

The Rainbow Times

Your LGBT News in Western MA, the Capital District of NY, Northern CT, & Southern VT

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FREE!

The L Word news that avid fans were hoping for here!

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Opinions

Economics & same-sex marriage

By: *Nicole C. Lashomb**/TRT Editor-in-Chief

On July 29, 2008, the Mass. House voted to repeal a 1913 state law that prohibited almost all out-of-state gay and lesbian couples from legally marrying in Massachusetts. This repeal was favored in a vote of 118 to 35. In lieu of the repeal, neighboring gay coupled New Yorkers have begun flocking to the liberated state to unify their relationships across the border as opposed to flying across the country to California.

In May 2008, NY Governor Patterson instructed New York State agencies to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other jurisdictions. This opens up a wealth of legal rights to lesbian and gay couples, including state health insurance, state tax

breaks, hospitalization/visitation rights, pension survivor benefits, amongst others.

The business of same sex-marriage is also proving beneficial for local economies.

In a report by *The New York Times*, August 2nd edition, "The New York City comptroller's office estimated in a June 2007 report that allowing gay marriage could bring \$142 million to the local economy in the first three years. The state would collect an additional \$8 million in taxes and the city would collect an additional \$7 million, and companies in New York would benefit from a wider pool of possible employees attracted by the change in marriage laws, the report projected."

See 1913 Law on Page 22

C'mon Out – Just Ask! Advice column

By: *Tetty Gorfine**/TRT Columnist

Tetty, Thank you for your offer of help. I am a 51 year old, happy, hetero, single, male, cross dresser. I live a fairly balanced "dual life" (mostly in the closet but "out" for pride marches away from my small New England town). I'm bright, jovial, & have a lot to give but am feeling "shot down". I'm looking for a woman who wants this, not just accepts it. I've written hundreds of very nice emails to (online daters) straight & gay women ...no takers ...now writing only to bi-women ... no takers ... short of selling my house & moving to a big metro area. HOW will I ever do this? I'm frustrated to despondency as I know that my chances no matter what, are slim. Lonely & worried, DJ

Dear DJ:

It is clear you want to be open and honest with a potential partner. This is a wonderful thing and I applaud you for it.

I have met scores of heterosexual cross dressers over the years. I haven't met one who has not been anxious and/or worried about their partners finding out. There is a great lack of information and awareness about gender identity and it's expression. When people first learn or see someone who is different (no matter what the difference), the response can be one of fear. And fear can be expressed in so many ways such as anger and judgment. This is, what I believe you are experiencing with the women with whom you are meeting.

When two people first meet and fall in love, hopefully, over time openness and honesty develops. As they get to know other better, they begin to share their inner truths (and secrets). The outcome is trust and deepening intimacy. This takes time and can only be built slowly.

In my experience, couples who accept one as cross dresser do so as a result of a relationship that is already successfully negotiating differences (since any two people are always different). When two people are developing trust because the relationship is already working well, there is a great deal of motivation to work out more challenging differences.

So DJ, what I want to suggest is that you



TETTY GORFINE

go ahead and find someone. Do not involve yourself in having to find someone who can quickly and easily accept this part of you. Do not tell them that you are a cross dresser. You might think this is a lie, but I think it is not.

When people first enter a relationship there are all sorts of things that are not shared. For example, if there are family secrets or if someone has had an earlier experience that has brought them shame, these things frequently are not shared until trust is developed. Don't get me wrong DJ, I am not advocating secrecy, nor do I think that being a cross dresser is something for which one should feel shame. It is just that we, humans, do not go around sharing our deepest feelings and vulnerabilities until we feel safe enough to do so!

Date, meet people, DJ. When you meet someone with whom you click, when you find you can share your deepest thoughts and feelings, you'll find just the right time to tell her about yourself. And your relationship will then be ready to grapple with diversity.

Best to you,
Tetty

C'mon Out! Submit your questions to Tetty Gorfine, Director of LifeCourse Counseling Center. Simply go to www.lifecourse.net and click on "Ask Us A Question." All questions will be answered on the bulletin board. One or two will be printed next month here in The Rainbow Times.

* Tetty has been a psychotherapist since 1980. She has worked extensively with LGBTQ individuals, couples and groups and has supervised both clinicians and therapists in training. Her vision and leadership spirited nearly all of LifeCourse Counseling Center's programs. Tetty has also been on numerous radio talk shows and television programs. She has presented at professional conferences on topics pertinent to gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender individuals.

The Controversial Couch

Lie back and listen. Then get up and do something

By: *Suzan Ambrose**/TRT Columnist



Fluffy. Puffy. Muffy. Furrface. You've guessed it. These are all names lovingly used to describe my warm, little pussy ... cats. Lesbians and their pussies are as common as trees in a forest, butches with tattoos, or gay men that smell good. You'd be hard-pressed to find one without the other.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to notice that lesbians have a strong attachment to their pets. Felines have been the domesticated pet of choice for years; however, dogs have been making headway in this category most recently. Could it be *dogs* are what *diamonds* are to straight women—a butch's best friend?

Yes, lesbians **do** have a real affinity for

their precious puss-in-boots and pooches. Why, just pick up an issue of any queer rag and you'll eventually come across a section entitled "Lesbians and Their Pets." These furry little friends, with their goofy grins or what-the-hell-are-you-looking-at attitudes, are staring back at you from the pages, pictured with their (often similarly-looking!) owners.

Why are gay people so obsessed with their pets, treating them like the children we've never had—or, perhaps, never wanted to deal with? These little balls of furry love never speak back to us, never tell us we have to drive them to a soccer game ("NOW Mom!") or complain when we leave them to go out. On the other hand, our domesticated friends are quick to tell us how hungry they are, or that the bathroom break should have happened an hour previously. Oh no, Fido!

With the most recent trend of lesbians and gay men having children on their own, I'm curious to know if the pet industry has noticed a dip in adoptions at the local shelters.

So, has it become a choice between kitties or kiddies? Pampered pets or just plain Pampers? Kid-Mart or DogSmart? It's clear that there are parallels between the two worlds.

See Couch on Page 3

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I was recently alerted by a few in-the-know friends that my photo, captioned under "Bearded Women," was featured on a website of a Massachusetts organization. This was one of many photos selected to represent what this organization titled a "Gruesome display of body mutilations." What this organization was slanderously referring to was the diverse parade of proud Transgender folks and allies that was New England Transgender Pride. They also got my identity wrong. I do not identify as a Bearded Woman. I'm a female-bodied person, and I like to dress in drag occasionally, preferably cowboy-style, to express the masculine part of my gender identity that too often gets repressed. Of course, you'd have to ask me to know that. But why wouldn't this organization if they chose to publish my picture?

Transgender Pride was particularly inspiring because it gave a glimpse of what the world might look like if all people were liberated to express their gender identities however they chose. Transmen, smiling, would proudly bare their chests to the sun. Transwomen would wear T-shirts and jeans and still have people get their pronouns right. Intersex people would finally speak their stories of violation and survival. Allies, including many of the social workers who were in my cohort at the Pride March, would recognize how the full expression of their gendered selves is bound up in Transgender Liberation. The lines between allies and members of the community would blur. You wouldn't be able to tell who was born in what body, and what that meant to them.

If Transgender Pride was a glimpse at liberation, this website's publication was a reminder that we are not there yet. But, of course, those of us in the movement already knew that. What to do? Retain the liberatory spirit of the day, name the transphobic assault as what it was, and move on

See more Letters to the Editor on Page 15

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Massachusetts lets out-of-state gay couples marry

Implications for same-sex couples from NY who wed in Massachusetts

BOSTON (AP)—Joy Spring and Carla Barbano spent the day before their wedding the way many brides do: relaxing and primping at a spa.

But unlike most, their wedding day had to wait until Gov. Deval Patrick signed a bill Thursday that repealed a 1913 law that had blocked gay couples from outside Massachusetts from marrying here.

"We're being recognized as a married couple," said Spring, of Middletown, N.Y., who planned to wed Barbano, her partner of seven years, at a ceremony Friday in Provincetown.

Supporters of the repeal of the law, which banned couples from marrying in Massachusetts unless their unions would be legal in their home states, say lifting the ban was not only fair but will have economic benefits.

A state study estimates that more than 30,000 out-of-state gay couples—most of them from New York—will wed in Massachusetts over the next three years. That would boost the state's economy by \$11 million and create 330 jobs, the study estimated.

Opponents say Massachusetts now could become the "Las Vegas of gay marriage," and they criticized lawmakers for infringing on other states' rights to define marriage.

Patrick, the state's first black governor,

said he was proud to sign the bill repealing the law, which some say had its roots in trying to block interracial marriages.

Massachusetts in 2003 became the first state to rule gay couples had a right to marry; California recently legalized gay marriage, without a residency requirement.

