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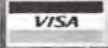
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ACLU FILES "EQUAL PROTECTION" DOMESTIC PARTNER BENEFITS LAWSUIT

Madison—The American Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit April 20 against the state of Wisconsin on behalf of six lesbian employees and their partners seeking domestic partner health insurance and family leave protections.

"I worked as many hours and just as hard as my straight colleagues and coworkers. I shouldn't be denied the ability to provide my family with health insurance solely because my partner of 29 years is another woman," Virginia Wolf, a minister and retired English professor at the University of Wisconsin-Stout said.

Married employees of the state of Wisconsin are permitted to include their spouses and children on the state insurance plan. The lawsuit ACLU filed today charges that it violates the state constitution's equal protection guarantees to block lesbian and gay employees, who are barred from marrying in the state, from access to the same coverage for their families.

"This is a matter of basic fairness — of whether gay and lesbian employees should be compensated less than straight employees for doing the same work," Larry Dupuis of the ACLU of Wisconsin said, noting that along with actual salary, health insurance is an important portion of how employees are compensated.

Diane Schermann, who works for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, is a plaintiff in the case with her partner, Michelle Collins. Because they can't afford an individual health insurance policy for Collins, she doesn't have a regular physician, exacerbating health problems she suffers from a back injury.

"Instead of seeing one primary care doctor, Michelle has to rely on a patchwork of free clinic visits, worker's compensation coverage, and emergency care visits. It's difficult to watch my partner live with physical pain, and it makes it more difficult to know that the only thing preventing me from covering her is the fact that we're lesbians," said Schermann.

The lawsuit also seeks equal access to family leave protections provided by the state. Eloise McPike works for the

care, the couple now has to spend \$260 per month on private insurance and prescription drugs because Barnett's injuries only allow her to work part time and she doesn't qualify for insurance.

Jody Helgeland, a research specialist at the University of Wisconsin — Madison, and Jessie Tanner celebrated their 10th anniversary in December. The couple can't afford private insurance for Tanner, who suffers from severe asthma and allergies. Her medications, which total over \$600 per month, would only cost \$75 per month if she were covered under the state health plan. Once, Tanner had an asthma attack so acute that Helgeland had to take her to an urgent care facility that charged \$105 per visit. At these prices, the couple can't afford to return for follow-up visits or buy Tanner's medications every month.

Today's lawsuit comes as governments, universities, companies and other employers increasingly extend benefits to employees' domestic partners. The University of Wisconsin is now the only Big Ten university that does not offer domestic partner benefits.

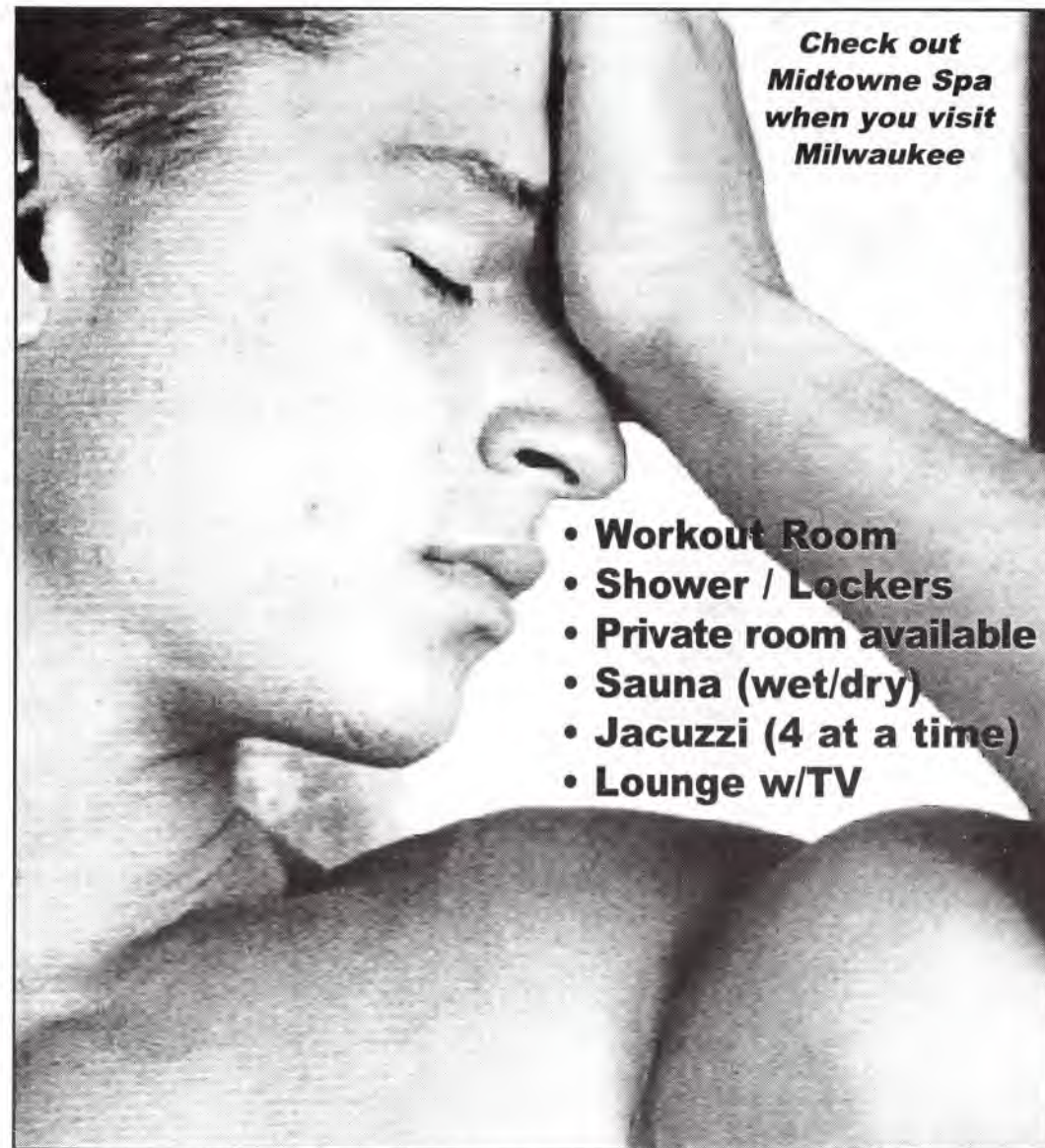
"Lesbian and gay Wisconsin state employees have been struggling for well over a decade to obtain fairness in health insurance benefits," said Christopher Ott, Executive Director of Action Wisconsin, the state's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender advocacy organization. "After years of our community running into bureaucratic and legislative roadblocks, these couples are hoping that the courts will put an end to needless financial and medical struggles for them and other state employees. This lawsuit is about the real harms caused to real families by unequal treatment."



