NorthView

News and views for Alaska’s gay and lesbian community
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Identity NorthView

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Editorial

Amy O'Mara

activism: a doctrine or practice that emphasizes direct, vigorous action especially in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue

I'm not so sure.

This past April, I arrived at work one morning and found that an extensive section of our Dilbert-esque work area had been decorated with the Easter things of Westerners. It was the commercialized version of the Christian co-opting of the ancient celebrations of spring. You probably know what I mean: an encultured linking of pastels and peace, eggs and ascension, jellybeans and Jesus.

Politely, I asked a co-worker if she knew who had provided this uplifting festoonery. She mentioned a name, but halted another co-worker to verify. That person, in turn, peered into an adjoining cubicle for confirmation by a third, who joined us. As we stood there in a loose knot of four, they agreed it was likely the work of So-and-so. After all, So-and-so had also decorated in honor of Christmas, Valentines Day, St. Patrick's Day and wasn't it just delightful that she brightened up the office so? It was looking like a slow news morning in the chatty cubicle.

"Why," asked one of my co-workers, "Did you want to know?" They waited, six tweezed eyebrows gently raised in the expression of the mildly curious. In light of my growing reputation for expressing personal truths, even when dishonesty would keep me closer to the status quo, they waited.

At that moment, So-and-so showed up. A fuss was made, good morning, good morning, the pastels brightened up the monotony of the office's bureaucratic grey, Amy wanted to see you, she has a question about the decorations. Addressing So-and-so, I asked if she'd considered our non-Christian friends. Giggles and chortles and the generalization emerged: "Amy, those decorations aren't really Christian, they are spring-like and fresh."

"Besides," said the most playful of the three, "Most people are Christian and the others can just get used to that."

A misrepresentation of myself at this point would certainly have relieved its hearers of their awkwardness, their discomfort. The entire weight of it would have been mine to hold.

"Actually, most people aren't Christian," I replied, "But that's like telling me, the office queer, that most people are straight and I should just get used to that." Their laughter immediately exploded, embarrassed and too loud, too forced. Their laughing, however mirthless, provided them with an opportunity to avert their eyes, and none met mine as I sought this simple connection.

I'd offered up a truth about my life, easily and in a way that could not be misinterpreted. Now they were certain and, faced with my shame-free nonchalance, could not muster any response. No more whispered speculation about whether my girlfriend was my girlfriend.

The knot unraveled, we disappeared into the labyrinth of cubicle dividers.

The personal is shot through with the political.
Truth will open doors.
Honesty is activism.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

I was elated to see Fred Hillman named Volunteer of the Month for May. Fred is one of the best people I have ever come to know, and it is an honor to count him among my friends.

Fred has always been there when I needed a hand, just like he has been for the gay community. For a special person like Fred Hillman, we should have a volunteer of the decade award! Thanks for being there for all of us, Fred!

We love you!
Sincerely,
Michael A. Haase
Most disagree with Lott’s attack

WASHINGTON — Anti-gay comments made by Majority Leader Trent Lott do not reflect the majority opinion in this country, says a new poll by the Human Rights Campaign.

"Senator Lott might be scoring points with religious political activists on the right, but his views don’t reflect those of a majority of American voters who believe in fairness and equality," said David M. Smith, communications director and senior strategist for the Human Rights Campaign.

The survey conducted by Lake Snell Perry asked 931 registered voters: "Trent Lott, the Republican Majority Leader, recently made a statement that said homosexuality is a sin and compared it to alcoholism and kleptomania. Others say that homosexuality is inherent and not a choice, and that all Americans should be treated equally and fairly by lawmakers. Which of these statements comes closer to your own opinion? Twenty-four percent said homosexuality is a sin and a disease; 55% said that homosexuality is inherent and that all Americans should be treated fairly; 14% said neither or both; 4% said don’t know; and 3% refused to answer. These numbers cut across partisan lines with 62% of democrats, 57% of independents and 41% of republicans saying that homosexuality is inherent and gay Americans should be treated equally. 18% of democrats, 21% of independents, and 35% of republicans saying that homosexuality is a sin.

"Strong majorities of democrat and independent voters and a plurality of republican voters do not share Lott’s views," said Smith, who oversees polling for HRC.

"This poll suggests that there could be a price to pay with key middle ground voters who object to the Republican Congressional leadership’s stepped up campaign year attacks on gay people," cautioned HRC political director Winnie Stachelberg.

The Human Rights Campaign is the largest national lesbian and gay political organization, with members throughout the country. It effectively lobbies Congress, provides campaign support, and educates the public to ensure that lesbian and gay Americans can be open, honest, and safe at home, at work, and in the community.

CA Guard must admit gays

SAN FRANCISCO – In late June a California judge ruled against the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy for gays in the military and ordered the California National Guard to open its ranks to homosexual members.

San Francisco Superior Court Judge David Garcia, said California’s national guard was violating the state constitutional rights of gays, lesbians and bisexuals by banning them from service under “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.”

“This is a total victory for the gay, lesbian and bisexual community,” said Lt. Andrew Holmes, the gay National Guard officer who brought the suit after he was discharged in 1995 for declaring his homosexuality. “I’m thrilled that the court has upheld the rights of gay men and lesbians. The guard must now open state active duty jobs to everyone, regardless of sexual orientation.” Garcia’s order said the Equal Protection Clause of California’s constitution prohibited the state National Guard from barring members who had been discharged from federal military service under “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.”

Specifically, he ordered the state military organization to stop treating such federal discharges as “for cause” terminations — a policy which equates dismissals for sexual orientation with those for criminal behavior.

California National Guard spokesman Lt. Col. Doug Hart said the organization planned to appeal the judge’s decision, which he said ignored the legal obligation of the National Guard to follow the Pentagon’s lead. “We will definitely appeal,” Hart said. “I am unclear as to what he wants us to do. We are obligated by federal law to follow the federal guidelines for the National Guard.”

But gay rights supporters were upbeat, saying Garcia’s decision was an important strike against the controversial “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell, Don’t Pursue” federal policy on gays in the military. That policy allows homosexuals to serve in the military, but continues the long-time ban on homosexual acts and requires gay and lesbian service members to keep their sexual orientation private.

“There is a landmark ruling. It’s a wake up call to the Pentagon,” said Michelle Benecke, co-director of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, a Washington, D. C.-based advocacy group for gays in the military.

Elizabeth Scott, one of the lawyers who worked on Holmes’ case, said the ruling was an important step forward, although she noted that the complicated overlap between state and federal National Guard agencies could make enforcement difficult. State National Guard members can be “federalized” when needed for national emergencies — a move which could bring the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy back into force, she noted.

PFLAG Anchorage

by Fred Hillman

“Love Makes A Family” illustrates glbt families

“Love Makes A Family” is a collection of 20 photographs of gay, lesbian, bi, or transgendered families. The exhibit, in five copies, has been shown across the nation for several years, this summer in over twenty locations from Miami to Anchorage. Thanks to generous donors, the exhibit was displayed in Anchorage during June, under the sponsorship of PFLAG, GLSEN, Identity, Inc., and the AUUF.

Thanks to other donors (including Triangle Tours), one of the authors of the project, Peggy Gillespie, was able to travel to Alaska, where she presented a slide show talk at the Loussac Library. A week later she was the program for Identity’s monthly potluck. Ms. Gillespie and the photo exhibit then traveled to Fairbanks for Pride Weekend festivities there. The exhibit had been displayed at various sites in Juneau earlier this spring, and indeed it was activists there who alerted us in Anchorage that this would be a worthwhile undertaking.

Ms. Gillespie’s slides at the library were part of a public forum. Following her talk four panelists presented their viewpoints supporting or opposing “gay families” and “gay marriage,” followed by lively discussion involving the audience, moderated by the astute and unflappable veteran politician Arliss Stuurgulisvski. The point of the event and its chief benefit were that the pro and con arguments were laid out clearly in what is likely to be a statewide debate during the next four months regarding Ballot Measure 2.

If you missed the photo exhibit, you may get a second chance. Ms. Gillespie has assured us that Family Diversity Projects, its distributor, will let it stay in Alaska until mid-October as a donation. Venues have not yet been chosen.

The sponsors thank all those who made this project possible.

Fred Hillman is a retired physician in Anchorage

Would you sell the colors of your sunset and the fragrance of your flowers, and the passionate wonder of your forest for a creed that will not let you dance?

—Helene Johnson

Stars to perform at Gay Games

Grace Jones, Jimmy Somerville, Right Said Fred, Bjorn Again, The Weather Girls (accompanied by hundreds of dancing sailors) and transsexual Eurovision song contest winner Dana International are some of the stars set to perform at the opening and closing ceremonies of the Gay Games this summer in Amsterdam.

The performances take place at the Amsterdam Docklands. “The huge halls of the Docklands will be turned into a Palace of Swing with large stages, an indoor luna park and even a complete indoor street of entertainment,” organizers said.

For more information or tickets, phone 011-31-20-420-0200.

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Out of My Mind

by F. Kenneth Freedman

I've had people ask me about this Harry Hay sentiment I often quote. You remember? Harry Hay, considered to be one of the founders of the homophile movement in America, said something like: what we have in common with straight people is what we do in bed, and that it's everything else that's different (italics added). Interestingly, we homo-oriented people frequently sense something about ourselves that is different — separate from the sexual manifestation of our relationships. Somehow we are "other." A lot of people, looking back on their childhood, knew they felt "other." They didn't always identify this feeling of "otherness" as homo-orientation, but they do remember that there was something distinctly different about them that set them apart from their fellows. It is the immanent quality of this "otherness" that distinguishes it from other traits such as having red hair, or braces, or being left-handed, for example.

Pre-sexual kids who internalize messages that their "otherness" is bad — whether or not that "otherness" is about being homo-oriented — will probably have some tough adjustments to make growing up as well as in adulthood. Personally, I believe "otherness" is a blessing and a source of rich personal values, and that this "otherness" is to be affirmed, supported, and explored.

This has relevance for homo-oriented people in that being "other" frequently means learning to edit out comments that might emphasize the "otherness" too much. Closet psychology [what I call Post-Traumatic Closet Syndrome (PTCS)] is learned from an early age and research consistently shows that its effects can emulate Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a fairly common problem for adults who have been oppressed through childhood.

"Otherness" needs to be recognized and nurtured if homo-oriented teens are to find their place in society, much less in intimate relationships later in life with themselves, their friends, and their spirituality. They need to know that they are affirmed as valid and valued humans, which means intergenerational contact, sharing of stories, culture, and mythology. Ironically, when we share our history it's called recruiting, while hetero-oriented mentor programs that foster intergenerational contact call it nurturing.

The opinion that it's "everything else that's different" relates to fundamental differences in ways of knowing. Harry Hay noted a significant difference in the ways in which homo- and hetero-oriented people viewed the world — a difference in consciousness which extended far beyond sexuality. He believed that we possess a special spiritual quality which, if fully realized, could be channeled for the betterment of humanity.

Everyone is "other" in some way, and, for many people, that otherness can be the source of shame or pride. It is the ability to celebrate the otherness that creates a space for sharing — what might be called "power with" (interconnectedness, process) rather than "power over" (dominion, patriarchy).

A footnote: if we believe the Buddhist teachings, dualistic thought is an illusion. We are all One.

Samsara is the eternal cycle of birth, suffering, death, and rebirth. Nirvana is the emancipation from ignorance, as well as all attachment, in which one achieves an ideal condition of rest, harmony, stability, and joy. Winston Leyland in Queer Dharma put it this way: "If, as many Buddhist schools maintain, samsara and nirvana are the same; if, as the great 13th century Japanese Ancestor Dogen taught, practice is already enlightenment, then the elements of that practice must encompass all that is human — without the dualistic distinctions of good and evil, the elect versus the damned, or gay versus straight. The sky is big enough for all the clouds to pass."

If we carry that thought — that dualism is an illusion — a little further, there are some interesting possibilities: If there is no good versus evil, gay versus straight, life versus death — if "It" and "We" are all One — then xenophobia would be about fear of the different aspects and emotions and spiritual parts of oneself; cultural diversity would then be about celebrating the richness of our common human, if different, bonds; and homophobia, taken literally, would refer to the fear of things that are the same as ourselves — meaning a fear of things that are homogeneous (like us), i.e., homophobia in straight people would be fear of themselves.

Our interconnectedness helps us transcend our differences, and provides the environment for us to flourish mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically.

That same interconnectedness creates a space where those very differences can be nurtured and celebrated, where our compassion can be awakened, and where our lives become intriguing, mysterious, spiritual, erotic, and worthwhile.

F. Ken Freedman is a counselor with a private practice in Anchorage, a former co-editor of the NorthView, and a gay activist. © 1998 F. Kenneth Freedman.
Queer Science

by Simon LeVay, Ph.D.

Mention the topic of gay and lesbian academics, and one thinks first of “queer theorists,” the highly visible band of writers, philosophers, and critics who are engaged in what they claim is a radical overhaul of queerdorm. There are plenty of gay people on the scientific side of academe too, but they’re mostly unknown to the gay community, because only a few of them conduct research that is directly relevant to gay issues.

To show that there are successful gay and lesbian role models in the sciences, I’ll highlight two who are known to me personally, Kerry Sieh and Kate Hutton. Both of them conduct research on earthquakes at Caltech’s famed Seismological Laboratory. That field is curiously appropriate for gay people, because one of the earliest theories of earthquakes (put forward by the Roman emperor, Justinian) held that they were caused by too much gay sex. By establishing the natural causes of earthquakes, seismologists are freeing us from the blame for all that death and destruction.

I know Kerry Sieh particularly well because we have collaborated on a forthcoming book about earthquakes and volcanoes, titled The Earth in Turmoil (Oxford University Press, August 1998). A Professor of Geology, Kerry is best-known for his research on the San Andreas fault, which he began as a graduate student in 1975. He had the idea — it seemed crazy to his advisors — of cutting trenches across the fault and looking for the telltale disturbances of the soil caused by past earthquakes. After years of painstaking work under the desert sun, Kerry succeeded in his goal: he found the traces of twelve great earthquakes. By carbon-dating organic debris in the soil, he established the dates of the earthquakes: they have occurred on average once every 130 years for the past 1500 years. His research forms the basis for current estimates of the likelihood and probable location of future earthquakes. It was a key factor in persuading the City of Los Angeles, in 1980, to order the strengthening of old masonry buildings. This retrofitting program saved many lives in the 1994 Northridge earthquake, and is likely to save many more in the future.

Kate Hutton supervises the staff that monitors ongoing seismic activity. This is done with a network of seismographs stationed across Southern California and linked to Caltech’s computers via landlines or satellite links. Working from the output of the seismographs, Kate’s group can rapidly determine the location and magnitude of each earthquake, the fault on which it occurred, and the direction and distance that the rock faces slipped against each other. This information, accumulated over many years, will improve our ability to predict Southern California’s seismic future and to focus mitigation efforts where they are most needed. Kate is also heavily involved in public education. She has become known affectionately as the “Earthquake Lady,” because she appears on television after every significant earthquake to explain exactly what happened and to predict the likely sequence of aftershocks.

Both Kerry and Kate are well-known in Los Angeles’ gay enclave, West Hollywood. At last year’s Gay Pride, Kate got the most applause of any celebrity as she rode down Santa Monica Boulevard in the back of an antique convertible. Kerry has helped the tiny city-within-a-city recognize and come to terms with its own seismic hazards — in particular, an active fault that runs right along the Sunset Strip.

Although seismology — and scientific research in general — is hardly a “stereotypical” occupation for gay people, some of the same qualities that make for a successful queer also make for a successful scientist. One such quality is the ability to trust one’s own judgment and follow one’s own aspirations, regardless of what orthodox opinion may dictate. Many gays and lesbians develop this independence of mind as a consequence of a difficult coming-out process, and can later apply it usefully in their professional lives.

Another valuable trait is a sincere desire to benefit humanity — a desire that often arises from a gay person’s own experience of oppression and struggle. This trait is vital to a scientist, for all scientists face the problem of how to pick relevant questions to study out of the bottomless barrel of human ignorance. Nothing can be a better guide than a scientist’s own empathy with the human condition.

Simon LeVay, Ph.D., is well-known for his research on the “gay brain.” He is the author of The Sexual Brain, City of Friends (with Elisabeth Nonas), and Queer Science (MIT Press, 1996), and the biomedical thriller Albrick’s Gold (Richard Kaak books, 1997). He can be reached at <SLeVay@aol.com>. For more Queer Science, visit <http://www.gay.net>.
Disney boycott fizzles!
The Chairman of Disney, Mr. Michael Eisner, has called charges by the religious right that his company promotes an anti-Christian agenda ridiculous. He further stated the boycott “Hasn’t had any financial effect on the Company.” The bigots voted at their convention to boycott Disney because they gave same sex partner of employees health benefits the same as odd sex partners, and because of them allowing “Gay Days” at their parks. They also objected because Disney didn’t include in its Pocahontas film the supposed fact that she converted to Christianity. Mr. Eisner responded to this last with “...I say they are nuts. They really are!” I for one like the cartoon which appeared in the Anchorage Daily News a short time back which showed Disney’s mouse and duck with labels of Mickey and Donald, and had Pat Robertson pictured with the label Goofy!

Come on in, the water’s fine
I note with interest that more and more mainline travel firms are courting the gay dollar. British Airways is not only becoming an active player in the market with ads directed to gays and lesbians, they have joined with a national Visa card program, The Rainbow Card, to become the official airlines of the card. The ranks of IGLTA, the International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association is swelling with new major travel concerns who want a piece of the fruit pie. (My words; I’m allowed!)

