-1073  
or Dan 838-2367OutSpoken (Youth) - Barb 259-8171; Dan 227-1755;  
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P-FLAG Spouses &amp; Ex Spouses Group - Joan 544-8724

Triangle Bowling League (Circle Lanes, Fairfield) - Lisa 333-3113;  
Roseann 931-8789Women's Rap Group - Chandra 226-8652; Linda 866-4598;  
Michele 438-4465All meetings are held at the Center and in the evening unless  
otherwise noted. A \$3 donation per person is appreciated with  
your participation in activities to help support the Center.**Deadline for the May Newsletter will be Saturday,  
April 16. We cannot guarantee that material received  
after that date will be included in May News&Views.****OTHER AREA GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

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Bisexually Curious Support Group Bpt	(203) 264-5605
Chiltern Mountain Club	(203) 899-0270
Connecticut Kids and Families	(203) 256-8414
Connecticut Freedom to Marry Coalition	(203) 791-9553
40-Up Club. (Social Grp.-call Dale before 10pm)	(203) 261-4019
Gay Fathers Group	(203) 866-7051
Gay Mens Association of Danbury	(203) 778-7016
GEMS (Mature GLBT)	(860) 688-1881
GuideLine (gay/lesbian phone info)	(203) 366-3734
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P.O. Box 4062, East Norwalk, CT 06855.

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Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 P-FLAG 7:45	2 Men's Rap 7:30	3 Bowl 9:30 Circle Lanes G Mosaic 7:30	4
5 AA 9-10 am OutSpoken 4-6	6 Women's Rap 7:30	7 Lesbian Lit Grp 7:30 Fund Raising 7:30	8 Bi Rap Grp 7:30	9 Men's Rap 7:30	10 Out & About 7:00 Bowl 9:30 Circle Lanes	11 Fundraiser, Bdgpt, 6-9 Deadline News & Views
12 AA 9-10 am OutSpoken 4-6	13 Women's Rap 7:30	14 TCC Board 7:30	15 P-FLAG Spouses & Ex spouses 7:30	16 Mens' Rap 7:30	17 Bowl 9:30 Circle Lanes G Mosaic 7:30	18
19 AA 9-10 am OutSpoken 4-6	20 Women's Rap 7:30	21	22 Bi Rap Grp 7:30	23 Men's Rap 7:30	24 Out & About 7:00 Bowl 9:30 Circle Lanes	25
26 AA 9-10 am OutSpoken 4-6	27 Women's Rap 7:30	28 TCC Board 7:30	29	30 Men's Rap 7:30		

## CONNECTICUT CALENDAR

### APRIL 1998

**Friday., April 3** - The Killing of Sister George, presented by Alternative Starz Production to benefit the New Haven Gay and Lesbian Community Center. At Artspace, 70 Audubon St., New Haven, 8:00 PM. Tickets \$15/\$10 for Artspace and NHGLCC members. For information and reservations all 203-877-6382.

**Saturday., April 4** - The Killing of Sister George (see April 3).

**Saturday, April 4** - Living Positively!'s 7th anniversary Potluck Dinner, in New Haven, 6:00 PM, followed by speakers at 7:00 PM. For location and other information, please call Peter at 203-248-5057.

**Friday, April 10** - The cult classic The Rocky Horror Picture Show will be featured at the twice monthly movie night at The New Haven Gay & Lesbian Community Center, One Long Wharf, New Haven. Potluck at 6:30 PM, movie at 7:15 PM. For info call the Center at (203) 777-7780.

**Friday, April 17 - Sunday, April 19** - Out and Equal '98. National conference on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Workplace Issues. For information call Dan Kosel at (716) 328-5986.

**Sunday, April 19** - Connecticut Gay Men's Chorus presents OUT! The Whole Story, to benefit A Moveable Feast, a meals-on-wheels service for people with HIV/AIDS and cancer in southeastern Connecticut. Garde ArtsCenter, New London, 2:00 PM, \$20 for general seating, \$26 for front balcony. For tickets call 1-888-ON GARDE. Party after the show at Heroes Cafe in New London.

**Friday, April 24** - A Diva gone mad is featured in Sunset Boulevard at the twice monthly movie night at The New Haven Gay & Lesbian Community Center, One Long Wharf, New Haven. Potluck at 6:30 PM, movie at 7:15 PM. For info, call the Center at (203) 777-7780.

**Saturday, April 25** - Lesbian concert at the Unitarian Church in Westport at 8 PM. "She's a Rebel Going Where No Woman Has Gone Before!" Women singing songs previously sung by men. Many singers and many bands! Tickets \$15. For more information call (203) 227-2705.

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

### MEMBERSHIP LISTS ARE CONFIDENTIAL

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CONTRIBUTING MEMBER	\$35
CONTRIBUTING HOUSEHOLD	\$60
SUPPORTING MEMBER	\$125
SPONSORING MEMBER	\$250
SUSTAINING/BUSINESS MEMBER	\$500
SPECIAL MEMBER (YOUTH/SENIOR)	\$20

PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO:  
**TRIANGLE COMMUNITY CENTER, INC. P.O. BOX 4062**  
**EAST NORWALK, CT 06855 ATTN: MEMBERSHIP**  
**(203) 853-0600**