Department of Corrections at a jail in Milwaukee. When her partner of 20 years, Janice Barnett, was severely injured in an out-of-state car accident several years ago, McPike wasn't allowed to leave to be with her as any other state employee would have been able to do. Instead, she had to submit a formal vacation request and then wait and worry for five days, hundreds of miles away, for it to be approved before she could be by Barnett's side. Though Social Security covered some of Barnett's medical



Left: Plaintiffs Jody Helgeland (left, standing) and Jessie Tanner discuss their involvement in the ACLU lawsuit at a Madison press conference April 20. Right: Larry Dupuis of the ACLU of Wisconsin introduces plaintiffs in the the case at the April 20 press conference. Photo Credit: Dan Ross



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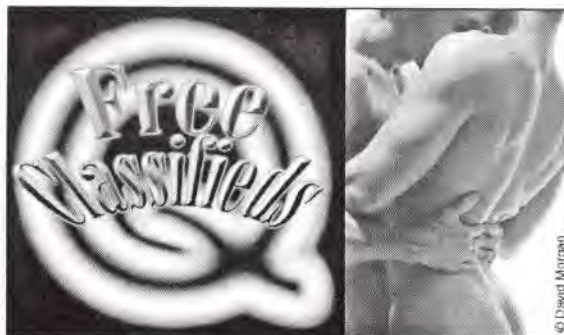
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The couples are represented by John Knight and Rose Saxe of the ACLU's Lesbian & Gay Rights Project, Larry Dupuis of the ACLU of Wisconsin, and cooperating attorneys Linda Roberson and Christopher Krimmer of the Madison law firm Balise & Roberson.



Plaintiffs Ingrid Ankerson and Megan Sapnar explain their need for family health insurance.

Plaintiffs Jayne Dunnum and Robin Timm.

Photo Credit: Dan Ross



PROPOSED CLOSURE OF UW-MADISON'S LGBT CAMPUS CENTER STALLED REORGANIZATION PLAN MEETS STUDENT OPPOSITION

Madison - A proposed reorganization of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Office of Dean of Students (ODOS) was slow-tracked after concerns about the process and the LGBT Campus Center's role in the new organization were voiced here recently. Although no details of the reorganization have been made public, it appears that the LGBT Campus Center was to be combined with units focusing on other campus diversity organizations.

The original proposal would have coalesced the nine units under ODOS to six units, cutting no jobs. The original time line proposed the restructuring and subsequent elimination of the LGBT Center to occur at the end of the current semester. No explicit involvement from academic staff, a job category of university employees that includes student advisors, was mentioned in the proposal. However, Quest has learned that the proposal was to be revealed in a presentation to the academic staff set for May 9, just weeks before the planned closure was to occur.

First widespread notice of the reorganization plan and "open to all university students" listening session was reported April 6 in the *Badger Herald*, one of the two daily campus papers. That article provided few specifics on the actual proposal, but reported that the proposal was enjoying widespread support.

The student staff of the LGBT Campus

Center responded in an open letter on April 13 that claimed that "students just found out about the proposal - which is scheduled to be implemented July 1 - though the discussions leading to its inception began several months ago and have been needlessly shrouded in secrecy."

In addition to complaints about the process, staff members cited details of the plan that would "splice the LGBTCC with the Multicultural Student Center, the Diversity Education Program and other social justice organizations on campus."

Other concerns resulting from the proposed change cited in the letter included the loss of autonomy that was promised to be retained in the LGBT Center's 2003 affiliation with ODOS; the loss of safe space for people of shared identity; and "the implicit message that one office is sufficient to meet the needs of all oppressed peoples."

On the evening of April 18, less than 24 hours before the event, ODOS announced that the April 19 listening session would be postponed until the fall semester. Dean of Students Luoluo Hong stated that "I do want to reiterate that change is necessary and will need to take place in ODOS if we are to continue realizing our mission. But to ensure everyone's voices are heard and ideas are taken into account, we want to take more time for these discussions to occur."

Concerns arose in part from the from a his-



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tory of LGBT issues being of lesser priority in allocation of resources by campus administration. In the early 1990s, LGBT issues for all of campus were the responsibility of a fraction of the position of a staff member which dwindled over time, and top campus administrators avoided the topic.

The LGBT Campus Center existed for many years as a student organization without institutional support, other than student fees. In 1992, the "LGB Campus Center" rented offices located about a mile off-campus. A positive change

was the hiring of a full-time LGBT Issues Coordinator for campus in 1999, who worked out of the ODOS. When the LGBT Campus Center was made a unit of the Dean of Students office in 2003, the issues coordinator position was transitioned into a center director position.

Today, the LGBT Campus Center follows a model similar to the UW's McBurney Disability Resource Center and the Multicultural Student Center, both of which receive student segregated fee funding, but also have full-time professional staff and are

units of the dean's office.

The UW-Madison Committee on GLBT Issues, which includes representatives from faculty, academic and classified staff, and students, has now scheduled its own listening session for Wednesday, April 27, 7:30-9 PM, in the Memorial Union, with a focus on the LGBT Campus Center in the reorganization plan.

Story filed by Quest's Madison correspondent Dan Ross.

CONNECTICUT CIVIL UNIONS BILL BECOMES LAW FIRST STATE TO PRO-ACTIVELY EXTEND LEGAL RECOGNITION TO SAME-SEX COUPLES

Hartford - Landmark legislation creating same-sex civil unions akin to marriage passed the state Senate April 20 and was quickly signed into law by Republican Gov. M. Jodi Rell. Supporters hailed it as step forward for equal rights while opponents said the law marked a sad day in Connecticut and will lead to a court fight.

Under the law that goes into effect October 1, couples who enter into civil unions will enjoy the same state rights as married couples, including rights to inheritance and pensions, state health benefits, "emergency and non-emergency medical care and treatment, hospital visitation and notification, and authority to act in matters affecting family members," according to the Legislative Research Office. Federal rights such as the ability to file joint income tax returns or have the unions recognized by other states are not extended by the law.

A total of 588 state laws, administrative regulations, court rules, common law, and civil laws have been identified as affecting the couples.

State Senator Andrew McDonald, the Judiciary Committee co-chair who shepherded the bill through the legislature, said he was elated that the bill had finally passed and that Rell had signed it so quickly.

"It's a stunning step forward for equal rights in the state and I think it sends a powerful message about Connecticut's dedication to eliminating discrimination in all its facets," McDonald, the Senate's only openly gay member, said. "It will send a strong message to the rest of the country that the will of the people and popular perception can in fact change the world."

With its passage, Connecticut becomes the first U.S. state to create civil unions for same-sex couples without the intervention of a court. Vermont's legislature created civil unions in 2000 after a 1999 court order and Massachusetts recognized marriages between same-sex couples in 2003 after a state court there ruled that excluding gays from marriage was discriminatory. The Connecticut law, how-

ever, does not recognize those unions.

The Senate had approved the bill two weeks ago. But last week the House added two amendments, one that defines marriage as between a man and a woman and another restricting civil unions in all cases to those over 18, where, for marriage, there are some exceptions for 16 and 17 year olds.

The marriage definition amendment had failed in the Senate two weeks ago but Senate proponents prior to the final passage vote said that because that definition had already been established elsewhere in the law, they saw no reason to attempt to remove it. They passed the bill as amended 28-8 with the same bipartisan vote as two weeks ago, but with two senators absent.