Rock Hudson slept here
The U.S. National Trust has formed a panel to identify and interpret “Gay and Lesbian Places.” Their task is to explore and preserve places significant to gay and lesbian history. This is a first for a U.S. preservation group. They hope to identify sites, buildings, and neighborhoods associated with historical and present day figures, events, and lives in gay America.

Holland may have the answer
Holland has a new program called “Registration of Partnership” which recognizes gay and lesbian couples. Why couldn’t this work for Alaska? Rather than “desecrate the institution of marriage,” have a registration program where I and my same sex partner of 27 years could derive the benefits associated with marriage without the so called “trampling on tradition.” Since neither he nor I have living parents either of us would have the right to act on behalf on the other in an emergency and enjoy spousal benefits of inheritance and insurance like opposite sex couples. This seems to me to be a sensible alternative to insisting that we be married.

Gay Games
Some operators are showing “sold out” on their doors, but there are still good bargains for the Gay Games in Amsterdam next month. A good number of our local community are making the trip to become part of this mega event. If you still want to go, check with Greg at Triangle Tours. I understand that he has some space available yet.

Hope you don’t mind
I thought you might enjoy some news and views from around our world this month, as well as my step up onto the soapbox on the marriage issue. I do feel strongly that all of us are entitled to equal benefit under the law. What title that benefit, if equal, goes by seems to me much less important. Next month I have promised my beautiful everloving to take him to Costa Rica for our 27th anniversary. Will try and offer some hot info on things to do and places to go in the coming months. Thanks for reading!

Bob De Loach, President of Apollo Travel, BG Tax and Accounting, The Electric Doctor, Apollo Real Estate, and Lock Doc, is an insurance broker and still finds time to write novels for adults, take part in community theater, write this column, and be active in the community.
Volunteer Spotlight

Victoria Shavers

Our volunteer for this month is a woman with energy to burn. Maybe being born way back in Roanoke, Virginia has something to do with it, but whatever it is... she moves fast and is in constant motion. Her family moved to Anchorage in 1971 and she decided to tag along.

Victoria is currently attending UAA, majoring in Economics with a minor in Public Policy. She's the chairperson for the lesbian/bisexual/gay/transgendered club on campus, called THE FAMILY... right... all in caps, cause it means they are vocal and an important part of this school's curriculum.

To help pay for her education, Victoria (never Vicky) works for Family First Dentistry as a sometimes receptionist and also in Patient Relations... in some circles that may mean that if your brother can't pay for that filling... it's free!

Her interests are many and varied, including the outdoors, or maybe just attending a good art movie at the Capri or Cyrano's. She's involved in the arts and a ferocious reader. Or maybe just hanging out with good friends (her extended family) over a cup of coffee. But it's not all mental, as she's a winner on the tennis courts too.

But, what shines through all this is a wonderful personality, a lust for life and her interest in what others think. We definitely have a young winner here, and we all salute you, Victoria.

"It [my ongoing three-year relationship] has made a big difference in my life. Before I met him, I didn't have healthy relationships. I used to scream: 'Rescue me! Rescue me!' And he didn't. He was wise enough to let me rescue myself. What a concept!"
— Gay Olympic diver Greg Louganis to the San Francisco Examiner, March 31.
No on 2 hits the ground running
(and the rest of us join in the fun)

Volleyball season ended months ago. So long ago that the pinpoints spikes and the errant serves have all melted into one vague memory of trying to keep a white leather ball from landing on the brightly illuminated hardwood floor. As it turned out, the challenge of picking a date to have the post-season party was more taxing than the 14-game season.

Now it’s late June, and former players and fans are rummaging through eclectic potluck offerings reminiscing about events we can hardly remember. Luckily, the discussion at the large kitchen table soon turns to current events. We discuss weather. There is only so much you can say about overcast skies. So we quickly move on to politics. Mary asks what we think will happen in November when Alaskans take to the polls to vote on the same sex marriage issue.

Rather than engage in the subject, several women abandon their seats and wander towards the living room. I’m curious to know why they leave. “Don’t you care?!” I want to say. “Doesn’t it make you angry that your straight neighbors may amend the State Constitution to specifically discriminate against you?” But I sit.

And listen. And what I learn from the women who stay at the table is that they are not optimistic about the outcome of the vote. Nor are they looking forward to the campaign leading up to November 3. To my dismay, I find myself agreeing with them on both counts. Looking around the table, I recognize that many of us were active in 1993 during the Anchorage municipal ordinance battle. An exhausting first exposure to the political process. With so much of our identities at stake, it was hard to not be consumed and drained by the anger, the misunderstanding and the fear. Now here we were poised on the verge of an even bigger battle discussing whether we’d rather stay on the sidelines.

Which I knew wasn’t what lesbians and gay men were doing in Juneau. Or Fairbanks. To the contrary, both communities led the charge when it came to trying to keep a constitutional amendment off the ballot. And they almost succeeded. The memory gave me cause to reconsider my pessimism.

That and learning that while my volleyball buddies and I had been feeling sorry for ourselves, 28 energized individuals from across the state had been attending an intense weekend-long campaign training put on by the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund. In preparation for the ballot measure campaign, these individuals had created a 15-member steering committee, written a draft campaign plan and outlined a budget. They planned to hire five paid staff members. And to cultivate coalitions with other political groups, like the native organizations working on subsistence and the groups opposing the English only movement.

I also learned that the emphasis of the campaign will be to reach voters on a personal level — to appeal to our neighbors one on one. To let them know that voting against the Constitutional amendment does not legalize gay marriage. In fact, a final resolution in Jay and Gene’s case will probably take several years. At issue here is whether it’s okay for the legislature to put something in the Alaska Constitution to say that one group isn’t protected by the Constitution the way other groups are.

It seems like an obvious conclusion but it will take plenty of education to get there. The steering committee for No on 2 (the new name of the group opposing the marriage amendment) hopes to solicit $600,000 to $850,000 and 5,000 volunteers. To kick off the campaign, No on 2 will organize a large event in late July or early August. In the meantime, they are soliciting contributions and volunteers to join in the effort. Contributions for No on 2 may be sent to: Alaskans for Civil Rights, P O Box 240751, Anchorage, AK 99524. Volunteers should contact Dan Carter at 274-9226 or e-mail <alaskadan@aol.com>.

Buoyed by the efforts of dedicated folks who I don’t even know, I decided that it was time to get out on the court. Because the one thing worse than losing in November would be to not even try.

Jen Kohout lives, works and occasionally mows the lawn in Anchorage, Alaska.
Tony Blair pushes gay rights in Britain

by Chandler Burr

LONDON — The administration of Tony Blair, Britain's young Prime Minister, contains the first openly gay and lesbian cabinet ministers in British history. Blair's team has pushed gay rights legislation in Parliament. It has even overseen a striking change in policy at the secret services: Sir Gerald Warner, the government's security coordinator, disclosed this year that the foreign intelligence agency MI-6 "has sent its first homosexual couple abroad."

Blair's support of gay rights is, in part, simple political horse trading: His "New Labor" Party made campaign promises to gay voters, and now he is fulfilling them, albeit slowly. Another factor appears to be personal conviction. “Tony and [his wife] Cherie have many gay friends, and, very much like Bill and Hillary Clinton, they are of the generation that simply believes this is right,” says Angela Mason, executive director of Stonewall, Britain's largest gay and lesbian lobbying group.

But it is unclear whether Blair is leading a national trend, or merely following it. All of Britain's political parties are moving in the same direction. William Hague, the new leader of a Conservative Party desperately seeking a more up-to-date image, has numerous gay friends and openly supports gay causes. So does Paddy Ashdown, head of Britain's third major party, the Liberal Democrats. “In a certain sense [Blair has] gotten on our bandwagon, not vice versa,” says John Lyttle, a gay columnist for the Independent newspaper.

Before the May 1997 election turned out the Conservatives and swept Labor to power, Jack Straw, now Blair's Home Secretary, promised in a speech that if Labor won the election, it would equalize the age of consensual sex for gays (now 18) and heterosexuals (16); reform immigration law to legalize foreign partners of gay Britons; repeal Margaret Thatcher's Section 28 education law which forbids the "promotion" of homosexuality; and pass legislation focusing on anti-gay hate crimes and discrimination.

At about the same time, Cherie Booth, Blair's wife and a respected employment discrimination lawyer, was representing Lisa Grant, a lesbian railroad worker who wanted the railroad to extend the same benefits to her domestic partner that it would to a spouse; this would be like attorney Hillary Rodham Clinton taking a major gay rights case to the Supreme Court.

Today one of Blair's top ministers — Chris Smith, secretary of state for culture, media, and sport — is openly gay. So are junior Environment Minister Angela Eagle and Minister Without Portfolio Peter Mandelson, who ran Blair's campaign and is one of his closest advisers. The immigration change has been made — for the first time, gay partners of British subjects can immigrate on exactly the same basis as heterosexual married partners. And the equalization of the age of consent for heterosexual and homosexual relations is expected to pass this summer.

Opinion polls indicate that most Britons disapprove of homosexuality, yet favor equal rights for gays and lesbians in employment and housing. In a survey last November, 57 percent said children should not be taught that gay relationships are "as valid as" straight ones. But the same poll found 64 percent support for gays in the military, 76 percent in favor of gay teachers, and 69 percent support for equal inheritance, pension, and tenancy rights.

Similar attitudes prevail in the United States: according to a 1996 poll, 56 percent of Americans believe homosexual relations are "always wrong," yet 80 percent or more favor equal rights in housing and job opportunities for gays and lesbians.

But faced with a similar electorate, Blair has avoided the debacle that surrounded President Clinton's "don't ask, don't tell" policy on homosexuals in the military. Like Clinton, Blair has balked at the elimination of a ban on homosexuality in the military. The main test case is a lawsuit by Terry Perkins, a gay officer appealing dismissal from the Royal Navy. The suit is now before the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg, and Blair's lawyers are arguing against Perkins. Blair explains this position with the phrase "Legislation, not litigation," meaning that he believes social change should come through the political process, not the courts.

With such legerdemain, Blair has held onto gay support without creating a backlash from the right. When his wife's lesbian client Lisa Grant was handed a defeat, Blair publicly welcomed it and said that Grant should pursue her agenda through electoral politics. In fact, British gays and lesbians had already done so — by voting for him.


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— Alex Levine

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PO Box 200070, Anchorage AK 99520
Gay & lesbian Mormons announce keynote speaker

Portland, OR — Affirmation, an international association of gay and lesbian Mormons, will hold its 20th annual conference in Portland, Oregon, from September 4 to 7. The keynote speaker will be Chris Kimball, a law professor at Boston University. Chris is a multi-generation Mormon with a genealogy that includes past church president Spencer Kimball. He has been involved with the church all of his life, including service as a bishop. At the same time, Chris describes himself as “Christian Mormon” and “semi-observant,” and his various heterodox views include strong support for same-sex marriage.

Chris will share his views on sexual ethics where a “legal and lawful” marriage is not possible or not chosen. “Whatever your personal belief about the importance of marriage,” Chris states, “we can all recognize that many people, both hetero- and homosexual, do in fact reject the legal definition of marriage as a defining requirement for an intimate relationship. The discussion of what is good touch or bad touch, better relationship or worse, healthy sex or damaging sex, does not have to begin and end with ‘outside legal marriage is bad.’ It happens that many of the people wrestling with these questions in the 1990’s are homosexual, in a world where the law does not (yet) recognize same-sex marriage, but the issue is not at all limited to gay men and women.”

Chris Kimball was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, in 1955, and grew up in Missoula, Montana, and Madison, Wisconsin. His formal education was at Harvard University and the University of Chicago. He is a lawyer, having practiced law for ten years and taught full-time for five years. He is Mormon by family, history, experience and belief. He was baptized at eight, served a mission to South Korea at age 19, and has served as a Ward Clerk, Elders Quorum President (twice), High Councillor (twice), and Bishop. He and Linda Hoffman have been married since 1977. Together Chris and Linda have three children.

“This topic is especially relevant for gay and lesbian Mormons,” observes Rick Fernández, Affirmation’s Public Relations Director. “The church denies us religious marriage, while also campaigning strongly against civil marriage, and then condemns our relationships as immoral because we’re not married. We need to remind ourselves that our relationships are good and valuable independently of what the church currently teaches.”

Scott MacKay, Affirmation’s Executive Director, noted that “our annual conference is a time when people within and without the Mormon church come together to discuss topics that affect nearly every family in our religious tradition, yet are virtually never addressed openly in a positive, uplifting manner by our church leaders. The indifference and open hostility that some of them continue to express about homosexuality have deeply hurt both individuals and families. We are doing our part to help educate and provide for our own spiritual and social needs.”

Information about Affirmation’s conference can be found on the Internet at <www.affirmation.org>, by phone at (503) 288-2037, or by writing to PO Box 80654, Portland OR 97280-1654.

Affirmation: Gay and Lesbian Mormons, is a nonprofit educational fellowship group serving gay and lesbian Latter-day Saints, their families and friends since 1977. It is a place for open, honest dialogue, friendship and support. All are welcome, regardless of gender, orientation or religious affiliation. Affirmation may be contacted by mail at PO Box 46022, Los Angeles CA, 90046, by phone at (213) 285-7251, or through the Internet at <http://www.affirmation.org>.

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Australian tourism officials chase pink dollar

The Australian Tourist Commission (ATC) and state tourism bureaus have launched an international campaign to attract gay visitors to the Blue Mountains, Hunter Valley and locations in Victoria, Queensland and the Northern Territory.

Gay-themed photos from the campaign appear in the new Ferrari Guides, the current Genre magazine and in public-relations material for the 2002 Gay Games in Sydney.

“Australia was the first nation whose government travel organization recognized the value of the gay travel market,” said ATC Managing Director John Morse. “The roots of Australia’s interest in gay travel date back over a decade with the gay Mardi Gras.

“They spend more than the average tourist,” Morse said. “You’re basically talking two-income families with lots of disposable income and no kids. They are part of the high-yield market that we are after.”

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Classics of world cinema

Film Gallery, Anchorage's Reel Alternative, presents “Classics of World Cinema: A Directors Showcase” a ten-week series showing daily at 5:30 p.m. at Cyrano's Film Gallery Cinema, 417 D Street, Anchorage. Telephone 562-0207. All presentations in 35mm. Special festival admission $5.

July 24 - 30 The Classic Films of Peter Weir: Director of "The Truman Show" Picnic At Hanging Rock: The Director's Cut 1975. Directed by Peter Weir. Rated PG. 103 minutes. Three students and a school teacher disappear on an excursion to Hanging Rock, in Victoria, on Valentine's Day, 1900. Widely (and incorrectly) regarded as being based on a true story, the movie follows those that disappeared, and those that stayed behind, but it delights in the asking of questions, not the answering of them. Based on the novel by Joan Lindsay. New 35mm print.

July 31 - Aug. 6 The Last Wave 1977. Directed by Peter Weir. Rated PG. 106 minutes. A Sydney lawyer has more to worry about than higher-than-average rainfall when he is called upon to defend five Aboriginals in court. Determined to break their silence and discover the truth behind the hidden society which he suspects lives in his city, the lawyer is drawn further, and more intimately, into a prophecy that threatens a new Armageddon, wherein all the continent shall drown.

From India and the UK:

August 7 - 13. The River 1951. Directed by Jean Renoir. Unrated, suitable for all audiences. 92 min. This sumptuous Technicolor story is based on Rumer Godden's memoir and tells of a young British girl's coming of age in 1920s India. Filmed entirely in India along the banks of the Ganges, The River was director Renoir's first color feature; the cinematography is by his nephew Claude. Offering an intriguing view of the beauty and friendship of the Indian way of life, The River is a gorgeous movie appropriate for viewers young and old. (Notes from the Criterion Collection).

From Germany:

August 14 - 20 Blue Angel 1930. Directed by Joseph von Sternberg. Unrated. 107 minutes. Fascinating film classic with Emil Jannings as a stuffy professor who falls blindly in love with a cabaret entertainer named Lola-Lola (Marlene Dietrich), who ruins his life. This is the role that made Dietrich an international star and introduces the song “Falling in Love Again.” Shot simultaneously in German and English versions, the German version which is presented here is considered the superior of the two. With English subtitles.

August 21 - 27 Mexico. The Exterminating Angel 1962. Directed by Luis Bunuel. Unrated. 91 minutes. After a lavish dinner party, the guests find themselves mysteriously unable to leave the room... and over the next few days all the elaborate pretenses and facades that they've built up by virtue of their position in society collapse completely as they become reduced to living like animals. In Spanish with English subtitles.

August 28 - Sept. 3 Spain. That Obscure Object Of Desire 1977. Directed by Luis Bunuel. Rated R. 100 minutes. Just after boarding a train, much to the surprise of his fellow passengers, a young man pours a bucket of water over a young girl on the platform. Over the next few hours he explains (and we see in flashback) how he became obsessed by her (so much so that he failed to notice that she was played by two different actresses, representing different sides of her personality), and how she tantalized him, but would never allow him to satisfy his desire for her. In Spanish with English Subtitles.

All presentations in 35mm. Special festival admission $5.
Lee Lynch’s new novel, *Rafferty Street*, has all the elements readers loved in earlier books like *Toothpick House*, *Dusty’s Queen of Hearts Diner*, and *Morton River Valley*: humor, optimism, emotional depth, a lot of flirting, a little sex, and a satisfying ending. *Rafferty Street* also has 90’s-style updates: a Gen-X contingent of characters, complete with leather and tattoos; political threats from the New Right; struggle over race and culture; people dealing with AIDS. Though her characters and plot lines have adjusted to changing times, Lynch has maintained her distinctive style. Lynch is short on description and long on action. Her dialogue is quick, witty, and often pointed. Tensions rise and break like ocean waves, motivating readers to turn the page.