"In five years now, the sky has not fallen, the earth has not opened to swallow us all

"Now New Yorkers can drive across the border to a neighboring state (and) get a marriage license that will be recognized as fully legal and valid here at home," said a statement from Empire State Pride Agenda, a New York gay rights group.

up, and more to the point, thousands and thousands of good people—contributing members of our society—are able to make free decisions about their personal future, and we ought to seek to affirm that every chance we can," said Patrick, whose 18-year-old daughter recently revealed publicly she's a lesbian.

An emergency preamble attached to Thursday's law allowed out-of-staters to begin marrying immediately.

That's good news for Spring and Barbano, whose 11-year-old daughter, Lizzy, will exchange rings with the couple at the ceremony Friday.

"It's extremely important. If something happened to one of us she'd always be taken care of," said Spring, who joined Barbano in a civil union in 2006 in New York.

The couple is from one of the few states that will recognize their impending union: New York Gov. David Paterson said earlier this year that state law requires recognition

of legal marriages performed elsewhere.

ing majority of which specifically bar same-sex marriage. The old law had been invoked by then-Gov. Mitt Romney, who said repealing it would make Massachusetts the "Las Vegas of gay marriage."

Now opponents say the Massachusetts repeal may just give fresh momentum to efforts for a constitutional amendment that would ban gay marriage across the country.

"This is a clarion call for the rest of the nation on the dangers of this radical social experiment, and also the essential need for a federal marriage amendment to clearly define marriage as the union of one man and one woman," said Kris Mineau, president of the Massachusetts Family Institute.

"Same-sex marriage is a social experiment, and it certainly will have an impact on the culture, particularly the children, where we already see that in Massachusetts, children are being educated on the efficacy of same-sex marriage and the irrelevance of fatherhood and motherhood," Mineau said.

Asked if the change in Massachusetts might create legal problems for couples returning to states with gay marriage bans, Patrick said: "What we can do is tend our own garden and make sure that it's weeded, and I think we've weeded out a discriminatory law."

Couch from Page 2 These close relationships with four-legged friends may very well satiate the maternal feeling that, perhaps, we unconsciously yearn to express. Pets could give us everything we want or need in that regard. Loyalty, trust, snuggles, companionship, warm greetings when we arrive at home; these are all traits we love about our kitty-cats. Yet, it appears many of our gay sisters (and brothers) have felt this is not enough, and have begun giving birth to their own to 2-legged animals. Really, you're supposed to laugh here.

Many can attest to the fact that our pets are like surrogate children. We raise them from infancy, ogling over their every little meow or trick that they perform. "Gay people have a very emotional connection with their pets, stronger than the general population," notes Jeff Watters, vice president of pet snacks marketing at *Del Monte* Pet Products, as reported in Mike Wilke's column from *TheGully.com*. According to Watters, lesbians and gays are "not unlike empty nester households, where the cat or dog becomes the furry 'kid' — that's a fundamental driver in this community." He continues, "Cats and dogs do not cast judgment on owners or lifestyle."

No arguments there.

But with the rise of the 'Gayby Boom,'

everything has changed. Lesbians and gay men are having children more than ever before. And, where does that leave Pretty Kitty and BowWow Doggie Dog?

Alisa Welch writes in *AnnabelleMagazine.com* that, according to statistics from the U.S. 2000 Census, *The Urban Institute* estimates the number of families with two lesbian-identified mothers to be around 167,000 couples. Research is limited concerning exact figures, as certain individuals may not be willing to be labeled 'gay' or 'lesbian' on a survey. More recently, *Witeck-Combs Communications* in Washington reported the number of lesbian parented households is most likely to be more than three million. *The Gay and Lesbian Atlas* (Gates & Ost) reports that in New Jersey, 30% of same-sex couples have children. Wow! That's somewhere around 10,000-12,500 kids being raised by gay folks, in just that one state! You do the math.

Times, they are a changin', and it's not just in Northampton anymore!

There was once a world that did not honor the right for all to have children. As social morass has shifted, it has become more acceptable for gays and lesbians to be raising children. With medical advances, women can now search for the perfect donor, simply by using the Internet and *FedEx*. Ok, they still need sperm, but the

way things are going, who knows if that will always be the case?

As progressive consciousness continues to shift, it becomes harder to define who makes up the typical GLBT family. As if there's a picture-book idea that defines all of us, like Mom, Dad, 2 kids and a dog for hetero family units.

We are definitely in flux with our use of the word "family" ... as it becomes clearer with each passing day that kiddie drool,

laughter and gurgling are replacing the purr and friendly lick offered to us by furry family members.

One can only hope we have room in the minivan for both.

* Suzan Ambrose can be heard on her call-in talk radio program, *The Naked Truth*, Monday evenings at 8 pm, on 103.3FM, Northampton, MA, or on the web at www.valleyfreeradio.org. For more of Suz's thoughts, visit: www.nakedtruthshow.com Feedback for Suz? Email: suz@nakedtruthshow.com

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Did you know that the University of Massachusetts, Amherst made the list of the top 20 schools from *The Advocate Magazine's* top 100 best schools for LGBT students?

In 'The Name of God'

Parley of Mormon agency, gay support group put off

By: **Jennifer Dobner/AP Writer**

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—An August meeting between a gay Mormon support group and a social service agency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been indefinitely delayed.

In a letter sent July 23, Fred C. Riley, the outgoing director of LDS Family Services, said the matter would best be handled by his successor, who hasn't been selected. LDS Family Services is an arm of the Salt Lake City-based denomination.

Riley was to hold the Aug. 11 meeting at the request of church president Thomas S. Monson. It was seen by leaders of Affirmation, an international support group for gay, lesbian and transgender Mormons, as a sign that church leaders were becoming more open to gay Mormons and their families. Affirmation is not affiliated with the church.

"We feel badly about this but believe that for this to be the best experience for all parties and to ensure appropriate consistency and continuity of the process, it would be

best to postpone the meeting until the new commissioner is named," Riley wrote to David Melson, assistant executive director of Affirmation.

Melson said Affirmation regrets the church's decision to put the meeting on hold. It was the result of a February appeal to Monson to open dialogue between the church and gay members.

"We've now written to President Monson and asked if another general authority can be designated to meet with us," Melson said.

It's unclear how soon the meeting could be rescheduled. Melson said he understood a replacement for Riley could be picked in three to six months.

Church spokeswoman Kim Farah confirmed Riley's departure from LDS Social Services and said a search is under way for a replacement.

"The reason the August meeting with Affirmation was postponed is clearly given in the letter," Farah said, adding that the church had initially proposed a meeting

date earlier than August. "The meeting was put on hold until August at Affirmation's request."

Melson said both sides agreed to meetings in August because the all-volunteer Affirmation executive committee already had plans to travel to Utah for a conference.

The LDS church teaches that being gay is not a sin and that gays are welcome as church members, but homosexual relationships are sinful and gays should remain celibate.

Mormons consider traditional marriage an institution ordained by God and church leaders have in the past joined with religious conservatives to lobby for its preservation.

This year, LDS leaders are backing California's Proposition 8, which would define marriage in that state's constitution as being only between a man and a woman. LDS leaders have asked members to make contributions of time and money for the campaign.

Some Mormons who have acted on what

the church has labeled "same-gender attraction" have been excommunicated. Others have left the denomination. George Cole, 27, who runs Affirmation's young adult program, said the attitude of today's Mormon youth is different.

"I suspect the younger crowd is much less willing to be second-class, or just to leave the church over it. I really think they want to have both," said Cole, of San Francisco.

Affirmation was founded in secret by students at the church-owned Brigham Young University in Provo more than 30 years ago. The group had tried unsuccessfully since then to create a dialogue with church leaders.

"It was a wonderful sign," said Cole of the planned meeting. "I do worry a little bit that there won't be any follow through now, but I still have some faith in the church. It's run by people doing what they can to make lives better. I think they want to serve all of their members."

Dating for the transgender woman: It can be very different

By: **Deja Nicole Green/TRT Columnist**

Ok, you've finally accepted that you are a male to female Transwoman. You've taken steps to feminize your body and now you are thinking about finding your soul mate. It would be nice having that special someone in your life but how will it work? Can you make it work? What are the problems that you might encounter? You think to yourself, "Hmmm, this is going to be a bit different than from my straight life."

Dating for the Transgender woman, well, it is different. Many of us Transwomen came from the straight world. We kind of know the expectations of straight dating but now things are different. For one, we are on the other side of the fence. Before we would enter the dating scene as a male but now we are entering it as a female and although it is wonderful and exciting, there are issues.

First, many Transgender women would like to date straight men. But, let's face it



DEJA NICOLE GREENLAW

... not all, but most straight men would much rather date a biological woman. A lot of straight men have trouble being with us. Evidently, there is something in many straight male's minds about being with a male to female Transgender woman that just doesn't sit well. I think the biggest concern is them thinking that being with a Transwoman is like being with someone who once was a guy. If one looks at it strictly from a physical view, that is a true statement. Physically we were "men" who have taken steps to become women, but mentally and emotionally one could argue that we never really were men but women who tried to act like men because that is what we thought that we must do. It was expected of us and so we gave it our

best try. Now we have "moved on" and are now experiencing life in our preferred gender.