Rell signed the bill into law about one hour later. "I have said all along that I believe in no discrimination of any kind and I think this bill accomplishes that, while at the same time preserving the traditional language that a marriage is between a man and a woman," Rell said outside her office moments after signing the bill, with McDonald and Judiciary Committee co-chair Rep. Michael Lawlor, standing at her side. "From the very beginning I have also said that this is not a Republican or Democratic issue, that it should not be partisan and that by signing it today I have indicated that that is in fact the case."

Love Makes a Family, the leading gay and lesbian rights group supporting same-sex unions in the state, originally had said it would not support civil union legislation because it considers the unions a second-class status to full recognition of marriage for same-sex couples. The organization later softened its stance and began saying that it sees civil unions as a positive stepping stone for full marriage rights.

"This is a great day," said Love Makes a Family President Anne Stanback. "We have taken an important step on the path toward full equality. We have more work to do, but certainly this will provide important rights for same-sex couples in our state."

Stanback said she doesn't know what the

impact of the law will be when it goes into effect October 1: whether couples would run out and seek civil union recognition, wait for full marriage rights or seek to be married in other states that might allow it.

That question is answered for Kix Ryen, 34, a business manager for UBS in Stamford who lives near Norwalk Hospital with her partner Cathy Ryen. The two, who have been together for two years, had a ceremony last August that they called their "wedding" and after which Cathy took Kix's last name. Kix Ryen said she and Cathy will form a civil union soon after the law takes effect.

"We're happy that Cathy and I are going to be legally recognized as partners," Ryen said in a telephone interview. "We're not so thrilled there's a definition of marriage as between a man and woman written into the bill."

Ryen, 34, originally from Norway, said she and Cathy are in the process of making a family, and that she will carry the child. She hopes the law will make it easier for them to make all the necessary arrangements.

"You have to plan for all kinds of eventualities, wills and what's going to happen and the fact that we're going to be legally recognized, there's so much less paperwork to be done," Kix Ryen said. "We were ready to do it, making the other person the primary care taker for medical emergencies, all the stuff that heterosexual couples get with a marriage license. I'm really hoping this civil union law is a big step forward in reducing the paperwork and getting us the rights we want. This means we don't have to be jumping through all kinds of (legal) hoops."

Brian Brown, whose organization, the Family Institute of Connecticut has been the staunchest opponent of same sex marriage and civil union legislation. Brown also said that his organization would not let voters forget who voted in favor of the civil union legislation when the House and Senate are up for reelection in 2006.

However, Rep. Lawlor countered that in last year's elections more lawmakers who came out in favor of same-sex marriage or civil unions were elected, suggesting "there's no political downside" in 2006 for legislators who supported the bill.

Diversion of the Day Community Calendar

Thursday, April 28

Harmony Cafe (Appleton) Open Mic, hosted by local musician Kevin Byrne, 7 pm

Friday, April 29

Crick's Fox River Lounge (Green Bay) Glamarama performs, 9 pm; no cover
Harmony Cafe (Appleton) Opening reception presenting the latest work of Lawrence University art major, Sandra Schwert, 7 pm. The work will be shown through the month of May.
SAGE (Milw.) Girls 'r' Out Movie & Tea. A women's only event to see *Calendar Girls*. Tea & nibbles served. 5 pm
Skylight Opera Theatre (158 N. Broadway, Milw.) "Get Happy: The Music of Judy Garland" opens today & runs thru May 15. Tickets: (414) 291-7800

Saturday, April 30

Office (Rockford, IL) Miss Illinois Continental pageant, 10 pm (prize package up to \$3,150). Info: JcFordIII@aol.com or (9815) 378-7808
SAGE/Milw. Poker Night, 5:30 pm. at SAGE offices. Bring a snack; soft drinks will be served.

Friday, May 6

Club Night Out (Stevens Point) 18 & up Nite (also May 20)

Saturday, May 7

Great Lakes Bikers beer/soda bust, 10pm-1am, at Tazzbach Bar & Grill, 1712 W. Pierce, Milw. \$5

Monday, May 9

Outwards Book Club (Milw.) All are welcome to discuss Harlan Greene's *The German Officer's Boy*, 7:30 pm

Tuesday, May 10

Lesbian Reading group at Outwards Books: discussion this evening, 7 pm, will be Nicole Foster's *Ultimate Lesbian Erotica 2005*. Welcome!

Wednesday, May 11

STD Specialties HIV & syphilis testing, 10pm-1am, at 94 North, Kenosha (also June 8)

Friday, May 13

Shelter (Green Bay) Whitney Paige headlines with Anita Shelter, Kelli Jo Klein, Jennifer Alyce, Tammy Faye, Desiree Mathews & Lee Bradford

Saturday, May 14

Men's Voices Milwaukee Spring Concert A Journey Through a

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Man's Life, 8 pm, Helene Zelazo Center-Peck School for the Performing Arts, UW-M, 2419 E. Kenwood Bl'vd. Tickets: \$15 advance, \$20 at door or \$15 w/ 4 non-perishables donated to the Hunger Task Force. Tickets: Avail. from MVM members & at the Zelazo Box Office (414) 229-4308

Oh Zone (Rockford) Miss Borderline WI USofA Pageant

Saturday, May 21

Shelter (Green Bay) Come Ride a Cowboy! It's Shelter's Hoedown. Free cowboy hats and bandannas. Starts at 10 pm

Monday, May 30 (Memorial Day)

Club Majestic (Madison) Mr. Gay Wisconsin pageant

Fri.-Sat., May 20-21

Angels of Hope MCC HUGE RUMMAGE SALE at the Green Bay church site, 3607 Libal St.

PrideFest (Milwaukee) Sat.-Sun., June 11-12

Milwaukee Pride Parade Sunday, June 12

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New on DVD by Glenn Bishop "Prom Queen"

Glenn suspected that "Prom Queen" might have been set just across the Canadian border from that gay cinematic utopia, Eden so delightfully depicted in the charming gay romance, "Big Eden." Cynical and bitter as Glenn admittedly is, the thought of an entire high school supporting a blue-haired gay teen taking his boyfriend to his prom seems like merely a divinely preposterous fairy tale.

Imagine Glenn's surprise to learn that this delightful, feel-good film is based on a true story. In May, 2002 the real seventeen year-old Marc Hall fought to take his boyfriend, Jean-Paul to his Catholic high school's prom.

As "Prom Queen" opens, it seems a day like any other in the life of openly gay Catholic high school student Marc Hall (Aaron Ashmore). The exuberant teen jumps out of bed, cranks up the music before dressing and bounding out of the house, skipping breakfast, while his parents look on indulgently.

But it isn't a day like any other. It is time to prepare for prom and Marc has naively submitted his and his boyfriend's name. Then Principal Warrick (Dave Foley) throws a wrench into the works - there's no way Marc will be given permission to bring a boy to the prom.

So begins Marc's quest - will this charming, blue-rinsed Cinderella make it to the prom on time?

Kent Staines's screenplay combines elements taken directly from Marc Hall's real court case with a romantic comedy framework



reminiscent of those delightful ABC Afternoon Specials Glenn enjoyed as a youth.