*Rafferty Street* catches up with Annie Heaphy, the protagonist of Lynch’s popular first novel *Toothpick House*, twenty years later. Annie at 22 wore a boyish cap, drove a cab, and looked for love in lesbian hangouts on the wrong side of town. Annie at 42 still wears a cap, but now she drives a van which takes disabled workers to their jobs and as a recovering alcoholic, she sips Cokes at gay dance clubs. Besides Annie, other *Toothpick House* characters — including Elly and Dusty, Peg, Paris, and Turkey — reappear, in some ways very changed and in other ways exactly the same as they were.

One factor which forces change on all the lesbian characters in *Rafferty Street* is the organized political effort of modern Christian fundamentalists. In Lynch’s earlier book, the lesbians suffered mostly at the hands of prejudiced employers or small-town bigots. Now gay men and lesbians not only endure the taunts of hoodlum neighbors and small-time vandals, but their most basic civil rights are threatened by laws and policies designed by a powerful conservative church.

Lynch’s characters are very real. She puts much effort into creating femmes as she does butches, which is a rare thing in lesbian literature. Lynch has always believed in the sexual magic of lesbian gender roles, and her beliefs have not wavered as butch-femme has gone from acceptable to unacceptable and back to acceptable again. *Rafferty Street* is full of powerful femmes. The femmes are the ones who make the decisions about whether sex will happen. They also seem to run their lives better than the butches do. Annie Heaphy, a butch, never settles into one living situation for very long, while Chantal, very femme, owns a home which she personally designed for beauty and comfort. Butch Dusty is temperamentally, and when her relationship grows shaky, she storms out of the diner she owns. Elly, Dusty’s femme partner, is just as upset as Dusty but she stays at the restaurant and keeps the food going out to the customers.

What’s best about *Rafferty Street* is Lynch’s willingness to take risks. It would be so easy for this prolific author to crank out carbon-copy novels once a year. Long-time Lynch fans, of which there are many, would tolerate formula fiction, and could seek comfort in a world which never changed, in the same way British soldiers used to take Jane Austen’s books into battlefields. But this book takes some daring angles. The trouble between Dusty and Elly is an example. A more cautious writer would be afraid to create the near break-up of Dusty and Elly, the lesbian community’s cornerstone couple. This is where Lynch’s age and experience are invaluable; she knows that her readers have aged along with these characters, and that we know that there is nothing so solid that the foundation can’t crack.

When I think of which ten books I’d take with me if I was banished to a desert island (I think of this often; like Lynch, I fear the fallout of church-powered public policy), I’d fill three slots with novels by lesbian writers. I’d take Jane Rule’s *The Young in One Another’s Arms*, Valerie Taylor’s *Prism*, and Lee Lynch’s *Rafferty Street*. All three authors face squarely the social struggles which might cause my exile, but more importantly, all three books would give me the faith, humor, strength, and optimism to fight my way back to where I belonged.

*Rafferty Street*, by Lee Lynch, is published by New Victoria and distributed by Inbook/LPG group. It is available in bookstores or by mail order (call 1-800-326-5297).
Arkansas family wins high school anti-gay harassment case

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) is hailing the historic agreement between the U.S. federal government and an Arkansas public school system as an important step towards protecting lesbian and gay youth in schools across the country.

The agreement — between the U.S. Education Dept.'s Office of Civil Rights and Fayetteville Public Schools — says that the Arkansas school district must take specific steps to handle various forms of sexual harassment, including "sexual harassment directed at gay and lesbian students," according to the agreement which was sent to the family's legal counsel, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund.

It came in response to a complaint brought by an openly-gay Fayetteville student, Willi Wagner, and his parents who charged that the local school system had failed to act after he was harassed repeatedly and beaten up by a gang of students.

"I see this as a very powerful tool to help parents, just like us, ensure a safe school environment for our children," said Willi's mother, Carolyn Wagner, who, with her husband Bill, worked closely with PFLAG (of which they are members) since 1996 to meet with federal officials on the issue.

"A mother has certain dreams for her children, and they always include that they be happy, healthy and safe," Wagner said. "Now, parents of gay and lesbian children have some kind of recourse."

Under the agreement, the Fayetteville public school system must overhaul its policies and procedures as well as staff and administrators.

This is the first time that new Title IX guidelines, issued last year, have been applied to sexual harassment directed at a gay or lesbian student. Title IX, of the Education Amendments of 1972, is a federal statute that bars sex discrimination, including sexual harassment. Schools must be in compliance with Title IX to receive federal funding.

"We are relieved to hear that the U.S. Department of Education is now making it clear to schools that they have an obligation to protect all of our children," said PFLAG Executive Director Kirsten Kingdon. "It is heart-wrenching for me to hear of the abuse that youth like Willi Wagner have to endure — from other students, as well as from administrators and teachers — just because of who they are," said Kingdon, a mother, grandmother and a former special education lawyer.

As a parent and community-based group, PFLAG fills a special niche in the work to make schools safer for gay and lesbian youth. Many of PFLAG's 400-plus chapters are engaged in "safe schools" activities at local high schools. These activities include teacher training on gay and lesbian youth and providing scholarships to gay and lesbian students.

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons, their families & friends and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity. Serving nearly 70,000 members, PFLAG affiliates are located in 400-plus communities in the U.S. and abroad. Contact them at 1101 14th St. NW, Suite 1030, Washington, DC 20005, (202) 638-4200, fax: (202) 638-0243, e-mail <info@pflag.org>.

Join Identity, Inc. at its celebrated Fourth Friday Potluck & Social. Bring soup, salad, entrée, deviled eggs, hors d'oeuvres, fruit, bread, dessert, chips, dip, pizza, etc. Identity provides tea, coffee, punch. Admission is free, but we cheerfully accept donations. Donations for the 4A's food bank are cheerfully accepted by The Food Fairie; why not bring a couple of cans or boxes of food with you.

Date: Friday, July 24 (not July 31)
Time: 6:30 p.m. doors open/socialize; 7:00 p.m. dinner; 7:30 p.m. announcements & program
Place: Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 3201 Turnagain Street
Program: Reggie Yeele, Denali Seed Company, planting perennials.
JUNEAU (AP) — Calling the measure a threat to public health, Democratic Gov. Tony Knowles vetoed a bill that would have criminalized the transmission of the virus that causes AIDS. The proposed offense, a felony, would have applied to people infected with HIV who voluntarily engaged in intimate contact with another person, even if the virus was not transmitted. People infected with the disease who donated blood or tissue also could have been charged.

"This bill is a threat to public health, is unnecessary and is simply an attack on those Alaskans who need treatment, compassion and confidence in our public health system — not prosecution," Knowles said before vetoing the measure in front of an audience of health officials and religious leaders in Anchorage. "Any action we take should criminalize behavior, not disease."

The measure was sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Robin Taylor, who is challenging Knowles, a Democrat, for the governor's mansion. "This bill does not criminalize the disease, it criminalizes irresponsible, fraudulent conduct that puts other people's lives at risk," said Taylor, R-Wrangell.

The crime would not have applied to a person who engaged in intimate contact with a consenting partner who was aware of the infection.

Appearing with Knowles at the news conference, state epidemiologist John Middaugh said effective control of the disease depends on the cooperation of people who are infected. The bill would have driven those people underground, Middaugh said.

Deputy Attorney General Cynthia Cooper said the state already has a law against reckless endangerment that could be used against people who deliberately or negligently spread the disease. Cooper said no such cases have been reported in Alaska.

Some of the religious leaders present accused Taylor of making the measure to capitalize on the public fear of AIDS. "We don't need to resort to the promulgation of hate and fear," Rabbi Harry Rosenfeld said.

Taylor strongly objected to that characterization, saying he had not made the measure a part of his campaign. "The only one that's selling hate-mongering is the governor and the people around him," Taylor said.

If Knowles calls the Legislature back for a special session on subsistence, lawmakers could try to override the veto.

Anchorage Daily News, P. O. Box 149001, Anchorage, AK 99514-9001 (fax 907-258-2157) (e-mail: <letters@pop.adn.com>.)

"Inside this big bull dyke beats the heart of a vicious queen. Musical theater has always been my dream. I know all the songs that Judy Garland ever recorded and can sing them — I'm really a big fag! I'm like one of those bear guys — a big papa bear."

— Dyke comic and actress Lea DeLaria to Out magazine, March issue.
Lesbian Notions

Democrats reach out

by Paula Martinac

In a recent and historic move, the Democratic National Committee (DNC) voted to require that state Democratic parties do outreach to lesbian and gay communities when selecting delegates for the national convention in the year 2000. Sexual orientation will now be given “priority of consideration” in the delegate selection process, along with race, ethnicity, age, and disability. (Gender parity was already required by the DNC.) This raises an important and sticky question: Do lesbians and gay men as a minority group need affirmative action? I believe that they do, but I’m concerned about who will get to represent and speak for our community.

First of all, I’m an unabashed liberal who is all for affirmative action policies. These policies, imperfect though they may sometimes seem, attempt to even up an uneven score by giving underrepresented communities a shot at the perks that many privileged white men have enjoyed for a long time. One of my fantasies is that affirmative action policies would be put into place in more institutions where they could really help — say, the U.S. Congress. Stipulations about gender parity and racial diversity in that august body could have a significant impact on many types of legislation.

Second, I do think that lesbians and gay men constitute an underrepresented minority, and I’m glad that the Democratic Party has officially recognized this. (How often have you wished there was a box to check “lesbian-gay” on the affirmative action forms that accompany job applications? My partner Katie has occasionally penned in “lesbian” under “other.”) Unlike groups such as African-Americans, Latinos, or the disabled, however, lesbians and gay men as a minority group have often been invisible because they blend into a lot of other groups. I’m sure that there have always been lots of lesbians and gays at both the Democratic and Republican conventions (and in the halls of Congress, for that matter), but the difference now is that individuals who are out and presumably politically in touch with the queer community will be enlisted. This is a big step and a much-needed one.

But here’s a caveat: The irony of receiving affirmative action from the DNC is that the lesbian and gay community itself could use a working affirmative action plan. Many of the most visible lesbian and gay leaders are still white, middle-class, able-bodied, and between the ages of 30 and 50. The members of the boards of directors of many of our organizations often have a similar background, though they tend to have even greater financial resources, since the ability to donate money and attract it continue to be important criteria in recruiting board members.

My first concern is that a majority of lesbian and gay delegates will come from this very narrow pool of activists. Jeff Sorel, the vice-chair of the DNC’s gay and lesbian caucus, for example (one of the people responsible for getting this historic motion passed) is one of the wealthiest white gay men in New York City. My second concern is that the issues the delegates choose to bring to the table will come from a white, middle-class, able-bodied, and of-a-certain-age perspective. And that doesn’t seem like affirmative action to me.

Okay, okay, you’re saying — so what? As long as some lesbians and gay men get their feet in the Democratic Party door, isn’t that an important start? Yes and no. The fact is, even the most politically progressive and well-intentioned people often get the issues wrong. On the New York stop of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force’s Families Tour, for example, a gay man of color pointed out that to talk about the rights of queer families as our community has been doing — that is, largely in terms of second-parent adoption and domestic partnership — obscures the reality of many queers of color, who may be raising a younger sibling, a niece, or a grandchild. Remember, too, the spin our community put on the issue of gays in the military — not as an economic and employment issue primarily affecting lesbians and queers of color, but as the God-given right of white men to be patriotic.

I’d like nothing better than to be proven wrong on this point and to find that the lesbian and gay delegates chosen by state parties represent a broad spectrum of our community. However, the delegate selection process tends to favor those with money and time, since it is a complicated maze that demands access to both of those. (For more information on the delegate selection process or to find out how to contact the Democratic Party in your state, call the DNC at 202-863-8000.) Prospective delegates need to be hooked into a presidential candidate’s local campaign office and become known to key players in that campaign. It’s clear that in order for a diversity of lesbian and gay delegates to happen, our community needs to make it happen.

Friends of the Klondyke Kontakt

The KK has a new e-mail address
klondykekontact@hotmail.com>
“What if we get phone calls?” my husband Paul says. “Then we’ll deal with them,” I say. “We’ll use them as educational opportunities, just like before.”

We’re talking about possible fallout of my letter to the editor of The Boston Globe. A couple of years ago, I’d written — and published — another letter to the same paper, proclaiming the Fourth of July a day of mourning for gay men and lesbians who do not enjoy the same rights as their fellow Americans. I got two phone calls on that one. The first was from a straight man on Cape Cod — I know he was straight because I asked him. He called very late at night, saying I had interrupted his morning coffee, so he wanted to interrupt my evening. He made several references to “you people,” placing all gays and lesbians in the same conceptual box in the way many of us try to make sense of those with whom we share the world. He was reasonably intelligent and we eventually discovered that we shared the same views, a la Rodney King (“Can’t we all just get along?”).

The second phone call was from an old college friend who saw my name in the paper and called on a whim to catch up. Together, Anita and I had trained a white rat — whom we had affectionately named “Wilbur” — to press a lever for food.

“This is different,” I tell Paul today about the letter I’m about to zip to the Globe by electronic mail. “It doesn’t criticize the entire American culture. It criticizes the paper for their use of a word.”

The word in question is “activist,” and I’d had my own private battles with it. I don’t particularly like the word because of the loud and intrusive picture it immediately and indelibly paints. Not to be simplistic or elementary, but the folks at American Heritage define “activist” as “A proponent or practitioner of activism,” for which they provide this insight directly above: “The theory, doctrine, or practice of assertive, often militant action, such as mass demonstrations or strikes, used as a means of opposing or supporting a controversial issue, entity, or person.”

Think Queer Nation; think ACT UP.

I’ve never considered myself an activist. If anything, I share more qualities with an in-activist. Truly, I live what I consider to be a conventional life, more or less watching those “controversial issues, entities, or people” unfold and buckle in on themselves in this highly contradictory and confused culture. Of course I take sides. But my passion expresses itself by staying to the sidelines, by wondering what will happen next.

Yet, I ask myself at least daily, “When I write and publish an essay such as this one, am I an activist?” When I openly talk about Paul in my workplace (my “real job”), am I an activist? When I write a letter to the editor because something pisses me off as a gay man, am I an activist? Writing is a political act, is it not?

The conflict goes deeper: though I fully recognize that Queer Nation and ACT UP helped to bring gay and lesbian civil rights into a new era, I read about their demonstrations with a sense that I — and gay people like me — was being grossly misrepresented in the media as an aggressive, don’t-screw-with-me rabble-rouser. But I also understood that their tactics ensured that people would hear The Message, that the media would flock to their activities because it made for good news. When it came down to the simple truths, the extreme forms of activism practiced by those groups were largely AIDS-driven. The gay population was in crisis; extremism seemed the only alternative.

And who was I to judge their tactics? After all, I wasn’t carrying “Silence=Death” banners. I wasn’t lying supine in health clinics and screaming “we’re here, we’re queer” until I was hoarse. Afraid my inactivity would be viewed as betrayal, I simply watched and often cringed at news reports for reasons I wasn’t quite sure of.

The recent Globe article in question portrayed the rain-washed, postponed Gay Pride parade that was supposed to have flitted its way through the streets of Boston the day before. The article itself “shed a favorable light on a resilient bunch of marchers,” I wrote to the anonymous editor. “But your subhead, ‘Activists walk route of postponed parade,’ panders to a simplistic public perception: namely, if I exhibit my gay pride in a parade or other public forum, then I am an activist.”

“Should we also consider,” I asked, “marchers in Fourth of July parades, from the Boy Scouts to the Board of Selectmen, to be American activists?” They are, after all, my reasoning went, exhibiting pride in
their “American-ness” by marching in a parade.

I could hear my opponents: “But Gay Pride Parades have ostentatious, often ridiculous drag costumes that refute the status quo — that’s the stuff of activism!”

But not long ago, I remember seeing a picture of Paul’s dad in a suburban Memorial Day parade. He’d pulled a huge top-hat over his head and nipples, cut out eye-holes in the hat so he could see, and drew a magic marker smiley-face and googly eyes on his fat naked belly. He certainly wasn’t Miss Divine, but the absurdity of his costume — on a holiday that commemorates the war-dead — wavered in the neighborhood of camp. The drag queen, I thought, was no more an activist than he was.

The point is this: by referring to those bold souls who marched the parade route despite the official parade’s postponement as “activists,” the Globe misrepresents who “we” are. (I use this collective first-person carefully and respectfully.) Their subhead collects us into a neat package that somehow becomes more conceptually manageable because of its simplicity, disregarding the fact that there were as many different reasons for marching on that wet day as there were marchers themselves. To presume the role of “activist” on any single person, regardless of their dress or appearance, was a gross mis-step of journalistic integrity.

Will the Globe publish my letter? Who knows? Publication was not the point.

If it does publish my letter, will I get phone calls? Oh, I hope so.

Britain lowers age-of-consent to 16

Britain’s House of Commons voted June 22 to lower the age of consent for gay-male sex to 16, bringing it in line with the laws for heterosexual and lesbian sex. The vote was 336 to 129.

An amendment that would have kept the gay age of consent at 18 when one person is in a position of trust or authority over the other was defeated 234 to 194.

The bill now moves to the House of Lords, the unelected upper house of Parliament, where it is expected to meet resistance from Anglican prelates.