And, although, it is nice to go out on a date and finally get to be the female that we always wanted to be but what about the other half of the date? What would they think of dating a Transgender? Would it be okay with them? Would it not be ok with them? Some may have no trouble with it, some may find it appealing and some may find it "unthinkable." I think most would have to step back and think about it for a bit.

I'll try to see it from their eyes. Let's see. This woman looks like a very dateable prospect. We hit it off, she's nice, she's intelligent, she's easy to talk to, we have common interests, she is cute and I'm definitely interested, but... she was once a guy. Does that make me Gay? I never thought that I was Gay, could I be Gay now? She did kiss well and we both enjoyed it but can

I kiss her again now that I know?" The questions come fast and furious.

After the questions and the doubts, the rationalizations then come into play. It just might be too much for some people but some, I think, would still be interested. After all, there was an attraction and it was ok before. It'll just take time to deal with the whole idea and to work things out.

This person may research Transgenderism and may find it in their heads and their hearts to decide to go with their feelings and continue to pursue us [transgender people] but ...and the next but is huge ... But, "What will my friends, coworkers, family, etc. say?" "How will they deal with it?" "Will they be shocked? Will they think that I am gay? Will they stop being my friend?" Will I lose people in my life? Will my children be ok with it? Unfortunately, these are very real questions for the person dating the Transgender person.

See *Trans Dating* on Page 10

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Sweetwood works with LGBT community to ensure inclusiveness

Retirement community offers welcoming atmosphere, luxury living

WILLIAMSTOWN, MA July, 2008—Earlier this year, staff from *Sweetwood Continuing Care Retirement Community* worked with local LGBT organizations to ensure that the organization—long known for offering luxury independent living in a beautiful setting, and in a friendly atmosphere—was open, inclusive, and fully welcoming to the LGBT community.

“Sweetwood is committed to supporting every resident, and every couple and/or family,” said Mark Amuso, Sweetwood’s executive director. “Working with *Bennington Pride* and *Berkshire Stonewall Coalition*, we realized it wasn’t enough simply to be open and affirming, we also needed to communicate this to the LGBT community.”

Supporting residents as individuals, as well as their families, is part of *Sweetwood’s* mission. Since 1987, the retirement community has allowed



seniors independent, worry-free living, paired with active, thriving personal lives.

performances, outdoor activities, education and more. Residents audit classes at *Williams College* free of charge

Sweetwood offers 70 luxury apartments, available in a variety of plans and sizes, as well as central dining facilities, a library, and spa/fitness center. Residents personalize their homes, and pets are welcome.

“Most important is the freedom to be who you are,” said Amuso.

Located just a few miles from *Williams College* and the *Clark Art Institute*, Sweetwood provides one-of-a-kind access to world-class museums,

and attend outdoor concerts, lectures, and performances of the *Williamstown Theater Festival*, *Williamstown Jazz Festivals*, *Tanglewood*, *MASS MoCA*,

Berkshire Theatre Festival, *Jacobs Pillow Dance Festival*, and more. Outdoor enthusiasts hike through the woods on well-maintained trails, golfers play on terrific courses just a few miles away, and gardeners nurture plants in the greenhouse.

“Whoever you are, whatever you enjoy, we’re here to support it,” said Amuso.

Sweetwood offers 70 luxury apartments, available in a variety of plans and sizes, as well as central dining facilities, a library, and spa/fitness center. Residents personalize their homes, and pets are welcome.

Sweetwood living, says Amuso, is all about freedom.

“Most important,” Amuso says, “is the freedom to be who you are.”

To find out more about the *Sweetwood Continuing Care Retirement Community*, please see page 11.

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Queer Book Review

Joe Oppedisano opens up about *Uncensored*

By: Steven Le Vine

If you've ever wanted to take a raw, upfront and hypersexual tour of the male form, world-renowned photographer Joe Oppedisano is your guide. On Nov. 11, 2008, premier gay publishing house, PROVOCATEUR, will officially debut its first-ever published book, *Uncensored*, a continuation of Oppedisano's best-selling 2006 photobook, *Testosterone*.

The 192-page, full-color, hardcover (8.6" x 11") photobook will be available through such major retail outlets as *10percent.com*, and in local community retailers around the world. *Uncensored* is a bold, masculine and completely uncensored journey of men and their deepest desires.

In a one-on-one interview, Oppedisano explains the ins and outs of his career, his passions, and what he thinks his legacy to this form of art is.

Steven Le Vine: Coming from *Testosterone* to your new book, *Uncensored*, what do you feel are the similarities and differences? Do you see *Uncensored* as a continuation of *Testosterone* or a totally separate entity altogether?

Joe Oppedisano: *Testosterone* was a compilation of editorials I had shot over a seven-year period for magazines like *Esquire*, *DNA*, *Genre*, *Gay Times*, etc. *Uncensored* is almost all work that has never been seen before. It was a journey coming out of the success of *Testosterone*. The truth is, I have been a fashion photographer for years, shooting women and men for institutions such as *New York Times Magazine*, *Vibe*, *WWD*, *Esquire*, *Uomo Collezioni* — all work that was not dark or extremely sexual. To break out of the box, I wanted people to see that I work in many different ways. I also wanted to bring the hyped up sexuality out of the dark and in locations that were upscale, and in that way, a little more twisted.

SLV: Obviously, there is a lot of raw male sexuality in *Uncensored*, and in your port-



folio of work. But you seem to describe it as "sensitivity." What do you feel is the difference between the two, and how do you, as an artist and photographer, differentiate them through photography?

JO: I just think that the "way" I shoot makes it a glamorized version of porn, especially in *Uncensored*. Firstly, I have almost every major porn star out now in it, but it does not appear cheap because the lighting is excellent. Erik Rhodes, Steve Cruz, Jake Deckard, Ricky Sinz, (and of course, Colton Ford) are the inspiration for this, because they live their lives on their terms, and I find great beauty, more than anything, from this. I wanted these photos to blow away everyone's idea of what I do. I push it further, but also I let the sensuality take control and expose raw sexuality, no holds barred.

SLV: If you were to approach the female form in the same way, with respect to *Uncensored*, how different do you think the book would turn out? Is there a major difference in both sexes, or are they basically the same when put in front of a camera?

JO: I LOVE shooting women. I just did a lingerie campaign for Carmen Marc Valvo that is one of my favorite shoots ever. It's an incredibly gorgeous Brazilian model in a huge French pied e terre, in \$15,000 pieces of couture lingerie, completely dominating Erik Rhodes. Women are great because they already have that sense of fantasy that I try to bring to the male form in my photos. With women, they can be

made up, put in incredible clothes, can do anything, and no one blinks an eye. My goal in shooting men is to make them look like they are shots pulled out of a *L'Uomo Vogue* shoot that maybe went a little far. I am planning on releasing a women's book soon. Men like it, because the fantasy of an in-charge woman in killer clothes and heels is the epitome of POWER.

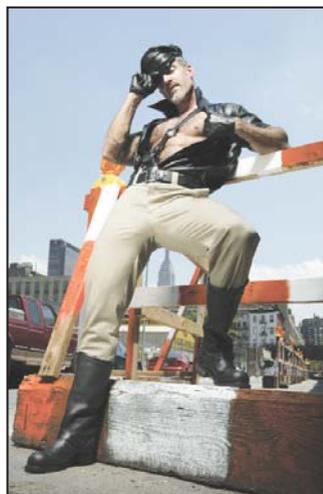
SLV: What was your main inspiration for *Uncensored* and where do you see your next work going, in terms of structure, form and theme?

JO: I like to take the viewer on a trip. I work in storyboard form, so usually I am trying to create a visual story that gets more and more out of control. I have the opportunity to work with some of the hottest, sweetest men from every studio including Falcon, Raging Stallion, Chi Chi LaRue (love her), Butch Bear and Colt. They were all really generous and sweet, and gave me control to create photos of their stars that I really love. As for structure and form, I studied Art History in Florence, so I'm a renaissance man. I love symmetry, the twists and turns muscles create when they are in motion It's all about form, muscle, perfection in mind, body and spirit. Those things will never leave me. BUT, I have been directing videos (my directorial debut of Colton Ford's "That's Me" was just announced as being one of Logo TV's top five requested videos of all time, beating out Madonna). That's kind of fierce.

SLV: What do you want people to take away from your portfolio of work, whether in the past and currently? Many years from now, how do you want your art to be remembered? And you as an artist, in particular?

JO: I think I've already done it. People always say to me, "I saw this picture and knew it had to be yours." I'm happy I create images that are recognizable to people even though the picture may not even be a half naked man. I like to have a sense of humor and also recreate gay history. I don't think that anyone has been a connection to the gay experience we share since Jim French created Colt. Gay youth needs to have something to look forward to when they are 40. The guys I shoot aren't all young bucks, but a lot of them are 40 year old men, and they look pretty fu@*%\$* hot.