When Marc's best gal pal Charley (Tamara Hope) finds out that Marc can't go to the prom, she decides she will show her solidarity by refusing to go as well. This doesn't set well with Charley's adorable, blue-eyed boyfriend Beau (Trevor Blumas). Determined to go to the prom at any cost, he enlists the aid of a couple of computer geeks who set up a "Send Marc to the Prom" website - filling it with rainbows, pink triangles and pictures of an unidentified guy with a bunch of arrows in his body. They are not sure what it all means but all the other gay websites have that sort of stuff.

If this wasn't based upon a true story, this really would be just too gosh-darn cute. Despite solid support from much of

the student body and by Marc's parents, there are still obstacles Marc must navigate before his dream of dancing with his boyfriend under the twinkling mirror ball can become a reality. First, Marc's boyfriend Jason (Mac Fyfe) wasn't out before the media made he and Marc the latest cause-célèbre, begins to get cold feet. Second, the well-meaning school board seems absolutely determined to uphold their belief in the archaic notions of Catholic morality. Finally, Marc must even question the motives of his slimy lawyer Lonnie "ISUE4U" Winn (Kid's in the Hall's Scott Thompson).

Buy it, rent it or forget it...

Something of a "Beautiful Thing" goes on vacation to "Big Eden." "Prom Queen" is the perfect film of real "family values," where even the hot, homophobic but closeted classmate manages to somehow find himself at the prom with his boyfriend.

Just the facts...

"Prom Queen" is in English and runs 88 minutes

All about the real Marc Hall at http://www.samesexmarriage.ca/advocacy/marc_hall.htm

DVD offers usual extras and has a suggested of SRP: \$24.95 and will be available May 3rd



Whitney Paige

Quest recently had the opportunity to talk with Whitney Paige who will be performing at The Shelter in Green Bay on Friday, May 13th. Whitney is well known across the country for the art of female impersonation. It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to talk with Whitney and we look forward to having her perform in Wisconsin.

Q: Where are you from, and how long have you been in the art of female impersonation?

WP: I was born and raised in Nashville, TN., but reside in Dallas, TX. I have been in the art of female impersonation for many wonderful years!

Q: How did you get started performing and how often do you perform?

WP: Well, like many involved in the art, it all began with a dare, and honey, the shoes fit and they felt so natural! I decided this is what I enjoyed, and loved entertaining. I was lucky enough to quit my daytime job and entertain ever night of the week.

Q: What is it that you enjoy about female impersonation?

WP: I love meeting people, making them laugh and smile. I have been very lucky to travel across this great country and entertain. This will be my first time in Green Bay, so I am looking forward to this show!

Q: How many state and national titles have you held?

WP: I truly am blessed as a performer winning and representing

so many different pageants and pageant systems. I have won every title in the state of Texas, and have been crowned Miss Texas EOY twice! Nationally, I have been crowned Miss USofA at Large and Miss World. Recently, I captured the title of Miss Venus USofA and will be competing at the Miss Gay USofA Pageant. Being crowned Miss Gay USofA has always been a dream of mine so I look forward to competing this year.

Q: Who are you known for impersonating?

WP: I am well known for performing songs by Diana Ross, Patty LaBelle, and Whitney Houston. I enjoy entertaining and no matter whom I am impersonating, I like all my performances to be bigger than life!

Q: What can the patrons of The Shelter expect from Whitney Paige on May 13th?

WP: The patrons need to be ready to have a good time, in the most positive way! I plan to make them laugh, and make them smile! That week is actually my

birthday week, as I celebrate my birthday on May 10th, so I will be ready for a party after the show! I drink chilled southern comfort and love pretty boys! J

Q: Thank you Whitney for taking the time, and letting our readers get to know you better! We look forward to your performance at The Shelter on May 13th!

FMI on Whitney Paige, you can visit her website; www.whitney-paige.com or www.TheShelterClub.com Showtime is 11pm at The Shelter, 730 N. Quincy St., Green Bay.

NO Cover Charge for the show!! Come Join the Fun as we welcome Whitney Paige to Wisconsin!!



GAY CATHOLICS SOUR ON NEWLY-ELECTED POPE BENEDICT XVI "GOD'S ROTTWEILER" INFAMOUS FOR ANT-GAY POSITIONS



Rome - When white smoke puffed from the Sistine Chapel chimney April 19 and church bells tolled minutes later to signal the selection of a new pope, America's gay and lesbian Catholics braced themselves for deep disappointment.

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, the man who has described homosexuality as "an intrinsic moral evil," emerged at dusk on to the balcony of St. Peter's Square, drawing cheers from the thousands gathered as the 265th pope announced his new name, Benedict XVI.

But for Kara Speltz, a gay Catholic from California, the speedy decision symbolized the church's intent to abide by the staunch conservatism of Pope John Paul II. "If a decision was made that fast, I knew the Holy Spirit was not working here," Speltz said. "But in my worst nightmares, I did not think Ratzinger would be the next pope."

Speltz, co-chair of the Catholic division of Souforce, a non-profit organization seeking equality for gays in all religions, said

she and her team members were stunned by Ratzinger's selection. "Personally, I don't know if I can stay in the church with a Nazi in the papacy," she added, noting Ratzinger's brief stint as a Hitler Youth during World War II in his home country of Germany. Ratzinger has said that membership was mandatory.

Dubbed "God's rottweiler" and "the enforcer," Ratzinger, who turned 78 just days before his selection, served more than 20 years under Pope John Paul II as prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the office once known as the Holy Inquisition.

His hardline approach to dissidents earned him a tough reputation for enforcing the doctrine of the church, and he has continuously spoken out against homosexuality as well as other progressive issues, including ordaining women into the priesthood, birth control and the acceptance of married priests.

Ratzinger authored the Vatican's 1986 "Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons." Written in English and aimed at American Catholics, the letter stated: "Although the particular inclination of the homosexual person is not a sin, it is a more or less strong tendency ordered toward an intrinsic moral evil; and thus the inclination itself must be seen as an objective disorder."

And in 2003, Ratzinger wrote the Vatican's "Considerations Regarding Proposals to Give Legal Recognition to Unions Between Homosexual Persons," a battle plan guiding Catholic politicians to oppose gay marriage and adoptions. "There are absolutely no grounds for considering homosexual unions to be in any way similar or even remotely analogous to God's plan for marriage and family," Ratzinger wrote. "Marriage is holy, while homosexual acts go against the natural moral law."

Mark Jordan, a gay Catholic who came out while a professor at Notre Dame, said news of Ratzinger's election sickened him. "I felt kicked in the stomach. And then I probably felt kicked out the door. Because certainly the room for people like me to present themselves as Catholic theologians ... will shrink even further," said Jordan, now a religion professor at Emory University in Atlanta.

Jordan, whose books include "The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology" and "The Silence of Sodomy: Homosexuality in Modern Catholicism," said the choice of Ratzinger to lead the Catholic Church at this time is an obvious preference to reward enforcement of a strict and conservative doctrine. "There will be no progress and perhaps much regress," Jordan said. "Many liberal Catholics who hoped they would roll back the legacy of Pope John Paul II have got to be bitterly disappointed."