“Theoretically, yes, the Lords could screw it up, though it is highly unlikely and almost unprecedented,” said Tim Teeman, editor of London’s The Pink Paper.

“Also, the government is looking at massive reform in the House of Lords, so the HOI would be unlikely — and unwise — to pick too much of a fight on this. But, yes, there will be some opposition.”

Correspondent Chris Granlund added: “Technically the Lords could suggest amendments, send it back for revisions, delay it, etc., but it would be almost impossible to block completely given that it passed with such a huge majority. It will be an interesting debate because the upper house is currently being stuffed with Blair-appointed ‘working peers’ [who] are not hereditary and ... have only become peers on the understanding that the upper house will be fundamentally reformed and democratized in the near future — in fact they have been appointed with the aim of voting the current Lords out of existence.”

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Press does justice to gay marriage

GALAAD Release

Articles in both the Star-Ledger on June 18 and The
Hackensack Record on June 21 highlighted the holy
union of Jon and Michael Galluccio in New Jersey
recently.

The Galluccios, who first made headlines for becoming
the first couple in the state to jointly adopt a child,
recently held a public marriage ceremony. Both newspapers
provided balanced, moving coverage of the occasion.

The Star-Ledger article begins, “All week, Jon Galluccio
has been taking care of all the usual errands befitting a
typical groom-to-be. He visited the tailor for a final fit-
ing. He dropped by the jewelry store to check on the
ring. He met with his priest. Then he checked in with the
local police to find out when the bomb-sniffing dogs
would be searching the church on Sunday morning.”

Reporter Matthew Futterman’s piece continues to say
that, “The Galluccio’s Holy Union, the first to be held at
their [Episcopal] parish, comes at a time when nearly
every religious denomination is wrestling with the issue
of gay marriage.”

The article quotes radical religious leader Anthony
Falzaran of Transformation Christian Ministries, an “ex-
gay” group, claiming God would not bless gay relation-
ships. The Ledger noted, “And yet, said the Rev. Kevin P.
Coffey of the Church of the Atonement, God will do just
when the Galluccios exchange their vows... ‘Right
now, I’m just hoping everything goes okay,’ Jon Galluccio
said.” Futterman concludes: “Spoken like a true groom.”

Meanwhile, The Record featured a touching Father’s
Day article by Ruth Padawer highlighting the relationship
between Michael Galluccio and his dad, Adolph Galluccio.
“Over the years, Adolph Galluccio, like any proud Italian-
American patriarch, has rejoiced at each of his children’s
weddings, till only his oldest son, Michael, remained.
Today will finally be Michael’s turn, but the ceremony
will not be of the sort Adolph Galluccio once imagined for his
boy,” it begins.

Padawer writes: “This is a story about a son and a father
who nearly lost one another, about love and the fight
for acceptance. It has not been an easy passage for any of
the Galluccios, least of all for Adolph, but it has been an
illuminating one.”

The moving story tells of Adolph’s and his wife Dot’s
feelings of being in the closet themselves to reclaiming
and embracing their son by accepting his sexual orienta-
tion, partner and children. The end of the article quotes
Michael: “It turns out he really is the dad I had when I
was a little kid: a conquer-the-world, limitless dad, some-
one I’ve come to really love and respect... He’s gone that
extra mile, for me...”

GALAAD (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation)
is a national organization that promotes fair, accurate
and inclusive representation as a means of challenging
discrimination based on sexual orientation or identity.

Officials protect sexual minorities

GAIN Press Release

PORTLAND, OR — Leaders of Oregon’s sexual minori-
ties met with Portland city officials at Portland City Hall
to re-sign a partnership agreement. The Partnership
Agreement says that the Portland Police Bureau accepts
responsibility for the protection of all citizens, “especially
as it applies to the special needs of the sexual minorities
community.”

Portland is the first major metropolitan city to have its
mayor, council members and police chief openly recog-
nize the special needs of the sexual minority community.
Sexual minorities are defined as individuals who self-
identify with a sexual orientation or gender identity.
The Sexual Minority Round Table (SMRT)
The SMRT helped conceive the historic Partnership
Agreement that was first signed October 11, 1994. The
SMRT is a forum where sexual minority leaders meet with
Portland Police Bureau and Multnomah County Sheriff
representatives to discuss the following:
* Crime trends and public safety concerns of the sexual
minorities communities
* Police/minorities community conflicts
* Portland Police and Multnomah County procedures
and policies which impact crime or fear of crime within
the Portland sexual minorities community
Sexual Minority Leaders:
Various leaders of Oregon’s sexual minorities spoke at
the re-signing of this historic agreement including:
* Jean Harris, Director of Basic Rights Oregon, an organ-
ization that helps businesses include sexual orientation
in their company’s non-discrimination policies. Basic
Rights Oregon also leads the fight against Lon Mabon
and the Oregon Citizen’s Alliance. The OCA is sponsoring an
anti-gay and anti-trans initiative this year.
* Lori Buckwalter, Director of It’s Time, Oregon, an orga-
ization that promotes civil rights initiatives concern-
ging gender identity. She serves on the Sexual Minorities
Round Table, and has been recommended by the Round
Table and appointed by Chief Charles Moose as the rep-
resentative of the Portland sexual minorities communities
to the Portland Chief’s Forum. “We hope to reconfirm the
promise and commitment we share equally, to work to-
together for the safety and dignity of every person in Port-
land. By improving communications through honest and
respectful dialogue, we can create a city that honors ev-
everyone who calls it home, and I believe there can be no
higher purpose for us all,” says Buckwalter.

For more information please e-mail Lori Buckwalter
<transgal@yahoo.com>.

Gender Advocacy Internet News (GAIN), is a free
Internet news service, brought to you courtesy of American
Educational Gender Information Service and It’s Time,
America!

Falling in love is great. Being in love is a disaster.
— Mario Puzo
Deep Inside Hollywood

by Romeo San Vicente

The heat is on

Much as was the case with her partner Ellen, actress Anne Heche has the weight of the queer world on her shoulders with the opening of 6 Days, 7 Nights.

Hollywood's been buzzing about the possibility of "mainstream" America's acceptance of a lesbian leading lady, especially one as outspoken as Anne. Her director, Ivan Reitman (Dave), expressed reservations about his casting choice soon after Heche's relationship with Ellen became public.

And audiences have been hooting at the trailer for 6 Days, specifically the part where Harrison Ford's character reaches down Anne's shorts to pull out a snake. Coincidence or no, you can't help but snicker when the voice-over says "journey to the most remote place known to man."

Ford's movies are expected to be winners, so fair or not Heche — who stated in a recent magazine interview that she eschews labels and is neither gay nor straight — could be blamed if the film performs poorly. Let's hope not.

Meanwhile, Ellen's groundbreaking show is being credited, sort of, for paving the way for the new NBC series Will and Grace, which features a gay character (Eric McCormack as "Will"). But creators and executive producers David Kohan and Max Mutchnick say they don't plan to make the "same mistakes" Ellen did, claiming the show is more about "sensibilities" than who's gay or straight. In other words, expect the gay characters (the supporting cast includes another queer character, played by Sean P. Hayes) to be asexual.

Kate goes down

Titanic leading lady Kate Winslet is being mentioned for the role of novelist Daphne deMaurier in the film version of the controversial biography which explores the author's bisexuality. The book details an affair between deMaurier and actress Gertrude Lawrence.

Winslet has played gay before: in the 1993 import Heavenly Creatures.

A new recruit?

Sony is developing the life story of the Village People, and guess who's being rumored as a candidate to play the construction worker? None other than heartthrob Brad Pitt.

While we're at it, how about some more inspired casting, like, say, Tom Selleck as the leather man and famous homophobe Mel Gibson as the cop?

Love, valour and controversy

Famed gay playwright Terrence McNally has caused an uproar with his upcoming play, Corpus Christi, which depicts Jesus as a homosexual who seduces one of his apostles. The play was canceled by the Manhattan Theatre Club over concerns about right-wing violence in opposition to the show, but at last word was back in production.

McNally's not wanting for work, though. Faye Dunaway is still trying desperately to get a film version of Master Class made, which features the actress as legendary opera singer Maria Callas. In an effort to increase the appeal to studios, Dunaway is lobbying for Al Pacino to play the role of Callas' lover, Aristote Onassis. Ari wasn't in the one-woman stage production, but McNally is willing to write the character into the film version.

St. Elmo's dyke

Allied Sheedy, who stars in this month's independent release High Art as a lesbian junkie, says she's flirted with homosexuality.

The film contains some graphic lovemaking between Sheedy and co-star Patricia Clarkson. Sheedy assures that the action is not simulated, and claims her husband of five years likes the fact that she's more attracted to women than men. Their marriage, however, is a monogamous one, Sheedy claims.

I'll tumble for ya, the movie

The venerable BBC has bought the rights to Boy George's autobiography, Take it Like a Man, with plans to adapt the book for the big screen.

Talk is of an $8.5 million budget, but no word yet on casting. It'll be interesting to see how the film deals with some of the more controversial assertions Boy makes in his book, such as the one that claims Bush frontman Gavin Rossdale is bi (which the hunky singer denies).

Versace does Cannes

The first film to deal with the murder of fashion designer Gianni Versace premiered recently at the Cannes Film Festival. Produced by Pan Am Pictures, The Versace Murder stars Franco Nero as the title character and Steven Bauer (Scarface) as alleged serial murderer Andrew Cunanan.

Romeo San Vicente, who is under consideration to play the Native American in the Village People movie, can be reached at <RSVicente@aol.com>.
Complaint by gay student triggers historic civil rights agreement

NEW YORK — In an important step in combating harassment of lesbian and gay students nationwide, the federal government reached agreement with the Fayetteville Public Schools in Arkansas on broad civil rights protections in the schools, according to the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. The “Commitment to Resolve,” entered into by the federal government and the school system, remedies an administrative complaint brought by a Fayetteville student, William Wagner.

Lambda Legal represented Wagner, now 17, and his parents, in a sex discrimination complaint to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) of the United States Department of Education. The complaint is the first filed under Title IX on behalf of a harassed gay student.

In June 1998, the OCR reached agreement with the Fayetteville Public Schools, calling for the district to “recognize the various forms of sexual harassment,” including “sexual harassment directed at gay or lesbian students.” Under the agreement, the school district must overhaul its policies and procedures and train faculty, staff, and students with written reports of progress to the OCR until June 1999.

Throughout 1995 and 1996, several students harassed Wagner in grades eight to 10 at his Fayetteville, Arkansas, school; the harassment escalated to a gay bashing by a gang that broke Wagner’s nose and bruised a kidney. Criminal charges resulted in probation for those students, but others at the school continued to sexually harass Wagner. After the school failed to address the on-going harassment, Wagner and his parents filed their OCR complaint in January 1997. The Wagners subsequently pulled William out of school in fear for his life.

Wagner’s mother, Carolyn, welcomed the agreement. “My heart broke when my son was so terribly abused, just for being himself. A mother’s dream for her children is that they be happy and healthy, and this includes being safe at school,” she said, adding, “This agreement with Fayetteville Schools, hopefully, will safeguard many parents’ dreams and protect their kids.”

OCR enforces compliance with Title IX, a federal statute that prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual harassment. In March of 1997, OCR released new Title IX guidelines for schools which, for the first time, made explicit reference to “gay or lesbian students” as also being covered by federal prohibitions against sexual harassment.

“This is the first case in the nation under the new Title IX guidelines’ explicit coverage of sexual harassment directed at gay students,” said Lambda Staff Attorney David S. Buckel. “School principals who question whether sexual harassment of gay students is illegal will learn a big lesson from this breakthrough. And now, more lesbian and gay students may be able to finish high school,” he said.

Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund
The Amazon Trail

Gays and aging parents

by Lee Lynch

Oh joy! It's time for gay boomers to deal not only with the right wing, the epidemic of breast cancer, HIV, the greenhouse effect, aging bodies and mass downsizing, but old parents! Is this the true measure of being grown ups — watching the onset of parental infirmity, making life care decisions, learning about mortality another hard way? Wake me when it's over, pleeeze!

Our friends Dot and Dotty, whom we sometime call Dot and Dottier, sometimes Dot and Dash, have been living with Dot's mom for years. Mom was sweet and warm and very old. She just passed on and will leave a hole in all of our lives.

I don't know another couple, gay or straight, who've done what the Dots have — made that commitment to keep an old and ill parent at home. Mom went everywhere with them. If she couldn't go, at least one of them stayed with her. Mom never went into a nursing home. She never even had to go to a hospital.

Dot and Dotty received incredible help from a Hospice team. “It's one of the few non-judgmental groups available to help us,” Dot told me. “They were really interested in every family member and happy that Dotty and I would remain a family unit. The Hospice Chaplain said it was a privilege to head the graveside service. Her support was really valuable — the spiritual part of care is all too often denied to our people.”

Could I do what they've done? No way. Not that my own family doesn't deserve it. Not that I don't want the best for those who raised and tried to nurture me. Good intentions simply can't translate into good deeds for many of us.

The reasons? Personality, closets, distance, bad history, the blessing of abler siblings, work responsibilities — there are so many reasons I can't do what Dot and Dotty have done.

It wasn't just the constant care that was difficult. There were lesbian gatherings to which Dot, Dottie and Mom simply could not go, where an invalid non-gay mother was equivalent to a boy child. They'd graciously stay away, since Mom couldn't be left alone and they didn't have the means to hire a mom-sitter even if they could find one who was trustworthy.

When they did bring Mom to an event, I was surprised to see so many people, of all ages, unversed. Perfectly pleasant women and men would ignore Mom entirely, or greet her and then forget she existed. True, Mom didn't have much to say, but a hint went a long way, and an interested voice, whether Mom could make out all the words or not, put a big smile on her face.

I could take care of my buddy Norma. In her final months she went from home to hospital to foster care, to assisted living and finally to a rehabilitation facility. Though for the last six months I lived five hours away, I visited my lesbian “parent” about every six weeks and called daily. As part of an informal support network of Norma's lesbian friends I took her shopping, pushed her wheel chair, filled her oxygen, helped her in the bathroom and performed a dozen little tasks that I'd be less comfortable doing for any blood relative. Between the telephone and e-mail I was even able to participate in planning her care. What goes around comes around. My younger cousin does for my mother what I did for Norma.

Of course it works both ways. I know a queen, an only child, who hasn't seen his parents since they found out he was gay. Won't they need him, I ask when he guesses them to be close to ninety. “They can deal with it” he says. But he doesn't know how he'd respond to a dying plea for forgiveness. Abandoned children of non-gay parents can get pretty hungry for love whenever it comes.

I need to take care of myself. But it's a source of much self-flagellation — not being willing to sacrifice Lover, home, roots, career and, yes, closet, to help a parent feel more secure, to return the caretaking I once need.

As I write this the funeral service for Dot's mom is ending. Their life will be so different now that they have a life of their own. Dot said on the phone, “I have no guilt.” I envy that feeling — enough to follow in their footsteps, but enough to have to reassure myself I'm making the right choice for me.

Dot and Dotty are role models for anyone, gay or non-gay, in caring for elders. Where circumstances allow, it can be done. It does end. It has its rewards.

One of which, for me, was getting to know Dot and Dotty as lesbians, as friends and especially, as a family.

Canadian feds let “spouse” ruling stand

Canada's federal government decided June 22 not to appeal an April ruling by the Ontario Court of Appeal that rewrote the federal Income Tax Act to recognize same-sex couples.

The April decision came in a case where Canada's largest union had been prevented from paying pensions to same-sex couples due to Revenue Canada's heterosexist definition of "spouse." Pension plans must be registered with Revenue Canada to be tax-free.

The decision not to appeal likely will result in other federal laws that define "spouse" being rewritten as well.
“Hey, guess what this is,” my friend Sarah says.
I look over. Sarah’s tongue is sticking straight out of
her mouth.
“Your tongue?” I answer, thinking maybe it’s a trick
question.
“No,” she says “It’s a lesbian on Viagra.”
I groan, not because the joke is bad, but because I’m
all Viagraed out. It’s all anyone talks about now. It’s on
television. It’s in the papers. Why, even Bob Dole went
public and announced that taking it had spiked up his
and Libby’s sex life. She must be so relieved that she
can throw out all her Al Gore dildos now.
I guess I should be happy that I live in a country that
has managed to give men back both their hair and their
erects in the same year. I mean, we wouldn’t want a
bunch of balding impotents to suffer any longer while
all of those selfish women with breast cancer are out
partying up a storm now, would we? And gee, I guess
the fact that 85-year-olds are scampering around with
newly-aroused stiffies must be a great consolation to
the folks who can’t afford health care for their kids.
Little Timmy still needs that inhaler, but at least
Grandpa can get it on again.

Luckily for the poor, however, Congress is diligently
working on passing legislation that would make Viagra
covered under Medicare and other insurance plans.
And then that nice man donated a million dollars to
buy Viagra for the underprivileged. Thank heavens.
At ten bucks a pill, Viagra is one of those wonder drugs
whose soothing pleasures might have remained in
reach only of those with deep pockets. Now at least ev-
eryone in this country will have equal opportunities for
erects without having to pirate their children’s col-
lege funds. Isn’t that what democracy is all about?

I suppose I shouldn’t be surprised about all the fuss
being made over this silly pill. This is, after all, a coun-
try where billions of dollars are being spent investigat-
ing just where Bill Clinton, who clearly does not need
the aid of Viagra, has been putting his erection. The
American public is absolutely in love with the penis,
and especially with penises that stand firmly at atten-
tion. Why, I’ve even heard rumors that certain mem-
bers of the government are actively campaigning to
make the erection the national symbol, replacing the
bald eagle. Where once that baldpate creature accu-
rate represented our nation of over weight, thinn-
haired citizens perfectly, now that we have hair
restorers and Viagra, we need something more potent
to signify our collective return to randy youth.