SLV: Give me one word to describe your particular approach to photography.



JO: Thought-out!

Some of his other recent achievements include the 25th anniversary Calvin Klein spread published in Italian magazine *Collezioni Uomo*, and album covers for Ari Gold, Colton Ford, Daphne Rubin Vega, Raven O and IO in addition to Colton Ford's new music video for "That's Me," of which he directed. Oppedisano also won an award last year from the Fashion Institute of Technology for his outstanding contribution to the fashion/art world.

Furthermore, he is known for his featured photography in such esteemed publications as *Esquire*, *New York Times Magazine*, *Men's Health*, *Time Out*, *Pref*, *refresh*, *MR.*, *Instinct*, *DNA* and *Gay Times*, and his advertisements for *Pepe Jeans* and red carpet favorite *Carmen Marc Valvo*. Never afraid of starting or fueling controversy, Oppedisano also shot the infamous *Black Party* poster, featuring female-to-male transsexual *Buck Angel*, and of which has become a high-selling collector's item.

For more information on Joe Oppedisano's *Uncensored* or other products put out by PROVOCATEUR, please visit www.villagelighthouse.com.

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STCC, which is a leader in technology and instructional innovation, makes its mission to transform lives through educational opportunities that promote personal and professional success.

The *STCC Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Alliance* (GLBTA) has been an active student club for more than a dozen years. The club has had as many as 30 members in recent years, and hosts a variety of events throughout the academic year. The club, in conjunction with the Diversity Council, has hosted a National Coming Out Day Celebration in which the entire campus community was invited to attend. This event has been widely successful with scores of people attending, communing and learning about LGBT issues. The club has also hosted other cultural, educational and “fun” events such as: Pizza



Pride 2007, President Ira Rubenzahl and club advisors Prof. Eric Brown and Prof. Amy Stephenson.

and Movie Afternoons, Halloween parties, fashion shows, educational speakers, picnics on the campus green, and this year plans to host a “Come as You Want” prom.

The GLBTA's academic year culminates with the Northampton LGBT Pride March. In recent years the club has invited the

entire campus community to join them at the march - and STCC has shown its pride and diversity by marching with the club in large numbers. Those who joined in the festivities include President Ira Rubenzahl, Dean Arlene Rodriguez and Dean Robert Dickerman, as well as Vice President for

Human Resources and Multicultural Affairs Myra Smith, other members of the administration, faculty, and staff, and of course many students, allies and friends. (The campus homepage, www.stcc.edu, has pictures of club members at the Pride March!)

Springfield Technical Community College is consistently working on providing the LGBT community with an open, welcoming and safe educational environment. The STCC Diversity Council has a mission to embrace diversity, and this includes the objective to educate others on campus about the values of mutual respect and inclusiveness. The Diversity Council has been a strong supporter of GLBTA events, and is working to further educate the campus community on LGBT issues. The STCC library has built a formidable LGBT film section, and is consistently adding excellent works to the collection. Numerous professors in a variety of fields, including English, sociology, psychology, philosophy, and political science, offer courses inclusive of LGBT issues.

If you are interested in attending STCC, please contact the Admissions office at (413) 755-3333 or on the web at www.stcc.edu/admissions. For more information about the GLBTA, contact Student Activities at (413) 755-4912.

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Queer TV Review

Rue McClanahan: Golden Girl in the 'Sordid' Lives: The Series

By: **Mikey Rox***/TRT Special

How Rue McClanahan became a TV icon isn't classified information: For 20 years, the veteran actress has brought syndicated love and laughter to millions of people via The Golden Girls' Blanche Devereaux, America's favorite over-the-hill whore.

With the royalties that the 74-year-old McClanahan reaps from the still-popular sitcom—broadcast daily around the world to roughly 1.2 million viewers—you'd expect that the Healdton, Okla., native would be eager, at such a tender age, to sit back and count her cash.

Au contraire. The saucy septuagenarian continues to take on surprising—and sometimes scandalous—new roles. Her latest? Peggy Ingram, the matriarch of a colorful, crooked Texas clan in Del Shores' *Sordid Lives: The Series*—based on Shores' 1999 feature-length cult classic of the same name—premiering on Logo July 23.

In a new interview, McClanahan talks about her long-awaited return to series television; the gigs that got her there; fan mail from convicts; the problem with Shreveport, La.; her brave battle with breast cancer; her steamy *Sordid Lives* sex scenes; and the on-set drama that's making everyone uncomfortable.

It's dish that Rose, Sophia and Dorothy

would definitely be down for.

Cheesecake, anyone?

MIKEY ROX: You've been in show business for a long time. I won't take you all the way back to the beginning, but I did read somewhere that while playing maniacal nanny Caroline Johnson on *Another World*, a fan sent a letter advising you on the best poisons with which to kill the character Pat. That's kind of frightening to say the least, but what other sort of scary letters have you received over the years. Any one that comes to mind?

RUE MCCLANAHAN: No, that's the only one. That was enough. I got some letters from some convicts when I was doing *Golden Girls*, but I didn't answer them. I'm not sure it would have been safe.

MR: Speaking of *Golden Girls*, there's no question that you're best known for your role as Blanche Devereaux. How did that go your life?

RM: It gave me a lot more self-confidence. I realized that she thinks she's the cat's meow, crazy about herself, very outgoing, thinks that she's beautiful. I figured, I'm playing the part—why don't I start feeling that way too. I became much less shy.

MR: At what point during the Golden years did you know that the show had made its mark on television history?

RM: Several years ago. It started running



RUE MCCLANAHAN

in reruns in 1988, and it hasn't stopped since. It dawned on me then that this might be an ongoing proposition.

MR: In the mid-1980s, talk of homosexuality on TV was quite taboo—and even today the introduction of a gay storyline creates a lot of buzz—but *Golden Girls* was a pioneer for gay issues way back then. Why was the show so committed to these issues?

RM: I think because maybe we could get by with so much. I heard *Betty White* say this so many times—'four old broads are so non-threatening.' We could do and say a lot of things that shows with younger actors

couldn't.

MR: You have quite a knack for playing excessive southern women, but in your new role as Peggy Ingram on Logo's *Sordid Lives: The Series*—which will mark your return to series TV—your character is way out there, much different than anyone you've played before. Considering that this role is such a departure from how we're used to seeing you on TV, what made you decide to take on this project?

RM: [Series creator] Del [Shores] sent me the script back in November. When I read it, I said this is the best thing I've read by far. It was a very funny script. Peggy is a departure, but of course she turns into a sexy maniac. But she starts out as a church mouse, never had a drink of beer, married to the same man for 34 years, never had an orgasm. It's about the growing up of Peggy, her blossoming. And she'll grow up even more. In the second season Del has so much up his sleeve. Peggy starts out really boring, quiet-spoken, carrying her little purse in both hands. But she goes to the beauty parlor in the 11th week and wants to go blond, platinum. God knows what will happen in the second season.

MR: Had you seen the movie prior to receiving the script for the TV series?

See *Sordid Lives* on Page 9



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Queer Justice: Town inspector's harrasment

By: Attorney Jennifer L. Dexter*

I own my own business. Recently the town inspector has been coming to my place of business investigating complaints supposedly made by my neighbors. Does the town have the right to do that and what can I do?

—Janice, Westhampton, MA

Dear Janice:

The short answer is yes the town has the right to investigate any and all complaints and actually has an obligation to do so.

Every town has what they call by-laws. These are "laws" if you will that regulate the land and how it is used within the town or city lines. They define what portions of the land will be used for what purposes; ie what is a commercial district, a residential district, historic, municipal etc.

Before being able to adequately answer your question, I would need to know, what the by-laws are in Westhampton, whether or not you had to apply for a special permit and if so what it says, and what complaints your neighbors made.

So the first thing would be to look at your special permit. Are you in compliance with all of the conditions? Then I would go to the town hall and get a copy



Atty. Jennifer Dexter earned a B.A. in Psychology from The University of Central Florida. She moved to Massachusetts to attend law school at The Western New England College of Law in Springfield, Mass. She is a member of the Massachusetts Bar and has a Solo General Practice in the Pioneer Valley Area.

The information contained herein is intended for educational purposes only and does not represent legal advice. Should you need legal advice, please contact an attorney.

If you have legal questions that are unanswered, or if you would like to know more about a specific topic, then send your questions to: queerjustice@com-cast.net

of the by-laws. Read them very carefully. If after you do that, you still do not understand why the town inspector is visiting you, contact an attorney.

* Attorney Jennifer L. Dexter

earned a B.A. in Psychology from The University of Central Florida. She moved to Massachusetts to attend law school at The Western New England College of Law in Springfield, Mass. She is a member of the Massachusetts Bar and has a Solo General Practice in the Pioneer Valley Area.