Patricia Dugan, a Philadelphia-based Catholic canon and civil lawyer, said Ratzinger's selection signifies the church's desire for "comfort food." "He was the vice pope; this is Pope John Paul II, Part II," Dugan said. "People were so comfortable with Pope John Paul II and his style, and Ratzinger is as close to Pope John Paul II as you can get."

But many gay Catholics felt it was time for the church hierarchy to recognize the need to find common ground and seek dialogue with others. "The elevation of Cardinal Ratzinger is being seen by many LGBT Catholics as a profound betrayal by the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church and betrayal of one of the most fundamental teachings of Jesus Christ as the loving Good Shepherd who reached out to the ones separated from the flock," said Sam Sinnett, president of the gay Catholic organization Dignity USA. "We believe the 21st century Roman Catholic hierarchical shepherds are themselves lost, and it is up to the flock to call them back," Sinnett said.

BRIARPATCH SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

Madison: - Youth Services of Southern Wisconsin-Briarpatch is looking for help-line volunteers. Briarpatch's Crisis intervention services are staffed and handled by the agency's volunteer crisis help-line counselors. Volunteer training at Briarpatch covers issues ranging from domestic abuse and runaways, to drug abuse and adolescent development. Help-line volunteers offer support and provide referrals to teens and parents who call to talk about their problems, frustrations, or other crises.

The next volunteer training will be June 7 through July 2. Tuesday and Thursday training sessions are 5:30-8:30 PM and Saturday sessions run from 10 AM to Noon. The complete volunteer training process takes total of 56 hours over four weeks with twelve structured sessions and three practice shifts. All sessions will be held at Briarpatch, 512 E. Washington Ave.

Briarpatch Volunteers are college students, parents, high-school students, brothers, sisters, seniors, and professionals. Prospective volunteers may submit an online application, or call Rachel O'Leary at 608-251-6211 to have an application mailed to them.

For more information, visit the Briarpatch website at: www.youthsos.org

CHRISTIANS FOR EQUALITY SET PLANNING CONFERENCE

Oconomowoc: - Christians for Equality in Wisconsin will sponsor a Strategy Planning Workshop Saturday, April 30 at the First Congregational Church, 815 S. Concord St. here.

According to the mainstream Christian organization opposing the proposed state constitutional amendment that would ban legal recognition of all unmarried couples, regardless of sexual orientation, there is much work to be done between now and November, 2006, when the proposed ban is expected to be voted on by the citizens of Wisconsin.

The day's events will begin with registration and refreshments at 9 AM. A 9:30 AM worship and working session will offer an update on work done thus far by the CFE, the current status of the proposed amendment, and a look at the CFE's mission and message. Brainstorming on what activities, events and programs should be held, tasking and time line creation, and ideas for networking with other allied groups will follow. The day will conclude following a box lunch and social.

Reservations are not necessary but box lunches will be ordered for those who

respond by email by April 28 at: cfe@firstcongrmadison.org. Those who have any ideas or suggestions, but are unable to attend are also asked to send them to the CFE email address.



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OUTREACH, SENIOR CENTER COLLABORATE ON LGBT PROGRAMMING

Madison: - Outreach, the city's LGBT community center, and the Madison Senior Center have recently begun collaborating around expanding their supports to LGBT seniors. The two agencies have been working together to provide a social for LGBT elders and allies twice a year, but believe that this partnership could be greatly expanded as both anticipate an increase in the need and demand for services and supports for this population.

Before developing a plan to serve this population or further enhance their collaboration, the community partners would like more information about the experiences and needs of Madison's aging LGBT population. To that end, the two agencies are holding a series of focus groups on April 21, 24 and 26 with members of Dane County's LGBT communities who are



willing to discuss experiences related to retirement and aging.

Participation in the focus groups will be confidential, and will provide an opportunity to provide feedback on how the agencies can best serve as a resource, as well as develop services, programming and/or advocacy efforts that will be meaningful in the lives of LGBT seniors. The focus group facilitator, Maureen Ittig, is also available for one-on-one interviews about these issues.

If you would like to more information about this project or would like to participate in one of the focus groups, please contact Maureen Ittig at mpittig@wisc.edu or call 334-7475.

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LOGO GAY CHANNEL SEEKS ENTRY IN MADISON MARKET

Madison: - LOGO, MTV's new gay channel, is trying to get in the Madison market and has partnered with Outreach, the city's LGBT community center, to lobby the area's local cable provider to add the service. "We need to reach out to people and get them to call Charter and let them know that there is an LGBT community out there who would like to see more of themselves on TV," LOGO representatives told Quest. "We need people to call Charter by April 30 at 608-274-3822."



LOGO has partnered with HRC, PFLAG, GLAAD, The Victory Fund, and NGLTF in this effort to get the word out about the service, but is looking to make some headway on a local level in the markets where the cable channel needs to make the cable operator's phone ring. For more information about LOGO and its programming, visit LOGO at: www.logoonline.com.

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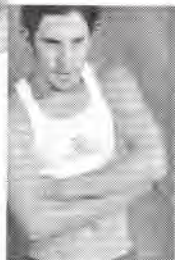
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PROPOSED BILL WOULD BAN GAY BOOKS

Alabama: - A bill that was considered by the Alabama Legislature on April 20 could ban certain books from all public facilities, officials said at a town hall meeting sponsored by the Human Rights Campaign held in Birmingham April 18. Officials said the bill would prohibit public funds and facilities such as schools and libraries from promoting a so-called "homosexual lifestyle."

Birmingham Middle school English teacher Matt Rittenberry said he has concerns about the bill. Rittenberry said his concerns about the bill brought him to the HRC event. Rittenberry cited works by Walt Whitman and William Shakespeare as examples of literature that he fears could be banned by the bill.

Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese said that he has the same concern about banning books, and said that is the reason he was in town to discuss what some call hateful legislation.

However, Jim Pinto, founder of a local religious group calling itself the Sanctity of Life Ministries, countered Solmonese's claim. "The state is protecting taxpayer money by not promoting a deviant lifestyle," Pinto told the HRC gathering.

GAY CLUB BOMBER ERIC RUDOLPH REVEALS MOTIVES



Georgia: - During a two-year series of bombings in the Deep South, Eric Rudolph considered himself a warrior against abortion and homosexuality. A sometimes-rambling, sometimes-reflective 11-page manifesto released by Rudolph's attorneys April 13 soon after he entered his last guilty plea in the bombings gave the most detailed look yet into the mind of the former Army explosives expert who killed two people and injured more than 120 others.

Rudolph pleaded guilty in federal court to the deadly 1996 Olympic park bombing in Atlanta and attacks at two abortion clinics and a gay nightclub. He was sentenced to four life sentences without parole, escaping the death penalty by telling authorities the whereabouts of hundreds of pounds of dynamite and other explosives he stashed while hiding in the North Carolina mountains for five years. In the statement, Rudolph said stopping abortion - "this holocaust," he called it - was his main motive. Any agent of a government that allows it, he reasoned, is an enemy that deserves death.