In fact, I think a monument is in order. What better
way to commemorate the restorative powers of the
century’s greatest medical achievement? That clever
young woman who did such a nice job on the Vietnam
veterans memorial could work something up, say a
phallic-shaped tower of rarest blue-veined Italian
marble. Beginning at the bottom and spiraling up to-
ward the turgid tip would be the names of all the men
whose sagging love lives had been saved by Viagra.

Visitors would flock to this important site for years
to come. Circling it slowly, they would scan the sides
for the names of friends and loved ones. “There’s uncle
Ken!” smiling children would squeal in delight while
taking licks at their Viagra-pops bought from nearby
vendors. Once every fifteen minutes the fountain clever-
ly concealed within the monument would erupt,
showering everyone within a fifty-foot radius with life-
giving waters. Drenched, they would clap and cheer at the wonder of it all.

Eventually, of course, the marvels of Viagra would grow to miraculous proportions. An entire religion would spring up. Worshipers would gather in their temples to rejoice in the God-given gift of eternal erections. Communion would consist of receiving the little blue triangle on outstretched tongues. After consumption, the congregation would celebrate the most holy of unions while singing their praises to the pharmaceutical angels who delivered the gift unto the Earth.

Okay, so maybe things would never get that bad. But honestly, what does it say about us as a people that we're making such a big deal over all this? We can't manage to educate our children enough so that everyone can read. We can't feed all the people who don't get enough to eat every day. But we can invent a pill that saves us from the horrors of performance anxiety. Surely it will only be a month or two before Andrew Lloyd Webber pens Viagra: The Musical.

And what does it say about our notions of sex that we define lovemaking by whether or not a man can get hard? If someone invented a pill that ensured that women had orgasms every time they had sex (let's call it Niagara), you can bet there wouldn't be a parade or legislation to make it available to everyone. It's only when weiners across America are able to function properly that we call it a national holiday.

In this day and age, where everyone is taking some kind of pill for something, you'd think these scientists would be able to use their skills for more worthwhile purposes. I'd be more impressed if someone could invent a medication that did something really useful, like make men suddenly feel an uncontrollable urge to clean the house. Or how about a pill that caused the taker to crave commitment. Personally, I would be first in line for anything that would enable me to read the newspaper without feeling nauseous. I like to be informed, but too often knowing what's going on in the world leaves me a little dizzy.

But no. What we get are pills that make our hair and our erections both grow. I suppose for some people that's enough, but I wouldn't want to know any of them.

"If we want to be like everyone else, we will act like everyone else. We will be greedy, we will value style over substance, and we will cast out those that challenge us and our comfortable assumptions. ... I challenge each of you to break through your world to a new place, to challenge your assumptions, to develop new relationships, to act as though the world that you create for yourself and your community is the model that each of us should live by. I challenge you to tear down your walls, to tear down your stereotypes, and to lead."

— NGLTF Executive Director Kerry Lobel, in an April 14 syndicated column.

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If you listen closely you can still hear the sounds of faraway snare drums and marching bands. Occasionally a cymbal crashes. Those sounds are the remnants of the Protease Parade that high-stepped its way through the AIDS community over the last year.

As we pack up our folding lawn chairs, though, we are left with some unfortunate truths about AIDS. They litter the streets like stubborn debris, while we turn away and leave the job to street cleaners that never arrive.

There's an elephant in the bars that few people will talk about.

In bar parking lots at closing, or about that time on the gay phone lines or in the ubiquitous "men 4 men" chat rooms on the Internet, one question repeats as incessantly as a Donna Summer beat.

"Are you partying?"

Many of us are drowning our grief or masking our wounds -- or just making up time from the frightening last decade -- through weekend evenings that begin with lines of white powder, or a joint, or the first in a long round of drinks.

Our service providers are dumbfounded. Substance abuse agencies and AIDS care organizations look across the fence at each other, warily, sometimes just to muse that at least their own battle isn't as tough as the other. We've all got our hands full and yet the two issues are inextricably bound.

And make no mistake about it, gay men who sit in judgment of drug addicts with AIDS -- their transmission route is illegal in every state, we think to ourselves -- are ignoring the powder-laced sty in our own eyes.

Excerpt from "Five Sad Truths About AIDS" by Mark King
Mark King is Director of Education for AID Atlanta, the largest AIDS service agency in the southeast United States, and also serves as Chair of the Mayor's AIDS Advisory Board. He is currently completing his first book, A Place Like This, about his experiences as an HIV positive gay man.

Upcoming Events:
- AIDS 101, 5:30-6:30pm, Tuesday August 11 @ 4 A's
- Free HIV Testing Wednesdays 2:00 - 4:00pm @ 4A's
- Every Thursday "HIV Support Group" 7pm - 8pm, call 263-2050
- Every Friday "Friday Lunch" for clients, friends and volunteers Noon @ 4 A's
NEW YORK (AP) — In an exciting advance that could speed the development of new drugs and a vaccine against AIDS, scientists have figured out the 3-D shape of the “key” the virus uses to unlock and enter cells. Scientists already knew a lot about the key, a complex protein called gp120 that sticks out from the AIDS virus like dozens of spikes. But the new work exposes far more detail about its defenses and its potential vulnerabilities.

“Before we were blind. Now we’re sighted,” said Dr. Joseph Sodroski of the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, one of the researchers. “We can see what the defenses of this virus are, and that allows us to focus on a logical approach to penetrate those defenses. Is that approach going to work? Well, we don’t know. There’s no way of predicting how soon any of this structural information will lead to better drugs and vaccines. But there’s no question we’re better off now than we were before.”

The work is reported in the journal Nature and the latest issue of Science by Sodroski, Wayne Hendrickson of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and Columbia University in New York, and other scientists.

“It’s a tour de force,” said AIDS researcher Dani Bolognesi of the Duke University Medical Center, who wasn’t involved in the work. “We’ve been waiting to see the structure of this molecule for many years.” The researchers overcame technical difficulties that had hindered prior attempts, he said.

Bolognesi said the work will be very important for developing vaccines and drugs that block virus infection. Such drugs, in combination with current medications, would help infected people by shutting down the spread of the virus within their bodies.

Another scientist not involved with the work, John P. Moore of the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center in New York, called the work the most important AIDS research published so far this year.

The gp120 spikes on the AIDS virus bind to two protein sites, one after the other, on the surface of a cell. That essentially unlocks the cell for the virus to enter. The first site, called CD4, has a chemical finger that fits precisely into a hole on gp120. The new work reveals details of that hole, which might allow scientists to design drugs that essentially plug it, and thereby prevent infection. The researchers also exposed other sites on gp120 that are crucial for infection, and so might be targets for an interfering molecule.

Vaccines are designed to train the immune system to attack germs, and the new work reveals details of defenses gp120 uses to evade attack. Since gp120 is the main part of HIV that the immune system notices, understanding its defenses could be crucial for vaccine development.

One problem is that certain parts of gp120 vary greatly from strain to strain. These variable regions are like decoys; if the immune system raises antibodies to attack one version of them, the antibodies will be useless against a different strain in the same person.

The new work should help scientists develop vaccines that focus the immune system’s attention on other parts of gp120 that are identical in all strains, Sodroski said.


Petitioners demand repeal of Section 28

The British gay group YouthSpeak delivered petitions signed by 25,000 people to the Prime Minister’s residence May 26 demanding the repeal of Section 28 of the Local Government Act.

The 10-year-old law prohibits city officials from “intentionally promot[ing] homosexuality” and bans schools from teaching “the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship.”

“The Labour Party has repeatedly committed itself to repealing Section 28 when appropriate time is found in Parliament,” said YouthSpeak Chair Chris Morris. “We believe that time can be found in the next Local Government Bill and so we’re calling on [Prime Minister Tony] Blair to act on his promises and end this culture of intolerance.

“Section 28 has cost lives,” Morris said. “Young people are often denied information about safer sex which leaves them open to abuse and exploitation. Low self-esteem and bullying have also been shown to lead to teenage suicide and drug abuse.”
Focus on the Family obsessed with gay issues

by Michael A. Haase

Everyone knows that the best way to get conservative Christians worked into a frenzy is to mention the word “homosexual.” A stream of court and legislative victories for gays and lesbians across America has only intensified the voice of the far right and has TV preachers working overtime.

One of those preachers is Dr. James Dobson. He is the preacher who raised eyebrows recently when he told Republican leaders in Congress that unless they started representing his agenda more, he would leave the party and take his followers with him. And of course the GOP stuck to principle and told Dobson to go take a flying leap, right? If you believe that, then let me tell you that, although I’ve already sold the Statue of Liberty, the Brooklyn Bridge is still available for a bargain. What happened was that the Republicans started attacking gay Americans faster than you can say “James Hormel.”

Years ago Dr. Dobson began a conservative religious organization called Focus on the Family. The group champions the causes of conservative politics and culture by way of TV programming and various print media. A magazine the group publishes monthly, Focus on the Family Citizen, is a great example of the religious right’s obsession with homosexuality. The June 1998 issue of the magazine is only 24 pages from front cover to back flap. However, in that scant space are a whopping five in-depth articles warning of the “dangers” of the gay rights movement.

The magazine’s most disappointing article is titled “Two Dads... But Where’s Mommy?” The six-page article begins with an explanation of a New Jersey court decision. Two men won the right to jointly adopt a two-year-old boy whom had been in their custody since the boy was three months old. In the landmark decision, New Jersey agreed to treat gays on an equal footing with straight parents where joint adoption is concerned. The article went on to warn of this new twist in the “gay agenda,” and how we are working to rewrite the laws and reshape American society to suit ourselves.

One would think that a single anti-gay article — that happened to fill 25% of the magazine’s space — would be enough. Nope. They were just getting started. Another article alleged that gay parents with adoptive children are generally not welcome in the gay rights movement. A third article explained the frustration of GOP leaders in Congress who have tried three times, and failed, to ban gay adoption. Still another article attacked the Netherlands for its acceptance of homosexuality and gay marriage, among other things. And the final article on the subject was about a woman who had been raised by gay parents, and her efforts to make gay adoption illegal. The gist of this article is that, although she was very close with her gay father, his sexuality left her confused.

Almost as disturbing as the obsession with homosexuality is Citizen’s complete lack of Biblical discussion. I had always thought that a religious magazine would pertain to religious topics; i.e. discussions about the meanings of books in the Bible, announcements for religious discussion and support groups, children writing in to say what the Bible means to them. It’s really sad to see a Christian organization spending most of its time judging and attacking the rest of the world. And it’s sad to see so many well-intentioned Christians being taught that it is their duty to do so.

Michael Haase is concerned with all aspects of the equal rights movement. Your comments and suggestions are encouraged and may be sent to him at <michaelh@servom.com>.

Elizabeth Maria McNeill, Ph.D.
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By Appointment

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99503
Goldwater’s vision of gay rights will be missed

by Deb Price

From his hilltop ranch house outside Phoenix, Barry Goldwater had a clear view in every direction. Sitting at his built-in desk in the glass-walled living room there in the Goldwater compound, the aged Republican patriarch also had an uncommonly broad perspective on the shifting sands of American politics and the bedrock of freedom underlying our American ideals.

He saw everyday gay Americans scapegoated by conservative Republicans who call themselves his disciples. And he saw Congress and the Pentagon waste taxpayer money to boot out dedicated gay soldiers.

Appalled, the crusty, no-nonsense 1964 presidential nominee came down from his mountain and out of political retirement to speak up for those of us who’re gay. That was 1992 at age 83. And before his death May 29, he authorized continued use of his powerful name on behalf of gay civil rights.

“To have Mr. Conservative as a champion of our cause — it doesn’t get any better,” says Bill MacDonald, co-president of the Arizona Human Rights Fund, who grew to consider Goldwater a personal friend.

Goldwater’s unexpected gay activism started when he pushed Phoenix lawmakers to enact a gay-rights ordinance. He then helped keep an antigay referendum off Arizona’s ballot and helped lead a national drive to stop such hateful measures.

He used his prestige to splash onto op-ed pages — denouncing the military ban, blasting a proposal to expel all HIV-positive servicemembers and urging Congress to protect gay workers from bigotry. “You don’t need to be straight ... to shoot straight,” he quipped in a soundbite that rang ’round the media world. In 1995, two years after accepting a humanitarian award from the Arizona Human Rights Fund, he authorized it to start the Barry Goldwater Human Rights Award to honor corporate and individual gay activism each year.

MacDonald, who had met Goldwater through a mutual gay friend, recalls calling him to ask him to denounce the military ban. “He said, ‘Come on up, Bill, and we’ll discuss it.’” Using a cane, Goldwater greeted him at the door and was “extremely cordial, very frank and open,” MacDonald says. It was the first of several successful treks to Goldwater’s compound.

Gay rights struck an intellectual and emotional chord with Goldwater. As he told me in a letter four years ago, “I have a grandson who is gay and a niece who is gay. They are my family, and my views have never changed. I feel that a person, under the Constitution, can do as they please.”

Goldwater will go down in history as a freedom-loving American who reminded our nation that being gay-friendly is neither Democratic nor Republican, neither liberal nor conservative: It is merely reasonable and just. For the gay rights movement, Goldwater’s receptiveness to respectful gay requests should serve as a lasting reminder of the folly of writing off any potential ally. And future generations, no doubt, will recognize Goldwater as a political giant who helped pave the way for the military ban’s inevitable demolition.

On June 13, at its annual awards dinner, the Arizona Human Rights Fund paid tribute to Goldwater, an irreplaceable ally who once joked, “Well, I guess I am pretty much an honorary gay.”

So, senator, if you’re looking down from some new mountaintop, remember this: We’re honored to count you as a gay-rights visionary and a true friend. You will be missed.

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Fairbanksan

Further North in the Heart of Alaska

Almost time for the State Fair here in the interior, but that doesn’t mean that summer is over, still time to get involved.

**PFLAG Fairbanks**

A very good turn-out this year for the Pride Weekend. Starting the weekend was the Queerrillion Dance at State Fair Park, and Saturday estimates show around 160 people at the pre-parade rally. Afterwards we took to the streets with floats, cars and groups marching to a nicely responsive audience of onlookers with only a few van loads of dissent from a local Baptist congregation.

Later in the day the festivities moved to Alaskaland for the picnic lasting well past 7:00 p.m. including a dunk tank and anonymous HIV screening, mooseburgers and the works. Ending the day was a two hour production called “Summer Kamp” at the Palace Saloon and a survivors brunch on Sunday at Into The Woods Bookshop & Coffeehouse. During the weekend the “Love Makes A Family” photo exhibit graced the main walkway of the Bentley Mall, and then moved to Whole Earth Grocery & Deli for a command performance.

On July 20 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. there will be a Spaghetti Feed Fundraiser at Jeansie & Deb’s to support the “Vote No on 2” Campaign (amending the constitution to define marriage as one man and one woman).

State Fair time is drawing near, and PFLAG will be there. Volunteers are needed to help run the booth and assist with distribution of information to the public. It is an opportunity to let people know about PFLAG’s mission and the ways in which equal treatment is essential to the community, especially in this upcoming election year. If you can spend some time, or would like to help out in other ways, please call 45P-FLAG or e-mail <pflag@mosquitonet.com>.

Our meetings are on the third Sunday of the month at Into The Woods Bookshop & Coffeehouse, 3560 College Road, at 4:00 p.m. Whether or not a member of PFLAG, all are welcome to join our meetings and activities to build a better community, or just listen in.

**Entertainment**

On June 20 over a dozen performers visiting from Anchorage were the centerpiece of Follies of Dollies in the Gold Room of the Westmark in a benefit for the Breast Cancer Detection Center, Interior AIDS Association and Northern Exchange. During the show the Grand Golden Heart Duchess stepped down and elections were held for the new Grand Duchess and Grand Duke.

More shows and events are underway leading up to Coronation time and beyond. Be sure to check QNetAK at <http://www.mosquitonet.com/~qnetak> or listen to Homophonic Radio on KSUA 91.5 FM on Sundays from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. for event times and places.

Fridays and Saturday nights at the Palace in Alaskaland is still the place for late night socializing and dancing starting at midnight.

**Parks Highway Express**

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**Homophonic Radio and then some**

Our presence is being felt on the airwaves in increasing numbers. In addition to Sunday’s Homophonic Radio from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., KSUA 91.5 FM is the place to tune on Wednesday from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. for “Lady B’s Golden Oldies: Motown and the Atlantic Star.” The show is done in character, with announcements about stuff that is going on in the community. Lady B (Baroness Brachnel) describes the show as “a fun show, but so far my audience consists of three straight people. I play all the songs that’s fit to lip-sync to. My motto is “the Big Bopper better watch out because here comes the Big Bopper.” The focus is on rockabilly, blues, and Motown; from 1940 to present.”

**Into The Woods Bookshop & Coffeehouse**

A great place to hang out, stop in at 3560 College Road where it is ever changing. Scheduled events every week and special happenings. Call 479-7701 to speak with Connie for more information, or to set up your own special time in a family friendly place.

**GLSEN Fairbanks**

Meets the 3rd Monday of the month at the Fairbanks Education Association offices on South Cushman at 5:00 p.m. Focus is on creating a safe environment for all.
Domestic violence laws pertain to same-sex couples too

Not long ago the State of Alaska legislature responded to cries from abused women, making laws tougher against batterers and those who intentionally ignore Protective Orders issued by magistrates. Intended to relieve battered spouses from the burden of swearing out criminal charges against their partner, amended laws spelled out the duties of peace officers responding to crimes involving domestic violence. As a result, police departments across the state now use a “mandatory arrest” operating policy. Additionally, the laws cover offenses, or attempted offenses, by a “household member” against another household member, including gay partnerships.