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Sordid Lives from Page 8

RM: No, I received the script then got the movie and watched it. I guessed that it had been directed by Del. Thank goodness. He's just wonderful to work with. Almost all the people are wonderful to work with. There's one person that isn't awfully popular, but I won't get into that right now. But most everyone is professional and cooperative. There aren't any prima donnas. Well, except that one person.

MR: Behind-the-scenes drama? I love it! I hear, too, that you have a steamy sex scene. And details? Would Blanche approve?

RM: I have several steamy sex scenes—they're wild and raucous. I suppose Blanche would probably approve. I also have a very sweet love scene. Blanche would be envious, if anything.

MR: The series debuts on Logo on July 23. But before the show becomes this summer's guiltiest pleasure, what can you tell me about life on set? Any juicy details?

RM: I think most of the juice is on the screen. But we were living under difficult conditions: bad food, low budget, long hours. Shreveport, [La.], is a pretty redneck town, and there aren't very good places to stay. We were working out of trailers, and during filming I was undergo-

ing physical problems. I was dealing with a knee surgery that was only six months old. It was all swollen and there was a lot of limping. I was not at all happy with how I felt or how I looked, so for me it was very difficult.

MR: Like so many women, you bravely battled breast cancer and beat the disease. What's your health status today, and to what do you attribute your cancer recovery?

RM: Excellent. I'm getting very healthy. Currently I'm at the Hippocrates Health Institute in West Palm Beach, on a raw food diet. I attribute my recovery to my husband, Morrow Wilson. His support helped me through it. We had just met when I was diagnosed. He's a brave man.

MR: All right, so you're 74 years old and you've been working all your life, bringing joy and comedy to so many people around the world, but at some point don't you just wanna sit back and relax?

RM: No, I want to work. Working is life—acting, writing; I like to write. I love acting in good things. I just shot a Hallmark movie with Ed Asner called Generation Gap that will premiere in late October. It's things like that that keep me young. I don't want to retire.

**Who is Mikey Rox? Who gives a f#@! &! But you can visit him at www.mikeyrox.com.*

Queertations: Say what?!

By: Rex Wockner

"It's a very empowering thing to be able to preside over these ceremonies. We've been working on this for such a long time. ... I'm very happy to preside over all the ceremonies that I can."

—Comedian **Margaret Cho**, who got deputized and is performing marriages for her gay friends, to *E! Online*, July 11.

"You know, the old thing about if gays get married, then it somehow threatens heterosexual marriage? It just so doesn't track on any level, but then again, any sort of homophobia doesn't really track on any logical level. It probably comes largely from religion; if it wasn't in the Bible, they would not really have any leg to stand on—not that I consider that much of a leg."

—**Bill Maher**, host of HBO's *Real Time with Bill Maher*; to the Portland, Ore., gay newspaper *Just Out*, July 3.

"The nature of being gay is that you are forced to challenge the general perception, otherwise you have to accept that something is wrong with you. Maybe that gives gay men the perspective that many have turned into art."

—Singer **George Michael** to the *Los Angeles Times*, June 29.

"From the beginning, my whole scene broke out in the gay clubs. ... I have to give credit where credit is due."

—Singer **Donna Summer** in an interview published by the Northampton, Mass., LGBT newspaper *The Rainbow Times*, July 3.

"The only thing Republicans really have going for them this year is fear—fear of terrorists coming over the ocean and fear of immigrants coming over the border and fear of homosexuals coming over your back."

—**Bill Maher**, host of HBO's *Real Time with Bill Maher*; to the Portland, Ore., gay newspaper *Just Out*, July 3.

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Queer But-not-Queer

Rhea of Hope: Caroline's diverse career keeps growing

By: **MIKEY ROX/TRT Special**

Comedian Caroline Rhea is somewhat of an anomaly.

Unlike most actors, the native Canadian isn't "best known" for any particular role.

Sure, a case can be made that the 44-year-old's career gained considerable steam as Aunt Hilda on ABC and The WB's *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch*—but, frankly, that was just her first act; Rhea has gone on to star in or host equally as popular projects, such as her renamed Rosie O'Donnell hand-me-down *The Caroline Rhea Show*; the most recent incarnation of *The Hollywood Squares*; and NBC's feel-good fat camp, *The Biggest Loser*.

As diverse and rewarding as each of those gigs were however, Rhea's most memorable character may be just around the corner: This summer, the veteran stand-upper will star alongside Hollywood legends Rue McClanahan, Olivia Newton-John and Leslie Jordan in writer-director Del Shores' *Sordid Lives: The Series*—based on his 1999 cult hit of the same name—which premiered July 23 on LOGO.

In a recent interview, the always cheerful Rhea addresses questions about her new hope as a huggable hillbilly, the comedy circuit as a male-dominated profession, why she came to America, her middle-aged milestone, and those pesky rumors that she's the one who ruffled old Rue's feathers on the *Sordid Lives* set.

Cue the catfightin' music.
MIKEY ROX: As a native Canadian, what is it about America—in your opinion—that draws so many young performers to the



Caroline Rhea in *Sordid Lives: The Series*.

Photo courtesy of LOGO

States?

CAROLINE RHEA: It used to be the exchange on the dollar (laughs). Also, just the opportunity. For me it was like, I'm going straight to New York. I felt like I would ultimately end up there if I could do this well.

MR: What specifically did America offer you that you couldn't find in Canada?

CR: I always wanted to be on a sitcom—a big American sitcom on the big three networks. And, of course, I want to go around

the world and be called a witch everywhere I went.

MR: I have friends from Canada, and they think most Americans sound like geese because we say "huh" a lot. Do you find that to be true? What else are Americans known for up there?

CR: I've never heard that one before, but now that I think about it... (laughs). I don't think Canadians as a people are crazy about

See Rhea on Page 21

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Trans Dating from Page 4

One of my male to female Transwoman friends told me "Deja, we come with a lot of baggage." It's true. It's not fair, but it's true and this is yet something else that we as Transgenders have to deal with in looking for a soul mate. I think it'll have to include a very open minded individual who doesn't care what others may think. I've found a few open minded people but it is hard to find someone who doesn't care what others may think and will ultimately risk losing people in their lives in order to be with us. That is the biggie. Any

Transgender person will tell you that because of their transition there are some folks who will never even speak to them again. They break contact forever from us and there's really nothing that we can do about it.

There is prejudice and ignorance and fear. It's not right but it is very real. And when we include someone very close in our lives this will happen to that someone who is close to us. Our baggage is now their baggage. Because of us, our soul mates will lose contact with some people that are currently in their life. It's an awful situation to be in and it's terrible to know that you have

to choose between people in your life.

So those are my thoughts on Transgender dating and I do realize that Gays and Lesbians and others have to deal with very similar issues in their quest for soul mates and so do people of different religions and different races and different places in society. It shouldn't have to be an issue but it is. A Transwoman friend once told me "If it was just the two of you, it would be fine, but when you get others involved, it becomes a problem." How true. Others can and do make it rough on our soul mate choices. Lord, it ain't easy being different.

Queer Cinema You Can't Miss!

Almost Myself (T)

Genre: Documentary; Rating: Not yet rated
Director: Tom Murray
Release Date: TBA
Notes: Premiered at 2006 Newfest
Synopsis: Director Tom Murry explores the lives of a group of diverse MTFs in this documentary.

Amnesia--The James Brighton Enigma (G)

Genre: Drama; Rating: Not yet rated
Distribution: Limited Release
Director: Denis Langlois
Distributor: K Films Amerique
Starring: Dusan Dukic, Norman Helms, Louise Laprade.; Release Date: 00/00/00
Notes: Winner of the Best Canadian Feature at the Inside Out Toronto Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.
Synopsis: A young man (Dukic) wakes up naked in a vacant Montreal parking lot, remembering nothing of who he is, except for the fact that he's

gay. After he is arrested, he begins to understand his past.

An American Soldier (L)

Genre: Documentary
Rating: Not yet rated
Distribution: Limited Release
Content: L
Director: Edet Belzberg
Release Date: 00/00/00
Notes: Premiered at 2008 Sundance Film Festival
Synopsis: Sergeant First Class Clay Usie is one of the most successful army recruiters in the country; he also acts as a mentor to high-school students training to become soldiers, many of whom will eventually be deployed to Iraq. One of the soldiers he recruits, and whom this film follows closely over a period of nine months, is revealed to be a lesbian.

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Q-lebrities

Golden Archer: Great in A Four Letter Word

By: Mikey Rox*/TRT Special

For writer-actor Jesse Archer, the name of his larger-than-latex character, Luke—whom the Oregon native brought to life in director Casper Andreas' debut film *Slutty Summer*—might as well be short for Lucrative.

Because four years after the well-traveled tramp—who's now a Manhattan transplant—landed the promiscuous (albeit pensive) part in his moviemaker friend's first feature, he reprises the role in the platitude-peppered follow-up, *A Four Letter Word*, available on DVD August 19.