Among the information in Rudolph's manifesto was a claim that the Olympic bombing was intended to be part of a weeklong campaign of explosions aimed at shutting down the games and embarrassing the U.S. government. Rudolph wrote that the purpose of the Olympic bombing "was to confound, anger and embarrass the Washington government in the eyes of the world for its abominable sanctioning of abortion on demand."

He originally hoped to obtain high-grade explosives and knock out the power grid around Atlanta, ending the games. When that

failed, he planned a series of five bombings over several days. He said he wanted to make phone calls well before each explosion, "leaving only uniformed arms-carrying government personnel exposed to potential injury." Rudolph wrote that a 911 call meant to warn authorities about the bomb was cut short, possibly because a plastic device he used to disguise his voice made him hard to understand.

Rudolph called homosexuality an "aberrant sexual behavior" and blasted what he called the government's acceptance of it. But he wrote that a pair of bombs planted at The Otherside Lounge, an Atlanta club that catered to a gay and lesbian clientele, targeted law enforcement, not the club's patrons.

In a postscript to his statement, Rudolph belittled, in sometimes mocking tones, theories that have swirled for years about his possible motives. He denied any allegiance to the racist, anti-Semitic, anti-gay Christian Identity movement, saying he attended an Identity church for about six months in the early 1980s only because the father of a woman he was dating went there. "I was born a Catholic, and with forgiveness I hope to die one," he wrote.

HISTORIANS CONFIRM LINCOLN WAS GAY OR BISEXUAL

Illinois: - It must have been the first conference in the history of Abraham Lincoln scholarship to call the Great Emancipator "a terrifically sexual guy." Addressing the nation's top Lincoln scholars on April 17, two historians defended a new book that claims Lincoln was gay and called for more research into his sexuality.

"I could build a Lincoln Log cabin of homophobic denial," Civil War historian Michael Chesson said. "There's been a cover-up, a conspiracy of silence for experts to hide what they regard as dirty linen in Abe's faded carpetbag."

The reason for the discussion - part of a conference held in conjunction with the opening of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum - is a new book called "The Intimate World of Abraham Lincoln." Author and sociologist C.A. Tripp, who died before the book was published, examined Lincoln's poetry, the recollections of those who knew him and his relationships with other men and concluded Lincoln was "predominantly homosexual."

Tripp went into more detail, but he was not the first person to speculate on the subject. Scholars have long wondered about the relationship between Lincoln and Joshua Speed. The two men slept in the same bed for four years in Springfield and developed a deep friendship.

Seeking to save money and stay warm in crude buildings, men of the day often shared beds. But Lincoln and Speed lived together long after they could afford separate quarters. Though both men married and Lincoln had four children, Tripp concluded they were lovers.

He reached the same conclusion about Lincoln and David Derickson, a soldier assigned to guard the president during the Civil War. Lincoln and Derickson sometimes shared a bed when Mary Todd Lincoln was out of town.

Jean Baker, author of a major biography of Mrs. Lincoln, has concluded that Lincoln was bisexual. "(Lincoln) loved men, and they loved him, at whatever level," Baker said.

Baker, however, rejected the contention that Lincoln married only to further his political career, saying Abraham and Mary "loved each other and could not be happy apart."

"DON RICKLES OF GAY COMEDY" PERFORMS MAY 7-8



Appleton: - He's performed at pride events from Provincetown to San Francisco. His initial intimate piano bar ivory tickler presence masquerades an outrageous comedian that has alternately delighted and enraged gay audiences throughout North America. Khris Francis, dubbed the "Don Rickles of Gay Comedy," will appear at Rascals Bar and Grill here May 7-8.

Native Californian Francis is currently touring the Midwest promoting the recent release of his fifth CD. However, Francis' musical skills are not as well known as his reputation for "blue" comedic material. "This show is not for those who are easily offended," Rascals owner Todd West told *Quest*. "That said, Khris Francis is also one of the funniest acts you'll ever see."

Shows both evenings begin at 10 PM. Though there is no cover charge for Francis' shows, tables may be reserved for a cost of \$20 each. For more information, contact Rascals at 920-954-9262.

CONFERENCE FOCUSES ON HIV/AIDS

DePere: - Across the globe populations are impacted by HIV and AIDS in different ways, but it is still a disease that takes lives. St. Norbert College president William Hynes made those opening comments at an AIDS symposium held on campus here April 16.

Hynes offered a personal view of HIV/AIDS' impact on the lives of young Africans. In Zambia, children are raised by six or seven sets of caretakers because the ones before have died from the disease, he told attendees of at the International Social Justice Symposium held at the college's F. K. Bemis International Center. The day-long event was co-sponsored by SNC and the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay.

Michael Riggs, external relations and information officer for the World Health Organization was among several panelists invited to address the conferees. Riggs said 8,000 people worldwide die every day from AIDS and HIV cases surpass 39 million worldwide.

Since HIV was first reported in Wisconsin in 1983, 8,700 people have contracted HIV, according to the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services. The 417 new cases reported in 2004 is the largest in seven years.

From 2002-04, 55% of newly reported cases were found in men who had sex with men. The state report also noted the



increase could be attributed to an increase in the number of such men seeking HIV testing. From 2001-03, the number of gay men getting tested rose by 27%.

While a high rate of women in developing countries are contracting HIV more men than women are contracting the disease in Wisconsin. In Wisconsin 78% of new HIV cases reported from 2002-04 were diagnosed in men versus 22% in women, according to a recent report released from the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services.

Kevin Roeder, a UWGB associate professor and board member of the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin, said a survey found that local victims of HIV name stigma as the second-greatest barrier to seeking medical treatment in Wisconsin. Transportation and financial worries were the first and third barriers named, respectively, he said.

GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE DEFIES "DAY OF SILENCE" BAN

Fond Du Lac: - The Gay-Straight Alliance at Fond du Lac High School made a silent statement April 13 by participating in the Day of Silence amid confusion as to whether students could participate. A week earlier the Fond Du Lac school board had issued an advisory prohibiting students at the city's high school from participating in the national GLSEN-sponsored event under threat of suspension.

Jake Becker, president of the Gay-Straight Alliance at Fond du Lac High School, said the Day of Silence created awareness and promoted equality. He told the *Fond Du Lac Reporter* that he hopes the day also broadens students' view of gay and lesbian people. "By promoting a broader viewpoint, we create a safer climate," Becker said.

The National Day of Silence is a youth-driven movement that boasts more than 3,000 participating schools across the country, Becker noted. "We feel the importance is to look at all the voices that aren't being heard today," he said. "All the voices have faced discrimination."

School Superintendent Dr. Gregory Maass said Fond du Lac High School did not officially sanction the day but allowed individuals to participate. Perhaps that's where the miscommunication came from, he said. "There has been confusion, but it has been cleared up," Becker said, avoiding reference to the board's April 8 memo.

The students who participated wore a button that explained that the wearer of the button was observing the Day of Silence and why. The students remained silent all day in school, except when remaining silent would interfere with responsibilities for their classes.

Across the state, Day of Silence events in Appleton, Green Bay, LaCrosse, Madison, Milwaukee, Oshkosh and Viroqua went on without incident. Nationally, GLSEN estimated more than a half-million students took part in Day of Silence events. By contrast, participants in the April 14 "Day of Truth," organized by the right wing Christian Alliance Defense Fund to counter the GLSEN event, numbered a paltry 1,150.