Police academies in Alaska must provide each recruit with a minimum of 12 hours of training specifically in laws related to domestic violence, the handling and investigating of incidents in a manner safest for the victim and the officer, and in knowing which organizations offer aid or shelter to victims. In addition, officers must receive a specified minimum number of hours of retraining each year.

Officers arriving on a scene of domestic violence (within 12 hours) must determine whether one of a multitude of applicable crimes has been committed. These would include burglary, criminal trespass, arson, criminal mischief, crimes against a person, or violation of an existing protective order or conditions of release. If the people involved fall into a category protected under domestic violence (DV) provisions, then the officer must determine who was the “principal physical aggressor” and arrest him/her. Only under very limited conditions can the officer leave without taking someone into custody, usually only by getting permission from the prosecutor’s office.

DV laws have been enacted to protect those who are current or former spouses, those who are living together (or have lived in the past), those who are dating (or dated in the past), relatives or those related by marriage, and those who are engaged in (or who have engaged in the past) a sexual relationship. That covers a lot of relationships, for mandatory arrest in domestic violence situations!

In a crime involving domestic violence, the officer has obligations to protect the victim and any member of the victim’s family by transporting them to a location in the community that is a shelter, safe home, or other location requested by the victim. He also has a duty to provide a written copy of the rights of victims, including services available locally. Further, the officer must assist the victim in getting medical treatment for injuries caused by the event, and to assist him/her in retrieving personal property from their residence. If the victim wants the court to issue an emergency or long-term protective order against the aggressor, the officer can transport the victim to a magistrate to facilitate that process.

A Petition for a Protective Order can request that the magistrate restrict the batterer from threatening or committing further acts of violence, stalking, or harassment, and to avoid contact directly or indirectly. Among other things, the judge can also direct the suspect not to possess controlled substances or deadly weapons, and order him/her to pay restitution for costs that arise from the domestic violence. An emergency 20-day “ex parte” [i.e., requested by one party] protective order can be issued to take effect immediately. A long-term order would require that notice be given to the abuser, and a court hearing be held.

It is important that members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered community realize that these protections apply to them in their relationships. Adults and minors are protected equally. But police must be made aware of the true nature of the relationship, since it may not occur to every officer to ask or assume that a same-sex couple is living together or that their relationship falls within the confines of the protections under this law.

Domestic violence laws cover more territory than I have mentioned here. If you have questions regarding its applicability to you or someone you know, contact your lawyer for specific facts. If you cannot afford a private attorney, consider calling your regional office of Alaska Legal Services. In Anchorage they’re at 1016 West 6th Avenue, 272-9431.

Ron has been a law enforcement officer for over 10 years, has been a certified police instructor since 1989 and is now employed by the University of Alaska Anchorage Police Department.
Past Out

What were the army drag shows during World War II?

by David Bianco

In 1942, the Army Special Services Branch set up an all-soldier theatrical program to help boost troop morale. One early soldier revue provided the clearest template for many subsequent army shows. Irving Berlin’s This Is the Army debuted on July 4, 1942 at the Broadway Theater in New York City to raise money for the production of other shows. TITA, as it was known, later toured other cities and was so successful that it was expanded into a Hollywood musical in 1943, starring Lieutenant Ronald Reagan. The revue featured all the basic elements that would become popular in G.I. shows, including plenty of men in drag.

At first, drag was incorporated because there were no women in the armed forces, but it remained popular even after women began to serve. Many drag routines had few queer undertones and featured bumbling chorus lines of hairy-chested soldiers dressed in tutus or frills. In TITA, for example, the spoof “Ladies of the Chorus” involved deep-voiced soldiers in dainty dresses, golden curls, and army boots singing and dancing with men in suits and straw boaters.

Other musical numbers in TITA, however, involved comedy drawn more directly from gay male culture. In “Stage Door Canteen,” a chorus of “hostesses,” again in dresses and army boots, sang lyrics with what sounds today (and must have sounded to gay soldiers then) like obvious gay subtext, swearing “to never be found / Canoodling around / With a soldier.”

The canteen segment also incorporated what had for years been a feature of gay male culture — female impersonation. More so than the broad comedy of chorus line drag, female impersonation was and is a highly refined art projecting the illusion of becoming the other gender. For example, one private impersonated stage actress Lynn Fontanne, who issued orders to her stereotypically milquetoast husband, actor Alfred Lunt. Many gay soldiers had undoubtedly heard the rumors about Lunt and Fontanne’s lavender marriage, so the skit provided them with an inside joke that straight soldiers missed.

The “TITA canteen segment, “I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen,” must have been poignant for many gay soldiers. In this sequence, a uniformed soldier sang a love song to his “girl,” another soldier in drag. Unlike other drag numbers, the song was unabashedly romantic and not for comic relief.

The gay men in the audience weren’t the only ones who benefited from these drag numbers. A number of gay soldiers had been involved in the theater in their civilian days and were recruited to perform in the army shows. Often, being thrown together in these revues instilled a sense of camaraderie among gay enlisted men, by affording them an underground social network and a public way to camp it up. On the other hand, fear of exposure as gay and dishonorable discharge were sometimes so great that many gay soldiers in these shows were too scared to “let their hair down” even with each other.

Ironically, while the U.S. military was for the first time discharging large numbers of gay soldiers, their own theatrical program inadvertently gave many gay soldiers, whether they were audience members or participants, a way to connect with each other.

“If I would have been healthier, emotionally and psychologically, I probably would have only won one gold medal. ... That would have been enough. But, diving was a form of a drug as well [as] of hiding. For me it was my salvation.
— Gay Olympic diver Greg Louganis to the gay newspaper Texas Triangle, April 2.
Clergy group supports gay unions

by Elaine Herscher

More than 100 Northern California religious leaders are taking a public stand in favor of gay marriage at the same time Southern Baptists have formally condemned homosexuality and declared that wives must submit to their husbands.

At last count, 101 clergy from San Rafael to Fresno had signed petitions saying they would officiate at same-sex marriages. It is the largest interfaith group of religious leaders in the nation to publicly support legal marriage for lesbians and gay men, said Cheryl Deaner, executive director of All Our Families Coalition in San Francisco.

At a convention in Salt Lake City, Southern Baptists issued a statement that wives were created to be "helpers" to their husbands and must submit to their leadership. The group also condemned the "perversion of homosexuality" and called on believers to "resist any claims of legitimacy" for same-sex relationships.

Although the clergy's petition does not directly address the Southern Baptist statement, Deaner said local clergy are eager to counter the notion that all organized religions oppose same-sex marriage. She accused the nation's largest Protestant church of trying to "demean and destroy any family that is not headed by dominant heterosexual males."

"I think signing this petition is an act of faith," said the Rev. Doug Donley, a Baptist pastor who signed the petition. "It needs to be not just a civil issue. It needs to be a religious issue, and religious leaders need to take a stand on behalf of love and mutuality." Donley's church was ejected from the state Southern Baptist organization for supporting gay congregants, and it chose to leave the national organization five years ago, he said.

The marriage petition was signed by nine rabbis as well as ministers from a variety of denominations, including Lutheran, Methodist, Metropolitan Community, Presbyterian, Unitarian and United Church of Christ.

Thirty-two of the 117 churches in the Northern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ have voted to support same-sex marriage, said the Rev. Warren Kreml of Daly City, a retired minister.

In all, 42 United Church of Christ ministers signed, some of them retired and without parishes. "I don't know of any other area of the country that is this well-organized," Kreml said.

In March, 92 Methodist ministers from across the country declared they would perform "rites of union" for couples regardless of sexual orientation. The declaration responded to the church trial of the Rev. Jimmy Creech of Omaha, Nebraska, for performing a wedding ceremony for two women. Creech was acquitted but lost his post at his church.

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QUESTIONS WELCOME.
Vice Versa Award entries submitted

by Amy O’Mara

Early in July, members of the NorthView editorial staff met to make selections for the newsletter's entries in the second annual Vice Versa competition. The contest recognizes excellence in the gay and lesbian press, acting as a force for creating a stronger sense of community among the diverse publications that make up the gay press.

The NorthView staff had some difficulty in paring down the long list of possible submissions. They were pleased to enter nine articles in the newsletter's division, that of local or regional publications producing 14 or fewer issues per year.

Sally Schlesmann's health article "Self-Care: Balance in the Everyday World" was submitted, as was Ron Swartz' first-person article "Rural cop moves to the last frontier". The staff also selected, as an interview or personality profile, Tom Rachal's article "Gay father, gay son reunion: After 25 year separation".

Two pieces by long-time NorthView contributor Jen Kohout were entered: "The Wedding Series: Fitting In (or Not)" in the humor category, and her editorial of January 98.

Two other editorials were submitted, one by Shirley Randal (June 98) and one by Amy O'Mara (July 97).

NorthView also offered two op-ed/news analysis pieces: "Gays, church leaders hold forum, discuss acceptance," which was written by Sean Cockerham of the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner and "Schools are clueless about gay issues," penned by Fred Hillman.

Additionally, a covers/photos category was added this year and, following a great deal of discussion, the NorthView submission was the February cover, a photo taken by Caroline Kohout and produced by Karen Konopacki.

The contest winners will be announced in August.

HELP US TO HELP YOU

There are many ways in which our readers may assist in the publication of NorthView. It may be that you have a few hours of time to donate in some manner, or you may have skills which you could apply on a volunteer basis. If there are no extra hours in your schedule and you have no skills which could be applied, why not consider sponsoring the mailing of one issue of NorthView.

Each month it costs approximately $100 to mail this publication to our members. Our primary sources of revenue are membership fees and advertising income. As postal rates have escalated over the years, so have our mailing expenses. We're using the lowest rate structure available to non-profit organizations, but the costs continue to increase. If you have the ability to donate the cost of mailing a complete issue of NorthView, we would like to speak with you about it. Or, if this is more than your checking account permits, why not contact one or more friends to see if a sharing of the expense can be worked out. You'll find we are more than willing to work with you in whatever configuration is best.

In return, we would encourage you to allow us to publicly acknowledge your donation by displaying the following statement at the bottom of the front cover (not the bulk mail page which is visible to the entire world): "Mailing of this issue of NorthView was generously donated by ............." If you prefer to remain anonymous, we understand and would simply insert "an anonymous donor" in the space.

If this is something you (or someone you know) are interested in doing, please contact Ruth at 563-1324, Tom at 333-7504 or Shirley at 338-3708.

Your Photos Are Needed

Karen Konopacki has need of suitable photos for the front cover of the next several issues of NorthView. If you have photos which you feel are worthy of publication, please contact her at 278-5179. You do not need to have a computer or photo scanner – Karen will handle the details with TimeFrame. You furnish the photos and she'll take care of the rest.

Remember, NorthView is only as good as those who support it. Support NorthView by submitting your suitable photos.
GLAAD likes bill protecting kids

GLAAD is applauding efforts by both the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and U.S. Representative Nick Lampson (D-Beaumont, Texas) which specifically target child pornographers and pedophiles.

A disturbing recent trend in Internet legislation has attempted, under the guise of protecting children, to limit free speech and access to age-appropriate materials on the Internet through the mandated use of Internet Filtering Software. Instead, both the FTC proposal and the Lampson Bill focus on strengthening existing laws against those who victimize children.

The FTC seeks to require sites to obtain parental permission before collecting information from children who are 12 and under. The Lampson Bill would give an additional $2 million to the Customs Service's International Child Pornography Investigation and Coordination Center for Internet enforcement.

For more information, contact Loren Javier (GLAAD Interactive Media Director) at (925) 831-1092 or <javier@glaad.org>.

GLAAD (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) is a national organization that promotes fair, accurate and inclusive representation as a means of challenging discrimination based on sexual orientation or identity.

Tale of discrimination

by Royal Ford

In the May 17 Boston Globe, staff writer Royal Ford articulates the discrimination that lesbian and gay couples face under current laws which exclude them from basic rights.

Ford writes of Mary Lou Bryant and her recently-deceased partner in business and love of fifteen years, Susan Grover, and how after Grover died early this year, “because [Bryant] is also a woman, she now has the State of New Hampshire and an onerous tax bearing down on her in a moment that should be sacred for grieving and healing. When our leaders [and] your neighbors tell you that gay and lesbian folks don’t need laws to protect them because they are protected just like everyone else, keep this story in mind.... Had they been a married heterosexual couple... [or] a man and a woman who had lived together for as short a time as three years, we would not be hearing this story. In New Hampshire, husbands and wives [or common-law marriages] can pass [property] to the surviving partner without paying an inheritance tax. That was not possible for Mary Lou and [Susan]. And that is discrimination.... [Mary Lou] was also left, horribly, with proving that even her own share of the business was truly hers. As she grieves, she must also search out old checks, old pay stubs, to prove that she was even a contributing partner to the house they built with sweat.... This is cruel, and the tax is unfair.... What are these taxes based on? Sexuality.... Simply and completely because of their sexuality, Mary Lou is now being whacked with a tax and an emotional burden that she should not have to endure. So next time someone tells you that gays and lesbians are not discriminated against, think about our own laws....Think about how Mary Lou, even as she grieves, must not only pay for what [Susan] left her, but must also prove to the state that those are even her footprints in the sands of their labor and love.”

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(Lesbian Managed)
NEW YORK — Unmarried couples including gays and lesbians in New York City will be treated the same as those who are married under landmark legislation passed on Wednesday. The law, one of the broadest domestic partner policies in the United States that gay rights advocates describe as historic, addresses a host of emotional issues and details of everyday life facing couples regardless of their sexual orientation.

It allows bereavement leave for city employees, visitation rights in city-run facilities, tenancy succession rights and permits partners to be buried together in a city-owned cemetery. The estimated 8,700 registered domestic partners in New York City will also be required to meet the same civic responsibilities as married couples.

The law was approved overwhelmingly by a City Council vote to cheers and applause in the public gallery. But before the vote, a group of Hasidic rabbis gathered in protest outside City Hall, saying Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and city officials would be cursed and wiped out because of their support for the legislation. “They are totally disregarding the clearly expressed wishes of the majority of decent moral family people,” said William Handler, a rabbi representing Jews for Morality.

Gay rights activists said despite that protest and New York’s Roman Catholic Cardinal John O’Connor speaking out against the law during a Mass, opposition to the measure had been limited. The measure passed by 39 votes to 7 with one abstention. The law, approved by Republican Giuliani last month, recognizes domestic partners as equal to spouses in a range of services, benefits, city employee issues and responsibilities. It fulfilled a campaign promise Giuliani made to gay rights advocates last year. Responsibilities include disclosure of background information about domestic partners when seeking certain licenses in some businesses and the income of the chief wage earner in some city-subsidized housing.

Advocates called the bill “unique” because it would extend rights beyond city employees. Other cities around the United States have largely addressed domestic partnerships in the context of municipal employee benefits.

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High Art

Art, ambition, lesbians, heroin, and ennui all combine into a seductive mix in this compelling feature by first-time Lisa Cholodenko that won the screenwriting award at this year's Sundance Film Festival.

Set among the New York City art world denizens whose casual conversations comfortably encompass such rarefied reference points as Derrida, Fassbinder, and MacArthur grants, High Art is at once a naturalistic study and a style-conscious riff on a specific milieu. Its story follows the reciprocal growth of a somewhat ambiguous relationship between a jaded ex-artist and a career-challenged young ingénue. The beguiling young Australian actress Radha Mitchell plays Syd, a lower-echelon editor at a sleek photography magazine whose functions are really no more than that of a glorified coffee fetcher. Young and conflicted because she knows that even though she has snagged her dream job, she sees little more than a continued future of dead-end servitude and creative lockout.

Her live-in boyfriend James (Mann) is sympathetic and encouraging. The transparently thin plot device of a leaky bathtub causes Syd one evening to knock on her upstairs neighbor's door to check on the plumbing. Once inside, Syd becomes intrigued by the world she finds. The apartment above her is a demimonde roost, a hazy, druggy magnet for heroin chic lesbians and their brood. Fancied by the unique photographs that cover the walls, Syd gradually comes to learn that her upstairs neighbor is actually the formerly renowned photographer Lucy Berliner (Sheedy), who defiantly pulled the plug on her own career 10 years earlier and moved to Germany. Back in New York now with her lover Greta (Clarkson), a drug-addicted former Fassbinder actress whose wearisome references to the dead director are as humorously pretentious and ineffective as if she were still playing a role in one of his ripe melodramas, Lucy is drawn out of her retirement by Syd's interest first in her photographs and gradually in Lucy herself.

What the movie explores is the extent to which Syd's attraction to Lucy stems more from the new drug experiences, the undeniable lesbian attraction, or the opportunities for work promotions that her presentation of Lucy's work entails. The lines between all these things are opaque and equivocal. High Art treats these questions with a strikingly naturalistic ease, a quality that's also evident in the lovemaking scenes.

But just as it imbues these abstract career and lifestyle questions with a refreshing matter-of-factness, the film also perfectly captures the molten one-beat-behind sensuousness of the drug haze. Sheedy's penetrating depiction of Lucy, the bone-thin seductress despite herself is a career high point for the actress, and Mitchell's Syd is a constant pleasure to watch. Well-drawn also are all the secondary characters — both the magazine hierarchy and Lucy's layabout pals. Additionally, original music by Shudder to Think lends the film another unique tone. A contrived conclusion mars the veracity of the story's escalating drama and provides an unsatisfying solution to the myriad questions the film raises.