In a recent interview, the affable Archer—from his sparkling Alphabet City abode—loosens his lips on infiltrating *Out* magazine, sharing screenwriting credit on the award-winning AFLW, that pheromone-producing physique, commingling with co-star Charlie David, and where NYC's faux-filthy go to get funky.

As if you didn't already know, ho.

MIKEY ROX: Most people know you as a columnist for *Out* magazine—I do, at least. Your anecdotes are charming, if not hilarious. How did you get that gig?

JESSE ARCHER: Thank you. I like charming and hilarious—I've heard much worse! Aaron Hicklin (*Out* editor-in-chief) knew I was a writer, and had me come in to show my portfolio. He took a look at it, and then I never heard back. Well, it took a few months before I heard back, and when I did it turns out he thought I'd make a good columnist. Lucky me!

MR: How do you get yourself into the oft-scandalous predicaments you write about?

JA: I take the slut approach to living. That, and I really like to push buttons.

MR: As the old saying goes, it's all in who you know. Which must have been true for Aaron Hicklin, who has a non-speaking role in your new movie *A Four Letter Word*. Did you owe him one?

JA: How did you know that? Aaron was a great sport. He came in and played one of my victims at the bar. I undo the button on his shirt and say one of my favorite lines: "Lose a button, make a friend..." I did owe him one—the column gig is great. Plus, since Aaron is in it, we thought he'd be more inclined to promote the film!

MR: This isn't your first film, and, in fact, the character you play in *A Four Letter Word*, Luke, originated as a bit part in director Casper Andreas' previous film, *Slutty Summer*. So, I have to ask, what did

you have to do to persuade Casper to write an entire movie around this character?

JA: Ha! My character—the gay cliché—is only always ever seen as a punch line. Both Casper and I wanted to show that he has his own truth to tell. You may have to read between the lines, but it's there. He didn't take much persuading—just a hot cattle prod.

MR: I heard that you had a hand in writing this film. Tell me about the screenwriting process, and what influence did you have on the finished product?

JA: Oh yes, we wrote the whole film together. Collaboration is tough. We would often send drafts to each other and we'd just erase what the other person had written and write our own stuff. At one point we had to sit down and make a case for what we wanted in there, and why. Ultimately, it made for a more dynamic script. We each got what we wanted most.

MR: As with most independent films, the budget for this film was relatively meager. But, I've gotta say, your wardrobe was bang on. Whisper in my ear the budget for the wardrobe. Did you have a hand in Luke's look? Did you take any of it home?

JA: I've got all of it! I'm sure I'll be caught wearing that sleeveless red vest with the cursive L out at the bars when I'm 65. Luke's wardrobe was a compilation of my clothes and my friends' clothes. The only money spent on wardrobe in the entire film was \$20. I think for something [the character] Marilyn wore in bed.

MR: If we're gonna chat fashion, we must discuss the hair. I lost count how many different ways Luke wore it.

JA: Oh, that hair! I mean, it has a mind of its own! My favorite look is the one where I come into work all disheveled after an all-night "fourgy." I look like a chicken at the state fair.

MR: I can't neglect mentioning that you're in mighty fine shape in this film. What did the physical conditioning entail? And before you say a word, don't tell me that you're naturally built like that and that you don't require gym time, homo. I'll slap you.

JA: I was totally going to tell you I'm naturally built like that—don't slap me! I do go to the gym, and I run long distance. It keeps me thin, but I'm not OCD about exercise. There's more to life.

MR: There's a scene in the film where you've just gotten out of the shower and



Luke (Jesse Archer) and Stephen (Charlie David) in *A Four Letter Word*.

Photo courtesy of afourletterwordmovie.com

you're lying on the bed in a pair of blue briefs. Your tresses are tussled, and symbolically you're meant to seem vulnerable given the context of the scene. But, frankly, I don't care about any of that. Tell me the truth; you think you look amazing in that scene, don't you? Because I do. And if I were you, I would totally steal the director's cut and self gratify once a week.

JA: Oh my god, that's really funny in a scary way! Self gratifying? There's a character profile for a really creepy film! The scary thing is, I think I wore those same underwear in *Slutty Summer*. Thanks for the compliment, but when I watch that scene all I think is, "Why am I positioned like that?" The camera is all up in my crotch.

MR: Charlie David, best known to the queer community as the protagonist of *Dante's Cove*, is your main squeeze throughout much of *A Four Letter Word*. As such, you two share some pretty explicit sex scenes that some might consider soft-core porn. What's it like literally baring it all on camera that way? More importantly, did you and Charlie practice beforehand?

JA: Charlie and I were boyfriends the entire shoot. I adore the guy. He's a class act. Thanks to him, those scenes were a lot less awkward than they could have been. It may look sexy, but we were surrounded by a camera crew. The action is all choreographed, and then the make up guy comes in and sprays you down with glycerin so you look sweaty. Hot and bothered, in all the wrong ways!

MR: Correct me if I'm wrong, but *A Four*

Letter Word was shot in New York City in 17 days, no? That's a pretty tight shooting schedule. How were you able to pull it off?

JA: Yeah, super tight. A lot of the scenes, like the ones at the sex shop, were shot overnight when the store was closed. Some days we'd work all night, some days during the day. It really messes with your body chemistry. But I was really thrilled to be making this film we wrote. In the last days of shooting, I'd worry while I walked to set that I might get hit by a car and die and then it'd never get finished. One funny anecdote from set is the day we shot in Central Park. Tourists would gather and watch the scene where Charlie and I are talking on the lawn. At the end of the scene, we make out, and each time some mother would cover her child's eyes and rush off in a huff. I loved every minute of that.

MR: While we're talking Manhattan, where's your favorite place to hang out in the city?

JA: Depends on the night. I do love a dirty dive bar. Boiler Room comes to mind.

MR: All right, so you've got your second feature film under your belt. What's next? More *Out* magazine? Move movies? Fill me in.

JA: More *Out*, more movies, more travel! I'm now developing a new story about a fag hag. I'm also one of the New York writers for a fun new site called Gay List Daily. Check out my blog at www.jesseonthebrink.com for what's new with me. Stop by and say hi!

* Who is Mikey Rox? Who gives a f\$@#! But you can find him at www.mikeyrox.com.

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Deep Inside Hollywood: Sarah Jessica Parker Collects Art in the City



By: Romeo San Vicente*

Sarah Jessica Parker Collects Art in the City

Visual artists spend long periods of time in solitary contemplation creating their work, seeking no outside opinions save for their muse. Until now. In the spirit of commerce-meeting-art-meeting-reality competition shows—a TV fever that has turned every single aspect of human existence into marketable skills honed through a series of judged challenges, each striver sent packing one by one with a cute (or annoying) catchphrase—comes the Sarah Jessica Parker-created Bravo series *American Artist*. That's right—the next household name to spring from the tiny, esoteric world of contemporary art is going to be found on cable television after creating meaningful, lasting work from items found while blindfolded and let loose in PetSmart. OK, enough sarcasm. It's Sarah Jessica Parker's world; the gays just live in it. We'll watch.

The L Word Spins Off ... But to Where? Bittersweet days are ahead for Romeo ... er, for rabid fans of *The L Word*. The final sea-

son—and a cruelly truncated, eight-episode mini-season at that—approaches in January 2009. And then that's it. A future of Dana and Dawn Denbo on DVD, at best, seems to await the faithful. But now there's a new hope on the horizon. Co-creator Ilene Chaiken is at work on a spin-off series that will follow one of the characters as she embarks on a new chapter in life. No other details are known at this time, especially not the identity of the new show's star. But strong contenders would seem to be bold, mouthy Alice (Leisha Hailey) or womanizing heartthrob Shane (Katherine Moennig), but don't discount sophisticated Type-A Bette (Jennifer Beals) or superdiva Jenny (Mia Kirshner). No matter who it is, the flock will surely follow.

Gore Vidal Sees a Shrink

He's outlived his peers and even some people from younger generations. He's written iconic novels like *Myra Breckinridge* and films such as *Suddenly Last Summer*. He's openly gay, often irascibly so, and at 82 he hasn't seen fit to retire from life yet, so it's fitting that Gore Vidal has taken on a small role in the latest film from producer Kevin Spacey, *Shrink*. Also starring Spacey and gay actor Dallas Roberts (*The L Word*), it's the story of a Los Angeles psychiatrist who



Katherine Moennig of *The L Word*.

becomes a pothead in order to cope with personal tragedy. No word, really, on who Vidal's character is, but it would be kind of cool if he played the thugged-out dope dealer, wouldn't it? Unless it's not a comedy. Then it would be somewhat inappropriate. Watch for this one to get small on the big screen in 2009.