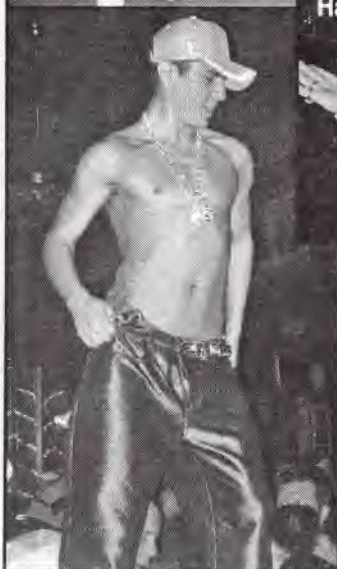


Above Left: Boom, Milwaukee held an Underwear Model Contest. Pictured is first and second place winners. After the contest we chilled for a while next door at "The Room". Of course I had to take a few extra shots above/below to pretend I was working and not really drinking.

Mr. Mississippi Valley contest @ Players



Player's co-owner, Harold



Miss N.E.W Wisconsin USofA @ Napalese

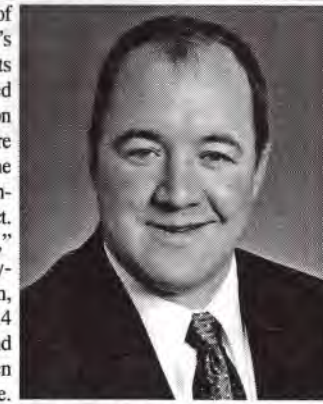
FEW SURPRISED BY GOP STATE SENATOR'S COMING OUT

Minnesota: - If any of Sen. Paul Koering's Brainerd constituents were shocked or outraged by his public revelation that he is gay, they were hard to find in this, the largest city in his north-central Minnesota district.

"To each his own," Jennifer Castro, a stay-at-home Brainerd mom, said over an April 14 lunch with her husband and two infant children at the Northland Grille.

"I was a little surprised by his announcement. But that's his personal business." Castro voted for the Koering in 2002 and expects to vote for him again in 2006.

Her attitude was typical of the majority of more than two dozen Brainerd-area residents interviewed by the St. Paul daily *Pioneer Press* recently. Koering's April 13 announcement was the first time he publicly discussed his sexual orientation. It came a week after Koering joined Democrats in the Senate to block an effort



to pull the proposed constitutional amendment banning gay marriage from an unfriendly committee.

In St. Paul, Koering was greeted on the Senate floor with hugs and handshakes from both Republicans and Democrats. He even got a call during the session from a supporter, who said she was a Democrat and a Catholic but still wanted to express her

good wishes. "I hope you will keep me in your prayers," the senator was heard to reply. "I'm a good Catholic boy, too."

Many of the senators said they have long known of his sexual orientation. "The Paul Koering I know is a large teddy bear with a very big heart and he will always be the same," said Republican Sen. Mady Reiter. Reiter said she didn't think any senator's opinion would change.

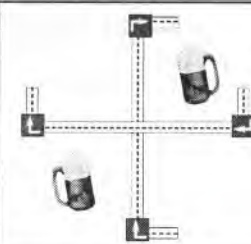
Koering acknowledged that being gay could cost him the next election in his con-

servative district, but he said he could live with that. He has no plans to switch parties, he said. "I feel like the Republican Party is big tent, and that there is a home for me in the Republican Party," he said. "The question is going to wind up being back home: Is the party big-tent enough for Paul Koering?" Koering said he is not a gay activist and supports Minnesota's current statute prohibiting same-sex marriages.

GOVERNOR FIRES UP ANTI-GAY MARRIAGE SUPPORTERS

Minnesota: - Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty lent his voice and presence to an April 20 rally in St. Paul supporting the state's proposed anti-gay marriage amendment. He advised those gathered to refute the claims of lawmakers who say the constitutional amendment is a distraction from more important state business.

"Mosquitoes when you are trying to get to sleep are a distraction," Pawlenty told the crowd of over one thousand mostly evangelical supporters of the bill. "Marriage between a man and a woman and protecting that is not a distraction. It is important." The Minnesota House approved placing



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Governor Tim Pawlenty speaks at Minnesota anti-gay rally April 20.

the marriage amendment on the 2006 ballot late last month. The full Minnesota Senate has not yet voted on the issue but last month it refused to pull the amendment from committee to the floor for a vote.

To add an amendment to the Minnesota constitution both the House and the Senate must first approve of putting it on the ballot. It then has to be approved by a majority of Minnesotans voting in a general election. The next general election will be in November 2006.

TOP COURT TOSSES GAY MARRIAGE LICENSES

Oregon: - The Oregon Supreme Court on April 14 nullified nearly 3,000 marriage licenses issued to gay couples a year ago by Portland's Multnomah County, saying a county cannot go against state matrimonial law.

"Oregon law currently places the regulation of marriage exclusively within the province of the state's legislative power," the high court said in its unanimous ruling. The court said state law bans gay marriage. It also noted that Oregon voters approved a constitutional amendment last November that even more explicitly prohibits the practice.

Kevin Neely, spokesman for the state attorney general's office, said the court left the big issue civil unions for gay couples for another day. "I suspect the issue will be resolved by either legislation or by additional litigation," he said.

Legislators had been waiting for the court's ruling for guidance. On April 15, Democratic Gov. Ted Kulongoski said he will push for a law allowing gay couples to form civil unions that would give them many of the rights and privileges of marriage.

Multnomah County, which includes much of Portland and is the state's most

populous county, began issuing marriages to gay couples last April, its county commissioners arguing that not doing so would violate the Oregon Constitution. A judge stopped the practice about six weeks later, but not before nearly 3,000 gay couples had wed.

Marte Sheehan, who married Linda Duchek last March, said she was disappointed with the ruling but hopes the Legislature passes a bill allowing civil unions. "I believe that ultimately the Legislature will do the right thing," she said.

BILL BANNING GAY FOSTER PARENTS PASSES

Texas: - The Texas State House tentatively approved legislation April 19 that would prohibit gay, lesbian and bisexual people from becoming foster parents. Legislators voted 81-58 to approve the ban in an amendment tacked on to a bill that would revamp the state's Child Protective Services agency. The full bill was tentatively approved 126-16. Final approval was expected Wednesday.

"It is our responsibility to make sure that we protect our most vulnerable children

Thank You SIR:

by Jeff Hicks

Yes SIR, At your service SIR!

sadism, 1. The getting of sexual pleasure from dominating, mistreating, or hurting one's partner 2. the getting of pleasure from inflicting physical or psychological pain on another or others. Sado-maso-chism - the getting of pleasure, esp. sexual pleasure from sadism or masochism.

Sade, Marquis DE - Novelist whose writings describe sexual aberrations.