But High Art is nevertheless a work that shallows itself into your consciousness.

High Art opens Friday, July 10 at the Capri Cinema and should run for at least two weeks.


New York Times explores second generation gay kids

The June 7 New York Times featured an article by David Kirby, entitled “The Second Generation,” exploring families which include two generations of lesbians or gay men.

While on the surface it may seem that coming out to a lesbian or gay parent would pose no problem, Kirby's interviews provide varied responses from lesbian and gay youth and their gay parents.

One suburban mother tells him that her son's coming out “kind of scared me because ... I don't want my kids to have to go through all the pain,” while another says, "Whatever they turned out [to be] would've been fine with us: both gay, both straight or any combination."

Kirby adds that while “Sometimes [lesbian and gay parents] are swept into the political and scientific debate over whether homosexuals are born or made, and whether parents influence their children's sexual orientation,” all of the lesbian and gay children in the article agree that their parents' sexual orientation did not influence their own.

As an example, Kirby points to the case of Maria De la O, who realized she was bisexual even before her mother had come out. Jamie Egan, a second generation gay person notes, “To say gay people make people gay is a ridiculous cliché.”

Still, Kirby also takes into account the fears of a number of other lesbians and gay men who worry that being outspoken about a lesbian or gay second generation person will “propagate stereotypes of gay people recruiting kids.”

Kirby explores the issues that both first and second generations of lesbians and gay men face in a particularly insightful and thoughtful manner.

New York Times, 229 West 43rd St., NY, NY 10036-3959, fax 212-556-3690, e-mail <letters@nytimes.com>.

GLAAD (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) is a national organization that promotes fair, accurate and inclusive representation as a means of challenging discrimination based on sexual orientation or identity.
SPRINGFIELD, NB — Cowboy boots. Country music. A crowd in the grandstand. Summer means rodeos for many towns across the Midwest, and last weekend was no exception here except for one difference: It was a gay rodeo.

About 60 men and women from Iowa and around the Midwest competed in the Heartland Regional Rodeo at the Sarpy County Fairgrounds. The rodeo, in its second year, was organized by the Heartland Gay Rodeo Association. Part of the proceeds from the rodeo went to the AIDS Project of Iowa and Nebraska.

Both amateurs and seasoned pros competed in more than 13 events, such as steer decorating. Steer decorating is a timed event in which a team of two must tie a ribbon on the tail of a steer and remove a rope from its horns. The team with the best time wins the event.

People here didn’t talk much about their sexuality. Instead, the point was the competition and a love of the rodeo. Ten years ago, Ken Boge of Iowa City went to his first gay rodeo in Texas. After being around horses all his life, Boge, 48, figured he could compete—and win. Today, after competing in gay rodeos across the country, including eight events here, Boge said bareback bronc riding is his favorite event. In that event, a rider must stay on a bucking horse for more than six seconds. Boge was able to stay on the horse for about 11 seconds.

“There’s more adrenaline in it,” he said. “But I’m getting too old for it.” He earned a belt buckle for the event and is ranked fourth in the country. He qualified to go to the national competition, being held in Phoenix this fall.

Boge, a leather smith, said he made his own leather chaps for the rodeo. He stitched a colorful “Gay Pride” flag on the chaps. “I only wear them when I ride the broncs,” he said. “They’re too cumbersome to wear for other events.”

He still considers himself an amateur, even though he competes in about eight gay rodeos a year. He enjoys the competitive nature of the rodeos. “It’s the way the competing makes you feel. After the ride, when it’s over, it’s an accomplishment. Whether you win or lose, it’s an accomplishment.”

But Boge said that the friendships he has made by going to gay rodeos over the years are important to him as well. “The friends I have made in the circuit—it’s a really good high. They always try to help you out, even if you don’t do well on your rides.”

Jo Knott of Red Oak, who was crowned Ms. Heartland Gay Rodeo last year, said that although she is afraid of big animals like horses, competing is helping her become used to them. Knott and a teammate had the record lowest time for goat dressing, an event in which a team of two must put a pair of underwear on a goat. “I’m out here having fun,” she said. “This is the first big thing I’ve ever won in my life. But I’m not that competitive—I’m here to party.”

Dale Strachan of Des Moines, a horse trainer for Prairie Meadows, competed in poll racing and flag bending, a race in which participants must reach from their horses to pull flags out of one barrel and place them in another. While riding his horse, Strachan wore a silver sequined jacket. “I know I’m not the only queen out there,” he said.

Strachan said that he has competed in finals three times. “I bought my horse when he was a year old, and I trained him myself,” Strachan said. “Now, the proof is in the pudding.”

Strachan also said that although he was sorry to have missed a gay pride celebration that weekend in Des Moines, he wouldn’t have missed the rodeo. “I got bit by the rodeo bug,” he said.

Des Moines Register, June 28, 1998.

**Chiropractic**

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272-1272
The Directory

This directory is our “yellow pages” and reference guide. It's free! The designations of (L)esbian, (G)ay, (B)sexual and (A)lly indicate the business or service ownership. All people are welcome to call for further info. NOTE: in some instances you might encounter employees who are unaware of The Directory and its significance. Don't be offended; enlighten. All listings are in Anchorage unless indicated. Submit changes to <TomAndAl@alaska.net> or telephone 258-4777.

Advertising:
(L) KT Creative, Katie, 278-9174

AIDS:
(A) Alaskan AIDS Assistance Assoc., 263-2050 (see 4A’s page)
(A) Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center (free HIV testing), Stephanie, 257-4657
(A) Interior AIDS Association (Fairbanks) 452-4222
(A) Shanti of Juneau, 907-643-5665, 1-800-478-AIDS (2437)
(A) S.T.O.P. AIDS Project, Gail Charles-Abbot, 278-5019

Alcoholics Anonymous:
(G/L) Gay, Joyous and Free, see Calendar
(G/L) Midnight Sun, see Calendar

Alternative Medicine/Health:
(A) Hope, 561-2330
(A) Gateki, Keke/Jaimini, 561-7327
(L) Movement Options, Shari, 274-FLEX (3539)
(A) Rainbow Counseling, Maureen, 277-0582
(A) Thee Cutting Edge (Seward, AK), Connie, 907-224-8996
(A) The Ole Herb Shoppe, Constance, 522-4372

Apparel & Clothing:
(A) The Look, Kari, 278-5665

Automotive Repairs & Fuel:
(A) Courtney's, Linny, 562-1227 (see ad)

Bakery & Catering:
(G) Alaska Best Catering, Maurice, 338-1080, 337-1969
(G) Illusions, Brian, 277-9191
(G) Silver Spoon Cleaning & Catering, Brent, 258-0828

Bars & Restaurants:
(G/L) O’Brady’s, 344-8033, 338-1080, 563-1080
(G/L) The Raven, 276-9672
(L/G) The Wave, 274-0690 or 561-WAVE (see ad)

Bed & Breakfasts, Accommodations:
(A) Ah, Rose Marie, 302 Cowles, Fairbanks, John, 456-2040
(G) Anna’s Fairbanks), Pete, 907-389-2525 (see ad)
(G) Arctic Feather, Doug, 277-3862
(A) Aurora Winds, James/Bill, 346-2533
(G) Crabtree Guest House (Fairbanks), Phil/Bobby, 907-451-6501
(A) Fairbanks Hotel, (Fairbanks) Doris Lundin, 888-329-4695
(A) Gallery Bed & Breakfast (Anchorage) Leslie Evans 274-2567
(A) Island Watch, Eileen (Homer), 907-235-2265 (see ad)
(A) Regina’s, 275-4904
(L) Rose-Beth’s B&B, (Anchorage) Rose Beth, 337-6779
(G/A) Sauderough Lodging (Seward), Gordon, 907-224-8946.
(L) Skyline B&B, Homer, 907-235-3832.
(L) Wandering Women (Juneau) Carol/Sudie 907-586-2410.

Books:
(A) Alaska, Gene, 561-1340 (see ad)
(A) Cyrano's Books & Cafe, Sandy/Jerry, 274-2599
(A) Into The Woods Bookshop (Fairbanks), Connie, 907-479-7701

Churches:
see Spiritual

Coffee Houses:
(G) Hollywood Canteen, Rand, 562-0737
(A) Quiver Bean Coffee Co, Scott & Becky, call or fax 278-BEAN

College and Boarding School Selections:
(A) Tom Croke, 277-7004 or (717) 888-8652

Computer Consultants, Graphics & Desktop Publishing:
(A) Alaskan Support Consortium, Walter Erskine, 522-4275
(L) Angie, 337-0253
(A) Binky's Den, 205 4th Ave, Seward, Sue or Terri, 224-PAWS
(L) Communication Art, Catherine, 563-5492
(L) CDA Services, Waltraud, 276-6862
(G) Ekstak RAM, Robert Iris, 522-4275
(G) Greg Parsons, 258-1339
(G) grail/x, Lucian, 561-5856
(L) Helleck & Assoc, Terry, 276-3869
(G) Mark Mathis, 338-3357, <mmathis@alaska.net>
(L) TechLink, LeMiel, 276-6862.

Computer Supplies & Equipment:
(A) Frigid North, Tom, 561-4633 (see ad)

Computer Training:
(G) Seven Treasures Computing, Don, 562-9496
(A) Find It! Business Services (Macintosh); Larry, 279-4862

Counseling:
(G) Ability Design Associates, Doran, 562-9575
(A) Anchorage Center for Families, 276-4994 (handles all kinds of family issues.)
(A) Baron Sloan, LCSW, 563-5765
(A) Connie, 562-1826
(G) F. Ken Freedman, 566-1708 (see ad)
(A) Jann, 248-9408
(A) Marion, 562-0012
(A) Psychological Services Center, 786-1795
(A) S.T.A.R (Standing Together Against Rape), 276-7279
(L) Tess Bensussen, LCSW, Alternative Counseling, 562-2400
(A) Tom Gormley, ANP, 566-2110

Defend Support:
(A) Interpreter Referral Line, 277-3323 voice, 277-0735 TTY
(A) Defend Rehabilitation Serv., 277-3456 voice, 258-2232 TTY

Dental Care:
(A) Ward Hulbert, DDS, 248-0022

Disk Jockeys:
(G/L) The Wave, Darcy, 274-0690 or 561-WAVE (see ad)

Drag Shows:
(G/L) The Wave, Darcy, 274-0690 or 561-WAVE (see ad)

Electrical:
(G) The Electric Doctor, Bob, 561-2225

Electrolysis:
(L) Gentle Touch Electrolysis Clinic, Bronwyn, 258-6608

Entertainment:
(G) Art Services North, Darl Schaaff, 561-2115
(G) Capri Cinema, 561-0064 (see ad)
(G) Cyrono’s Film Gallery Cinema, 417 D Street, 561-0064.
(A) Syzygy/Music Magic, Linda, 274-2599
(L) Women’s Coffeehouse, Lisa, 561-2198

Family Medicine:
(A) Dr. Phyllis T. Dunckel, 257-4600

Financial, Insurance, Investments:
(L) Chris, 561-8040/338-3962
(A) Kathleen Madden, Windell & Reed, 349-3559
(A) Catherine Smith, C.P.A., 562-2438
(A) Solutions Consulting, Laura, 243-3324

Flooring:
(A) Big Bob’s, Mark, 561-2121
(A) Quality Floors, Bob & Ruth, 248-3900

Florists/Greenhouses/Nurserys:
(G) Every Bloomin’ Thing, Jerry, Malcom, 274-3158
(A) Mile 5.2 Greenhouse, Dale, 694-3978
(A) Tryck Nursery, Doug, 345-2507S
Directory

Furniture/Furnishings/Gifts:
(A) Design Craft, David, 279-0638 (see ad)

Hair Styling:
(G) Gabriel, 272-9045
(A) 36th Avenue Hair Design, Ledzha, 561-8967

Health:
(A) Alpine Indoor Air Purification Systems, Marjory, (907) 746-6351
(L) Health Advocacy-Medical/Legal Research, Linda, 337-0253
(A) Home Health Care, 261-3173
(A) Nature’s Own Way, Roberto/Debby, 561-0181

Helpline:
(G/L) Anchorage, Identity Helpline, 258-4777 (see ads)
(G/L) Fairbanks Lesbian/Gay Line, 907-458-8288
(G/L) Open Door Youthline, 456-GLBY
(G/L) Gay & Lesbian National Hotline, 1-888-843-4564
(G/L) Juneau, SEAGLA, 586-GAYS

House Cleaning:
(L) Connie’s House Cleaning Service, Connie, 276-3147
(A) Green Valley Cleaning, Tara, 345-4657
(G) Silver Spoon Cleaning, Brent, 258-0828
(A) Sweeping Lady, Janet, 276-7608

House-Sitting:
(L) Victoria, 245-2291.

Insurance:
(L) Chris, 561-8040/338-3962

Kites, Games, Banners, Puzzles:
(A) Northwind Kites, Pat, 279-4386

Legal:
(L) Mendel & Associates, Allison, 279-5001 (see ad)
(L) Rhodes, Phyllis; Mediator, 346-2217
(A) Short, Sylvia, 562-4992 (see ad)

Massage Therapy:
(L) Donna (NCMT), 243-0789
(L) Beth (MT), Debbie (CMT), 566-0842
(G) Don, 338-8826
(G) Gabriel, 272-9045
(L) Leslie, 278-3346
(L) Ariel, 277-5222

Media:
(L) NLGJA (National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association), Kim, Alaska coordinator and board member, 277-2704

Moving:
(A) Broco Cartage Company, Tim, 275-8763

Music/Instruments:
(A) Oldtime Music Company, Marge, 561-6862 (see ad)

Native Arts/Culture:
(A) Moon Dancer Arts, Rosemary (Wasilla), 373-5353

Naturopathic:
(A) Hope, 561-2330

Newsletters/Newspapers:
(A) Alaska Women Speak, Mary Lee, 696-0924
(A) Anchorage Press, Nick, 561-7737 (see ad)
(L) Klondyke Contact (Alaska Women’s Cultural Center), 277-9763
(GL) Identity NorthView, 258-4777
(GL) Perspective (SEAGLA in Juneau), 586-4297

Obstetrics & Gynecology:
(A) Jane, 563-5151
(L) Mary Ross, Nurse Practitioner, 563-7228

Odd Jobs:
(L) Deb, 275-3018
(A) Service with a Smile, Liz, 274-5290

Pet Care & Veterinarian:
(L) Chena Ridge Veterinary Clinic (Fairbanks) 479-0001
(A) Dr. Ginny, 345-1515
(L) Dr. Viki, 345-1515

Photography:
(L) Alaska Photographic & Supply, Linda, 345-5434
(G) Fotos by Frank, Frank, 566-0600 (see ad)

Political:
(G/L) No on 2, Dan, 274-9226 <alaskadan@al.com>
(A) Alaskans Concerned About Latin America (ACALA), Ruth, 333-1190
(A) Anchorage Women’s Political Caucus, contact Janet Mitson, 688-0116
(G/L) Equal, Inc., 274-9226
(G/L) Log Cabin Republicans, (503) 642-7292

Printing/Electronic Graphics:
(A) Alaska Micro Associates, Rebecca, 337-0460
(A) SOS Printing, Val, 562-1678
(A) TimeFrame, 562-3922 (see ad)

Real Estate:
(G) Apollo Real Estate, Bob, 561-0661
(A) Bela Bodnar, RE/MAX, 244-4415 (see ad)
(L) Bronwyn Real Estate, 907-277-4744
(L) Century 21 (Missouri), Lucille, 417-745-6798 (w);
417-993-4302 (h)
(L) Dynamic Properties, Jill, 261-7663
(A) Rona Mason, Realtor, 242-8877 (cell) or 279-8877. (see ad)
(L) Waltraud Barron, 278-1981

Recreation:
(L) Alaska Women of the Wilderness, Rachel, 688-2226
(L) Equinox Wilderness Expeditions, Karen, voice mail: 274-9087
(A) Flies by Ilene (Eagle River), 907-694-6946
(A) Knik Glacier Tours; Palmer, Alaska; Tom Faussett, 745-1577
(L) McKinley Air Service, Lee Ann & Keli, 800-564-1765
(L) Puffin Family Charters, Leslie, 278-3346
(G) Roy’s Bikes, Roy, 333-8221
(A) Stan Stevens Cruises, P. O. Box 1297, Valdez, AK 99686.
(907) 835-4731, (800) 992-1297.
(G) Triangle Tours, Greg, 276-2770, 888-899-2770
(A) Wild Iris Fishing and Sightseeing Charters (Valdez) Barb,
907-389-2725

Reiki/Counseling:
(G) Rick, 333-9640
(A) Joyce, CMT, 562-1916
(L) Spirit Services, Barbara, 337-2011

Research:
(L) Cracium & Associates, 279-3982
(L) Writing & Research Services, Lorraine, 277-7373

Social/Educational:
(A) AGB Social Club, formerly Anch Garden Buddies, Steve
272-5608
(G) Imperial Court of All Alaska, Ross, 563-2110
(GL) Southeast Alaska Gay & Lesbian Alliance (SEAGLA),
(Juneau) 907-586-4297

Social Research Design, Consultation, Evaluation:
(L) Susan E. Johnson, PhD, 272-4113

Spiritual:
(A) Aquarian Foundation, Rev. Patricia Brown, 349-9955
(A) Anchorage Church of Religious Science, Center for Positive
Living, Rev. Nancee Sweeney, 258-0010
(A) Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Art, 248-3737
(see ad)
(A) Church of the Covenant (Matanuska Valley), Pastor Howard
Bess, 746-1099
(A) Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 2311 Pembrook, Anchorage,
welcomes all regardless of orientation, 333-5253
(A) Lamb of God Metropolitan Community Church, 258-5266
(A) St. James the Fisherian Episcopal Church (Kodiak), Fr.
Paul, 486-5276
Directory

Spiritual...