TV's Final Frontier: *The Gay Car*

If you were a kid in the 1980s, you proba-

bly watched *Knight Rider*, the show about David Hasselhoff and the talking Trans Am with superpowers named KITT. And now that you're all grown up, the concept's been rebooted for this fall's TV season. The new series comes complete with a hot young cast, a more tech-advanced car that can go into transforming attack mode, and...a sexual orientation? Well, probably not. But in recent interviews, the series' creators have joked about KITT being gay, thanks to their own childhood ideas about the original KITT's snooty, know-it-all, diva-like behavior. And Val Kilmer, who played a gay guy in *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*, is the new KITT's voice, so here's hoping he throws a little gay accent our way.

*Romeo San Vicente cared less about the *Trans Am* and more about the moments when Hasselhoff would take off his shirt. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

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Gay Travel

Out of Town: Laguna Beach, California



By: Andrew Collins*

Chic Laguna Beach, the jewel of the so-called California Riviera, has long been a favorite gay vacation spot. About midway between San Diego and Los Angeles and nicknamed SoHo-by-the-Sea, the area began attracting artists around the turn of the 20th century.

In addition to painters and writers, Hollywood film stars—Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, Bette Davis, and Mickey Rooney—were an early presence in Laguna Beach. The early culturati helped establish what is still one of the nation's outstanding community theaters, the Laguna Playhouse. The Festival of the Arts, a still-thriving showcase for local painters, sculptors, and other artists that began in 1932, sealed the town's reputation as a cradle of West Coast creativity.

The GLBT presence was very discreet during most of the 20th century, and there has been occasional tension between some of the town's mainstream and gay business owners and even residents over the years. Laguna is, after all, a coastal arm of conservative Orange County. Nevertheless, by 1983 there were enough progressive residents to elect Robert Gentry the first openly gay mayor in the United States. Laguna later became the first town in Orange County to adopt an antidiscrimination policy that protected the rights of gays and lesbians.

Laguna today is a desirable getaway for couples seeking romance, and with California having legalized gay marriage in 2008, it's quickly become a favorite locale for same-sex weddings and honeymoons. The ocean views and sandy beaches are spectacular, there's noteworthy shopping and dining, and there's one lively little gay bar—just enough nightlife to keep yourself occupied in the evening until another gorgeous day begins.

A good spot to begin your explorations is in the village center of Laguna, at the oceanside equivalent of a traditional American town green: Main Beach. This breezy park has tile benches, a large

expanse of golden sand, heavily used volleyball nets and basketball courts, and a small wooden boardwalk. Locals and tourists laze in the sun, their peace interrupted only by the occasional ring of a cell phone. Along Ocean and Forest avenues, and along Broadway, are excellent cafes and some fine art galleries and boutiques. North of Main Beach is Laguna's Gallery Row, the most concentrated stretch of art dealing in town, as well as the Laguna Art Museum, which houses a small permanent collection of works by local artists and mounts outstanding temporary exhibits.

A five-minute drive south of downtown, Coast Highway leads to some gay-popular businesses and hangouts, most of them along the blocks between Oak and Calliope streets. The long-famous gay resort, the Coast Inn, closed in 2007, but there are rumors afoot that a new gay-friendly resort will take its place. The beach behind the former inn still has a somewhat gay following, however.

For an enchanting side trip, head south of Laguna Beach several miles to reach San Juan Capistrano, the one town in the area that retains a sense of California's Mission-era history. Many of the adobe structures here date from the late 18th century. Mission San Juan Capistrano is famous as the spring host to thousands of migrating swallows from Argentina, and its Serra Chapel is thought to be the oldest continuously used building in the state of California. A small downtown area has largely escaped 20th-century commercialism.

One of the finest restaurants and most romantic settings along the Southern California coast, the Splashes Restaurant at the Surf and Sand Resort captivates diners with its sleek dining room directly fronting the ocean. Service is deft and knowing, and the creative regional American fare is out of this world. Consider starting with Maine lobster salad with roasted beets and orange-star-anise dressing, before sampling fennel-pollen-crusting ahi with a fava puree, olive oil, artichoke confit, and tarragon sauce.

Nearby and also of considerable acclaim, French 75 occupies a Tudor-style cottage



Photo courtesy of: Surf & Sand Resort

and serves fine French fare, such as three-way duck (confit, grilled breast, and foie gras) with a port-sour-cherry sauce. One of downtown Laguna's top restaurants, 230 Forest Avenue wows diners with imaginative West Coast regional cuisine. The emphasis is on seafood: pan-seared sea scallops with squash-porcini risotto, sweet corn sauce, and white-truffle oil is a favorite entree.

Although it's a tad touristy, the Cottage has been a friend to gays and lesbians since it opened in the early 1970s. The straightforward Continental cuisine is competently prepared—fire-roasted Colorado rack of lamb with a whole-grain-mustard sauce is a favorite. For breakfast, try the Laguna omelet with bay shrimp, snow crab, fresh dill, and Swiss cheese. Another of the more gay-popular venues in town, Nick's serves nicely prepared traditional American chow and has a lovely outdoor patio that's perfect for relaxing on a sunny day.

Zinc Cafe and Market is the ultimate lunch and breakfast spot downtown, with outstanding, healthy salads, sandwiches, and gourmet goodies, and a sunny outdoor dining area aglow with greenery and set with zinc tables. The self-serve fast-food restaurant Taco Loco is more than just a favorite surfer hangout—it serves fish fajitas and tacos to die for, available in many varieties: octopus, shrimp, mahimahi, and so on. Plenty of folks rave about the blackened-mushroom-tofu burgers, too. Get your java fix at Koffee Klatch, a cheerful storefront coffeehouse in the gay neighborhood, with tantalizing desserts, sandwiches, and Wi-Fi.

With the Coast Inn and its Boom Boom Room nightclub club having closed, Laguna Beach is not a major destination for gay nightlife. Bounce is the town's only gay bar—it's a cozy basement lounge with comfy seating, and it's close to Koffee Klatch and several other gay-friendly businesses along South Coast Highway. If

you're looking for a bit more clubbing action, you can always drive up to Long Beach (40 minutes north), which has a nice selection of lively gay bars.

Laguna's Coast Highway is strung with generally mainstream but gay-friendly lodgings, from posh hotels that face the ocean to a few basic motels. In the absence of a true gay resort in Laguna Beach, a number of properties nevertheless have a strong gay following. At the luxury end, the swank Surf and Sand Resort sits right on the beach, each of its 152 spacious rooms and suites offering panoramic ocean views. The tastefully appointed units have muted, contemporary furnishings and color schemes. The resort also has a top-notch spa, Aqua Terra, and there's a beautiful patio overlooking the sea that's perfect for weddings—the resort is very amenable to same-sex ceremonies.

An enchanting Spanish Mission-style compound, gay-owned Casa Laguna Inn draws a mainstream clientele but also has a strong GLBT following. The property has lush gardens and courtyards strewn with bougainvillea and queen palm trees, a pool and sundeck shaded by banana and avocado trees, and a small but exceptional spa. The wide-ranging accommodations (which are pet-friendly) include a small romantic cottage with phenomenal views, and about 20 additional units ranging from sprawling ocean-view suites to moderately priced courtyard rooms. Nearby, Laguna Brisas Spa Hotel is a cheerful property with a good reputation in the gay and lesbian community. Rooms are done in cool pastels; they're big, comfortable, and have ocean views—and all have two-person whirlpool tubs. The setting is a dramatic hill, with rooms tumbling down the side.

It's not quite as laidback as your typical beachfront hotel, but the formality of the magnificent Ritz-Carlton Laguna Niguel is worth braving if only to behold the breathtaking views from its stunning waterfront setting. Rooms are spacious and outfitted with top-notch amenities, including glamorous marble baths, goose-down pillows, terry robes. Even if you don't stay here, consider dropping by for a treatment in the magnificent spa, snacking in ENO wine-and-chocolate-tasting bar, or enjoying dinner in the ultra-posh Restaurant 162, named for its spectacular location on a bluff 162 feet above the ocean.

* Andrew Collins is the author of *Fodor's Gay Guide to the USA* and eight additional travel guides. He can be reached care of this publication or at OutofTown@qsyndicate.com.

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Everyone is trying to live life to the best of their ability

By: Jack/ie Kennedy

Why are so many people shocked that same-sex couples rush to get "married" but not to get "unionized?" Let's face it people, how would you feel if you were given a meatball when what you really signed up for was a huge, juicy burger? Why would you settle for less? What? My comparison isn't applicable? Honestly, only those who are short-changed feel that something that they have the right to have, should be freely available to them.

What happens is that we live in a world in which the powerful can hide the best. Which brings me to my next topic. Why do you think that there are so many rich people, celebrities, etc. in the closet? Because they can! Wouldn't you be in the closet if you had the money and resources to con-

vince everyone around you, well not everyone if you follow my drift, that you're straight? It's easier to be straight. It's the norm!