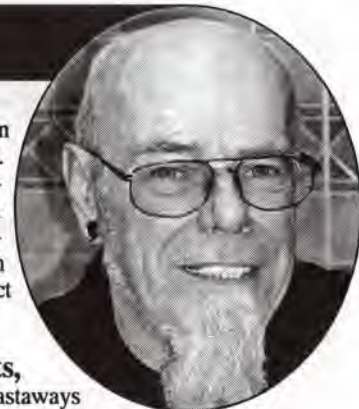
Psycho sexual activity in which sexual urges are gratified by the infliction of pain on another person. The term was coined in reference to the Marquis de Sade, an 18th-century French nobleman who chronicled his own such practices. Sadism is often linked to masochism, in which sexual arousal results from receiving pain, and many individuals respond in either role. The sadist, however, often seeks a victim who is not a masochist, as some of the sexual excitement derives from the victim's unwillingness. In most cases, however, the degree of 'unwillingness' is accepted by both parties. The level and extent of sadistic violence may vary considerably, from infliction of mild pain, in otherwise harmless love play, to the extreme. The satisfaction of the sadist may result not from inflicting actual physical pain but rather from the mental suffering of the victim. Sexual urges may limit the level of violence, but in some cases the aggressive impulse becomes predominant and the sadist progresses to more extreme expressions of his violent tendencies. The term sadism is occasionally used outside the sexual context, to describe individuals who are purposely cruel or who seem to derive pleasure from humiliating and dominating others in social situations. In this context, some milder forms of sadism are relatively more acceptable, such as the use of humiliating sarcasm as a conversational tool. Modern day Sadism, is usually practiced within the "limits" pre-established by the participants. It is not unusual to discuss what those limits are before engaging in any activity, and each

players preferences in significant detail. Doing so is the greatest safety net we can have. The next article will be on the M in BDSM. THE subject that i know best.

Upcoming events, June 11-12, the Castaways M.C. will be serving you at their beer tent at Pridefest.

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Below: At the Daddy/Daddy's boy/Granddaddy contest by the Argonauts in Green Bay, Our new title holders are: Dave: Daddy Rick: Daddy's Boy



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PENTAGON FLIP FLOPS SODOMY REMAINS A CRIME

Washington DC: - Pentagon officials denied April 22 that a proposed revision of the US code of military justice decriminalized sodomy between consenting adults. It said it could still be tried as a sex-related offense that was prejudicial to good order and discipline. Rights groups had welcomed the proposed change as removing a significant obstacle to ending the military's ban on gay men and women in uniform.

But Pentagon spokesman Lawrence DiRita said the proposed change did not decriminalize consensual sodomy and

merely put it into another category of triable offenses. "The act will continue to be a crime in the United States military. That's not changing," he said.

The proposed change would redefine sodomy in the code as limited to forcible sodomy or the sodomy of a child, and remove references to sodomy between consenting adults and unnatural copulation with an animal. At the same time, consensual sodomy would be listed in the Manual for Courts Martial as a sex-related offense that could be tried as prejudicial to good order and discipline,

according to a summary of the recommended changes.

Under "Don't Ask, Don't Tell", service members are barred from military service if they admit they are gay or are caught engaging in same-sex acts.

"Pentagon leaders can no longer justify banning gays because of private, consensual conduct if the military sodomy statute is repealed," Sharra Greer of the Servicemembers Legal Defence Network said. "Commanders should be concerned about winning the war on terror, not about prying into service members private lives."

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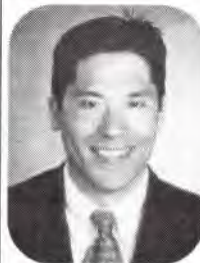


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and I don't think we are doing that if we allow a foster parent that is homosexual or bisexual," GOP Rep. Robert Talton, who introduced the amendment.

The state Senate has passed its own version of Child Protective Services reform that does not include the ban on gay foster parents.

Randall Ellis, executive director of the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas, said the House measure would mean the exclusion of people who could be good foster parents to children who need of them. "Mr. Talton has taken aim at the (gay and lesbian) community of Texas and thousands of children are now caught in the cross hairs," he said.

The bill also would spin off some of Child Protective Services' duties to the private sector, including foster care and case management. Private agencies already manage 75% of foster homes in Texas, and the state handles the rest. The bill would turn all of those functions over to private agencies. The bill follows recent high-profile cases of child homicides that happened after agency case-workers had investigated possible neglect or abuse and decided the children were safe to remain with their parents.

GAY RIGHTS BILL FAILS BY ONE VOTE

Washington: - Legislation banning discrimination against gays and lesbians reached the floor of the Washington Senate April 21 for the first time in history, but fell one vote short of becoming law. House Bill 1515, which has been around in some form for at least a quarter-century, lost 25-24 in a largely partisan split. Two conservative Democratic senators joined all 23 Republicans to defeat the bill.

State law now bans discrimination by race, sex, religion, national origin, marital status and other categories. The bill, which had passed the House, would have added sexual orientation to that list.

Openly gay Seattle lawmaker Rep. Ed Murray has been sponsoring the bill for a decade, and predicted his side would prevail in the long run. "We didn't win today, but we will be back and we will win," he said, choking with emotion.

Equal Rights Washington, a group that lobbied in favor of the bill, said it plans to run radio and television ads as soon as next week attacking Republican Minority Leader Bill Finkbeiner for voting against the measure. "We want to make sure [voters] know Bill Finkbeiner voted against House Bill 1515 and for discrimination," Executive Director

George Cheung said. As a member of the House in the early 1990s, Finkbeiner voted in favor of similar legislation.

Finkbeiner told the *Seattle Times* that he wasn't worried about a backlash. "I think I represent my district well. I'm going to keep doing what I think is right," he said. As for his vote in favor of the measure in the early 1990s, Finkbeiner said: "That was 12 years ago."

Prior to the vote, supporters of the gay-rights legislation thought they had their best shot in years to get the bill passed because Democrats control the House, Senate and Governor's Office. The bill passed the House in February by its largest margin ever, including several Republican votes. Gov. Christine Gregoire, who actively recruited votes in the Senate, had said she would sign it.

Supporters had hoped that if they could get the bill to the Senate floor, enough moderate Republicans would break ranks with their caucus to pass the legislation. Republicans, in previous years, had been able, with the help of conservative Democrats, to use procedural moves to keep the legislation from coming to the floor for a vote.

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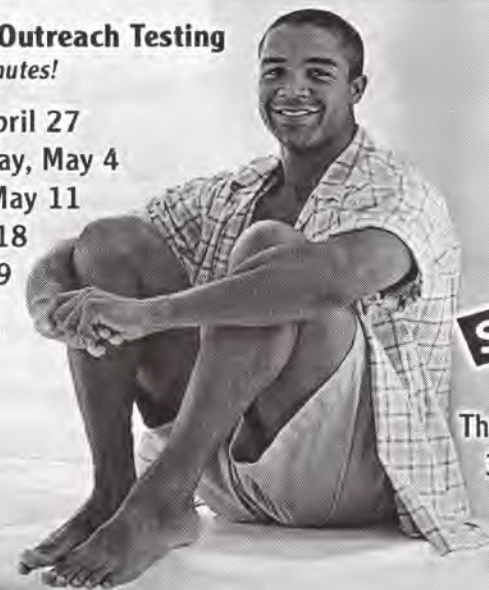
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