(A) Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Fairbanks, 4148 Pikes Landing Road, Richard Kemnitz, 457-9009
(A) Unity Church of Anchorage, 346-2824

Student Organizations:
(G/L) Alaskan Gay and Lesbian Association (AGLA, Fairbanks) Pete, 907-479-7348 (see Club Notes)
(G/L) The Family (Anchorage), Victoria, 245-2291

Support Groups:
(G) Ability Design Associates, Doran, 562-9575
(A) GISEN, Fred, 562-7161
(G) I.M.R.U.2 (Youth Group), 566-4678
(A) PFLAG Anchorage, Voice mail 566-1813
(A) PFLAG Fairbanks, Nancy, 907-45P-FLAG
(A) PFLAG Juneau, 907-463-4203

Tattoos:
(A) Bitchin’ Tats, Kathy, 561-3653

Theatre:
(A) Out North Contemporary Art House, Gene/Jay, 279-8099

Travel:
(G) Apollo Travel Agency, Bob, 561-0661 (see ad)
(B) Golden Travel, Albert, 272-5802
(G) Triangle Tours, Greg, 276-2770 or 888-899-2770

Tutoring:
(G) Gabriel, Spanish, 272-9045
(A) James, Biology, 248-6412
(L) Carolyn Lancaster, M.Ed., School Survival Skills, 274-5059
(A) Kathleen L. McDonough, School Survival Skills, 274-5059

Club Notes

AA
Gay Joyous & Free, see on-going calendar.
Midnight Sun's, see on-going calendar.

Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association (4As) Anchorage offers HIV testing Wednesday afternoons (2:00-4:00pm) at their offices, 1057 W. Fireweed Ln, Ste. 102. Friday at noon is a luncheon for People With HIV and AIDS. We are always looking for volunteers to help provide these meals. If you are interested in volunteering with the 4As, call 4As at 263-2050.

Alaska Gay and Lesbian Association of Fairbanks (AGLA) a UAF Student Organization, has regular meetings open to gays, lesbians and allies, 1st and 3rd Friday. For further information about meeting time and place, contact Matthew at 907-474-6666, ext. 3535.

AGB Social Club
(formerly Anchorz Garden Buddies) a social group for gay and bisexual men looking for an alternative to the “bar scene.” For more information, call Steve 272-5608, or e-mail <a g b @yahoo.com>.

Anchorage Women's Political Caucus
for lesbians and non-lesbians, meets 7:00pm at Elmer's Restaurant, New Seward & Fireweed, on the first Wednesday of every month.

Aquarian Foundation
services Wednesday 8:00pm and Sunday 11:00am, 8500 LaViento Drive, 349-9955.

Bruin Brotherhood of Alaska (Levi/Leather/Bear)
1441 E. 12th, #2, 99501 Contact Dan at 258-2629 or 276-6947. Meets the 3rd Saturday at 7 pm.

EQUAL, Inc. Anchorage
EQUAL provides education and information about political issues to our community. EQUAL is not a political action committee and does not endorse candidates. For more information, call Dan Carter at 274-9226.

EQUAL, Inc. Fairbanks
purpose is to keep the community informed about political and legal events which have an effect on the lesbian community, to educate about community issues, to organize letter writing campaigns and other forms of political action, and to promote equal rights for all Alaskan citizens, regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation. For more information about EQUAL, contact Laura Burleson at 907-479-7348 or e-mail pseb@aurora.alaska.edu

Fairbanks Gay Youth Group
Leave message on voice mail for info: 457-3524.

Fairbanks Radio Station
KSUA 91.5 “Homophonic Radio”, 4-6 p.m. Sundays

FAMILY—Anchorage
THE FAMILY is UAA's student club for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and ally students. For the summer months only, meets at different times and days. For more information, call Victoria at 245-2291 or e-mail <akglb_youth@hotmail.com>.

Feminist Sing-a-Long (women only), Anchorage third Saturday of every month, 1741 Westview Circle; call Carol and Fran at 333-0871. Non-singers are more than welcome. 6:30pm potluck, 7:30pm singing (from the KK—Thanks!)  

Gay Bar, Anchorage
free legal question and answer sessions on issues of interest to lesbians and gays. Second Monday of every month, noon at 845 K St. 279-5001.

Continued on page 41
Gay/Lesbian Book Club
at Barnes and Noble on third Wednesday, 7-9 pm. Kim Meck, Community Relations Coordinator for B&N hosts this discussion group.

GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network)
Anchorage meets the first Sunday each month, 1pm at AUUF. Membership is confidential. We welcome educators and non-educator allies who are interested in the problems of GLBT youth in our public schools. For more information call Fred, 562-7161.

Fairbanks meets third Monday, 5pm, FEA offices on Cushman.

Identity, Inc. Anchorage
founded to improve self and community awareness, understanding, and acceptance of the expression of individual sexual identities, in order to promote positive attitudes and healthful ways of living for all people within the State of Alaska. Identity builds bridges between different segments of the lesbian and gay community as well as bridges between the gay/lesbian and non-gay/non-lesbian communities. Potluck Social is held on the 4th Friday of each month at the Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 3201 Turnagain Street. Doors open at 6:30pm; dinner at 7:00pm; program at 7:30pm. See the Calendar for program title.

Imperial Court of All Alaska (ICOAA), Anchorage
is a social and support group active in many causes: we plan and present wonderful entertainment, and donate money to needy organizations for them to carry out their important goals. See Calendar for this month’s planned activities, or contact Empress Rosie rotten at 563-2110. Or write P.O. Box 104023, Anchorage 99510-4023.

IMRU Anchorage gay youth group meets Wednesdays 5:30-7:30 p.m. at 444, 1057 West Fireweed Lane, Suite 102. 566-IMRU

Interior AIDS Association (IAA) Fairbanks
offers medical and dental program assistance, “buddies” (volunteers who help HIV & People Living With AIDS), meal delivery food supplement program, a lending library and counseling support. If you’re interested in volunteering or need assistance, please call the IAA in Fairbanks at 452-4222.

Lamb of God Metropolitan Community Church (MCC)
Anchorage holds Sunday services at 11am at Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 2311 Pembroke, 258-5266.

Last Frontier Men’s Club, Anchorage
a members-only club for the Leather/Bear communities of Alaska. Meetings 3rd Thursday of each month, 6:00pm at the Raven; campouts & weekend trips, too. Write T.L.F.M.C., P.O. Box 202054, Anchorage, AK 99520-2054.

Mt. McKinley (Non-Ascent) Club, Anchorage
is a social group open to anyone gay, lesbian, or ally. Look for upcoming events in the Calendar, or call Eric at 277-3256.

Northern Exposure Bowling League, Anchorage
each Sunday afternoon at 4:00pm, Park Lanes. 561-8744 (Bob).

OPAL is a lesbian social organization with an open membership. OPAL holds monthly potlucks with different themes on the third Sunday of the month. Please call Roby at 522-3953 for more information.

Over 50’s Social Group
a lesbian group sharing positive energy discussions of films, books and ideas. Meets second and fourth Mondays, 7-9 pm. For location, call Rose Beth (337-6779) or Lorraine (276-3337).

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG)
Fairbanks meets the 3rd Sunday of every month from 4:00pm to 5:30pm at Into The Woods Bookstore & Coffeehouse, 3560 College Road, Fairbanks, Call 45P-FLAG for more information.

Juneau meets the 1st Saturday of every month at 10:30am at Mendenhall Mall Library. Phone 907-463-4203.

Anchorage holds meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of every month. For information call voice mail 566-1813.

Queer Round Table (QRT) Call to list your club’s events and hear about other club events. Barb (H) 274-4994 or (W) 564-5818

Shanti of Juneau
offers support services to persons with HIV/AIDS and their loved ones, as well as offering comprehensive AIDS prevention and educational information. Offices: 222 Seward, Suite 200; mail: P.O. Box 22655, Juneau, AK 99802-2655. 907-463-5665, 1-800-478-AIDS (2437).

SLAA (Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous) Anchorage
12-step meeting; Tues., Thurs., Sat. Check ongoing calendar for times and locations. 566-1133

Southeast Alaska Gay & Lesbian Alliance (SEAGLA)
a non-profit volunteer organization that provides a support network for lesbian and gay people in Southeast Alaska. Publishes monthly newsletter Perspective. P.O. Box 21542, Juneau, AK 99802-1452. Phone 586-GAYS

Support Group, Soldotna
a group for people with HIV or AIDS or families or friends. Call Jan at 907-262-2589.

Women’s Coffeehouse
on summer hiatus.

Aussie gays refused communion
About 50 gays, lesbians and their supporters were refused communion at Melbourne, Australia’s St. Patrick’s Roman Catholic Cathedral May 31 when they approached Archbishop George Pell, the celebrant, wearing rainbow sashes.

“I deeply regret that such people who profess the Catholic faith would choose to mount an ideological demonstration during mass and especially at communion time,” Pell said as the service concluded. “This is inappropriate.

“They must realize the church’s teaching on this matter cannot, will not, change. Although human weakness is universal and God’s mercy infinite, the path to happiness and heaven for a Catholic does not lie in seeking to re-interpret what is right or wrong.”

The congregation responded with sustained applause.

One of the protesters, Michael Kelly, told reporters afterward: “For the first time in my life, I saw my 74-year-old mother, who has been a Catholic all her life, refuse Holy Communion because she went forward openly in support of her gay son.

“We claim our dignity as people made in God’s image and our right to freedom, justice and love, the right to live fully human lives with the sexuality that God gave us.”
**Cyberlust**

Submit changes to <TomAndAl@alaska.net>
Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association (4As): <http://www.alaskanails.org>
AGLA: AK Gay & Lesbian. <fmpbl@aurora.alaska.edu>
Burleson, Laura: Gay Rights activist, Chair of Equal of Fairbanks: <fisleb@aurora.alaska.edu>
Capi Cinema, Rand Thorneley: <filmgallery@compuserve.com>
Carislo, Karen: Writer, feminist, teacher, activist: <rnktc@getontine.net>
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Gay & Lesbian National Hotline: <http://www.glnh.org>
GLAAD: Gays and the media <http://www.glaad.org>
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Hillman, Fred: <fhillman@alaska.net>
Hillman, Bronwyn: <bronwyn@alaska.net>
I AA - Interior AIDS Assoc. Fairbanks <iah@polarnet.com> website: <http://www2.polarnet.com/~iah>
Identity: <http://www.alaska.net/~identity>
Imperial Court of All Alaska (ICAOA): see link at <http://www.mosquitos.net/~qnetak>
Into the Woods Bookshop: Connie, Fairbanks, AK e-mail <woods@polarnet.com> website <http://www2.polarnet.com/~woods>
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Ranch. website <http://www.alaska.net/~identity/pflag.htm> e-mail <schlitter@micronet.com>
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Q Net AK, Alaska's Gay & Lesbian Information Source: website <http://www.mosquitos.com/~qnetak> e-mail <qnetak@mosquitos.com>
Rachal, Tom: <TomAndAl@alaska.net>
SEAGLA: <http://ptialaska.net/~seagla>
Severson, Kim: Entertainment editor Anchorage Daily News, board of Nat'l Lesb & Gay Journalists Assn: <kieverson@pop.adn.com>
Shanti of Juneau: <http://www.alaska.net/~shanti>
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Triangle Tours, Lesbian/Gay travel <triangle@servcom.com>
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Fairbanks: <rkmirtz@polarnet.com> <http://www.mosquitos.com/~uaff>
Walton, Eric: Q*Klatch, Q*K Outdoors, PFLAG, EQUAL etc. <esew@aurora.alaska.edu>
Wave, The: Lesbian/Gay bar & coffee house: <wave@alaska.net>

**Calendar**

**July**

**Sunday, 19:**
F PFLAG, 4-5:30pm, Into the Woods Bookstore.

**Monday, 20:**
F GLSEN, 5pm, FEA on S. Cushman.
F Vote No on 2 Spaghetti Feed Fundraiser, 6-9pm, Jeannie & Deb's.

**Tuesday, 21:**
A PFLAG, 7-9pm, AUUF, call 562-7161 for details.

**Friday, 24:**
A Identity Potluck, 6:30pm, AUUF, Program: Reggie Yaple on planting perennials.

**August**

**Saturday, 1:**
J PFLAG, 10:30am, Mendenhall Mall Library.

**Wednesday, 12:**
A PFLAG, 7-9pm, AUUF, 562-7161 for details.

**Sunday, 16:**
F PFLAG, 4-5:30pm, Into the Woods Bookstore.

**Monday, 17:**
F GLSEN, 5pm, FEA on S. Cushman.

"It is one of the ironies of history that today the mainstream of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender movement focuses more on bolstering traditional, patriarchal institutions such as marriage, family, and monogamy than it does on questioning their legitimacy. That this shift has taken place is undeniable: We are a people eagerly seeking the right to marry; clamoring to adopt, parent, and procreate; and engaging again in a spirited debate about sexual values and ethics. ... I want a movement willing to fight the patriarchy, not rehabilitate it. ... The old patriarchal family does not work; it is permeated with violence, drug and alcohol abuse, and unhappiness."
— NGLTF’s Urvashi Vaid writing in the March 17 Advocate.
On-Going Calendar Items

SUNDAYS
A Metropolitan Community Church Services, 11am Sunday at Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 2311 Pembroke.
A Gay, Joyous & Free, 7pm, AA Meeting, 1231 W. 27th Ave.
F PFLAG, third Sunday, 4-5:30pm, Into the Woods Bookstore.
F Homophobic Radio, KSUA 91.5, 3-6pm
A Northern Exposure bowling league, Park lanes, 561-8744 for more information

MONDAYS
A Gay Bar, Anchorage, noon, Second Monday, 845 K St., 279-5001.
A Gay, Joyous & Free, 7pm, AA Meeting, 1231 W. 27th Ave.
A Over 50's Social Group, 2nd and 4th from 7-9 pm Inquire 337-6779.
A Lesbian Social Group, reviews films & books, 1st, 3rd & 5th. Inquire 337-6779.
F GLSEN, 5pm, FEA on S. Cushman, every 3rd Mon.

TUESDAYS
A Righteous Babes Radio Show, 7pm, KRUA-FM 88.1.
A SLAA (Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous), 8pm, 566-1133.
F Farthest North Gay & Lesbian Chorus, 6pm, Into the Woods.
A PFLAG, 3rd Tuesday, 7-9pm, AUUF.

WEDNESDAYS
A Free HIV TEST at 4A's, 2pm - 4pm, 1057 W. Fireweed Ln, Ste. 102, Lori 263-2050.
A IMR82 3-5:30-7:30 pm at 4A's 1057 W Fireweed #102, 566-4678 (566-IMRU).
J Social at Summit Lounge, after work.
J "Women's Prerogative," KTOO-FM, Wednesdays, 9pm-10pm.
A La Cage aux Wave & Drag Bingo, 10pm, The Wave, $3 cover.

THURSDAYS
A SLAA (Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous), 5:30pm, Unitarian Church, 566-1133.
A Friends and Family Support Group, 6:30pm, call 4As, 263-2050.
A Gay, Joyous & Free, 7pm, AA Meeting, 1231 W. 27th Ave.
F French Club, Russian Club, alternating weeks at Into the Woods Bookstore.

FRIDAYS
A Lunch, 4A's, noon-1pm, 1057 W. Fireweed Ln, Ste. 102, Lori 263-2050. Everyone invited - HIV, volunteers and friends.
A Midnight Suns Gay AA Meeting, 7:30pm-9pm, 1231 W. 27th Ave.
A Identity Potluck fourth Friday at AUUF.
F Free anonymous HIV testing, 3:30-5:30pm, IAA offices, 710 3rd Avenue.
J Juneau Pride Chorus, 5:30-7pm, Floyd Dryden School, room 197.
F Dancing at The Palace Saloon, midnight - 2am.

SATURDAYS
A SLAA (Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous), 12 noon, Unitarian Church, 566-1133.
J PFLAG First Saturday of each month, 10:30 to 12:30 in the Mendenhall Library conference room.
F Dancing at The Palace Saloon, midnight - 2am.

Legend
A Anchorage, F Fairbanks, J Juneau

ILGA is 20 years old

The International Lesbian and Gay Association will celebrate its 20th birthday this summer. "It's a good time to reflect on ... just how far we've come [but] it's also important to remember how far we still have to go before lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgendered people are given equal recognition in all areas of life," the group said in its quarterly bulletin.

The publication described ILGA's mission as "to recognize the global family of lesbians and gay men, to work on those international laws and bodies that affect our lives, and to use our international networks to support those fighting nationally for their rights."

ILGA is a federation of several hundred gay groups and individuals from more than 80 countries. It stages conferences, publishes the bulletin, issues action alerts, and networks Western nations with the growing gay movements of the Third World and former communist nations. Recent ILGA initiatives have increased gay clout within the European Union, the World Health Organization, Amnesty International and other international bodies.

"With e-mail whizzing messages around the world, borders undergoing reconsideration and readjustment around the world, and lesbians and gay men still fighting for their lives — the world is a much smaller place," the group said. "Those tools that make it smaller also give us the means to publicize the news and start to agitate about the problems."

The group may be reached at <ilga@ilga.org>.
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