Now, let's not compare that with how others stay in the closet out of fear for their lives. I think that there is a small percentage that should actually be concerned about that. The rest of the people in such a predicament should be honest. If everyone who was gay really put their foot forward, I think most of my neighbors, politicians, lawyers, heck most of the people in my town and state would probably come out too. At some point, even Hugh Hefner himself, liked Dick. But, fear is a more powerful feeling than honesty. Why do married people cheat and hide it for years or until they get caught? Because of fear. Why do people pass gas and pretend it never hap-

pened? Because of fear and embarrassment. It seems like everyone is afraid to say and do what they really think and want. Is it then human nature to lie? Where does lying fall in the Christian meaning? Does it fall above or below being a "homosexual?" For those who hate different people (based on race, or cultural differences), but claim they are also Christians, where do their sins fall? Before or after being a "lezbo?"

And, what about vanity, what kind of a sin is that? Aren't we basically changing who we are, the people that God meant us to be and how God wanted us to look? Does that follow under lies, vanity or desiring to be someone else to be more loved, admired, etc.? Aren't these all ways in which we all fall in the same category? We want to fit in, because we're not happy with who we are. Trans people look at them-

self in the mirror and have gender dysphoria. A bald straight man looks at himself in the mirror and tries to get into a Hair Club for Men to correct his situation/problem. Other guys, have penis enlargements, and that doesn't happen for the sake of bringing children into this world either. My point? If you really follow what I am saying, then you've guessed it.

We are all made a certain way, and we should accept the variety, and understand that only one God could make so many beautiful people different. Gays, lesbians, transies, bisexuals, straight people, people with no hair, with wrinkles, with short-comings (penile and breast), people with sexual disorders, etc., we are all people trying to live life happily and to the best of our abilities. Why is this so hard to understand and so difficult to believe?

Letters to the Editor from Page 2

towards our vision of society where every person can self-determine their gender identity and expression, realize it, and live a full life.
—Sara Walker, Northampton, MA

Dear Editor,

The True Colors Tour article from the July edition of the Times was boring. I don't understand why there weren't any pics with it. I was hoping to see the Lauper myself. It was a shame not seeing or feeling it more.
—Ken Morrigan, Albany, NY

Dear Editor,

Although I like the Kennedy writer, why won't he or she come out as a he or she? What's wrong with that? I think that his or her stuff is funny, though with somewhat of a dry humor to make people think without the borderline sarcasm that he or she had before. I feel that if the person would come right "out of the closet" instead of acting almighty about it, we may follow what he or she says better. If you're so proud, why can't you come out?
—Jerry Mostel, Hartford, CT

Dear Editor,

Loved Donna Summer on the cover! The only thing is that I get disappointed when the Hollywood personalities keep getting and looking younger than my kid. I mean, this woman must be in her late 50s if not 60s and yet her picture shows her looking no older than 25. How can that be? I am tired of seeing fixed-up pictures of celebrities and the impact that these photos have on our youth and the concept of getting older. I think that Mrs. Summer should let herself age to be taken more seriously.
—Tammy N., Springfield, MA

Dear Editor,

I wanted to see more pictures of CT Pride! It was disappointing to see that there were almost only 5 or 6 pictures. Maybe next year you'll be able to show more of what took place then.
—Jay Lopez, Hartford, CT

Dear Editor,

I just kept an older edition of the June, 2008 of the Rainbow Times and loved reading about The Pub night club. I think that it's

about time that we have places like the Pub that showcase good events for gay people and at the same time contribute to good causes. I'm going to schedule a trip to the Pub in Springfield and I've never been there.
—Rick Lonest, Schenectady, NY

Dear Editor,

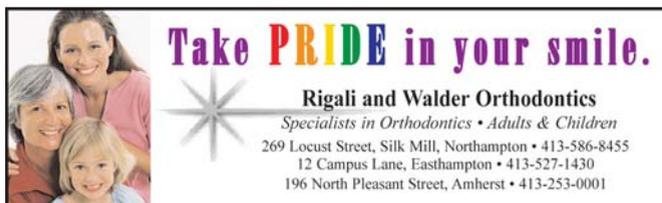
Any chance that you may be covering New Hampshire or other parts of Vermont soon? We don't have a paper here, but get yours at

a few venues. Please I'd like to know.

—Maureen B., Burlington, VT

Dear Maureen,

We are always expanding at The Rainbow Times. Thank you for your input and we will take it into consideration. We wanted you to know that we do go to parts of Bennington and Brattleboro, VT. However, we understand the need for more and are constantly working on it. Thank you.
—The Editor

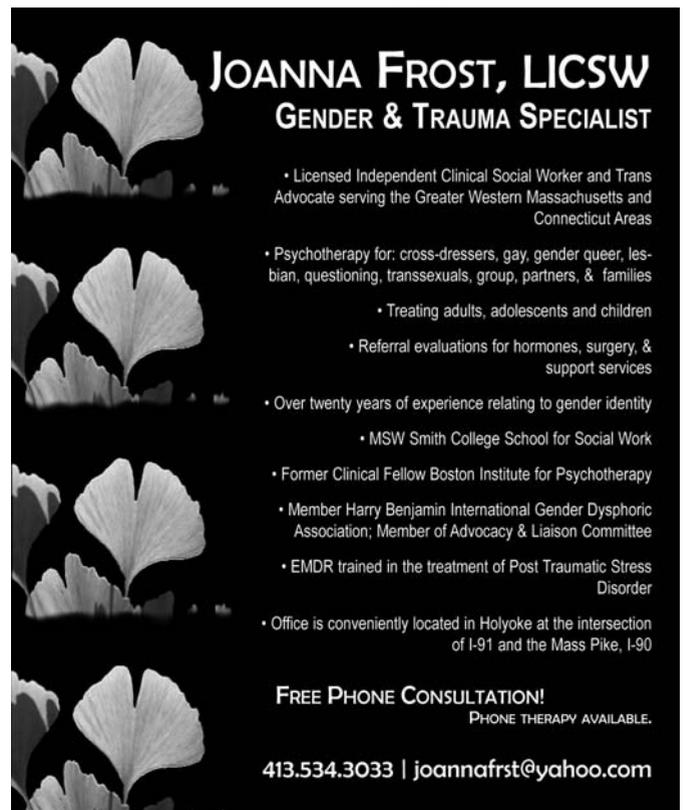


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Did you know the Gender Identity Disorder Facts?

- Gender Identity Disorder (GID) is a serious health condition consisting of a persistent discomfort with one's assigned sex and a strong identification with a different sex, causing significant distress or impairment.
- Some, but not all, transgender people are diagnosed with GID.
- Health experts recognize that treatment of GID is medically necessary. The accepted therapeutic approach involves an individualized gender transition, including living full-time as a member of the gender that corresponds with one's identity.



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TRT Calendar

ONGOING EVENTS/SUPPORT GROUPS

(MA) (MA) **UNITY** is a Transgender support group which meets at 7 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays at Baystate Hospital 3300 Main Street in Springfield, MA. FMI: Deja 860-604-6343 or Keri 413-364-1749.

(MA) **SOCIAL GROUP FOR LESBIANS**; We always meet on the first and third Friday's of the month. For information call 413-687-2065

(MA) **MATURE LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP**; Group for women 55+ meets monthly at the Northampton Council on Aging at 240 Main St., at 6 p.m.; second Monday of each month.

(MA) **DISCUSSION GROUP FOR LESBIANS 40+** meets every Wednesday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Stonewall Center at UMass. This is a warm and welcoming group of intelligent women. Information email to: JBGreenize@aol.com

(MA) **OLDER LESBIAN DISCUSSION GROUPS**; Amherst/NoHo Area. New members accepted on space-available basis. If interested, new groups may form. FMI: 413-247-3257 or 413-253-3049.

(VT) **MEN'S SUPPORT GROUP**; Any male 18 or older; Support group not a therapy group. Free. Every Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Brattleboro, VT. FMI: 802-258-3914.

(MA, NY, CT & VT) **DISCRIMINATION BECAUSE YOU ARE QUEER?** Call *The Rainbow Times*, 413-204-8959; 518-391-2617.

(NY) **Bisexual Brunch**; First and third Sundays of the month, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the Rainbow Cafe, 332 Hudson Ave., Albany. FMI: Viktoria 518-438-6315.

(NY) **Bagel Bunch**; Tuesdays; 10:30 a.m.; Older gay men's social and discussion group. Bruegger's, Hannaford Plaza, Central Ave., Albany.

(NY) **Capital Pride Singers**; Mondays @ 7 p.m.; LGBT/LGBTaffirming; mixed chorus; St. Andrew's, Episcopal Church, 10 No. Main St., Albany, 12203; FMI: 435-4636.

(NY) **Capital District Prime Timers**; Provides social, cultural, and recreational opportunities for mature gay and bisexual men. 21+. FMI: jallison2@nycap.rr.com or CDPT 595 New Loudon Rd #202 Latham NY 12110

(NY) **Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Men Support Group**; Mondays; 7 p.m.; Support group for GBT men; CDGLCC @ 332 Hudson Avenue in Albany. FMI: Q Diamond at (518) 462-6138 or qdiamond@cdglcc.org.

(NY) **Lesbian and Bisexual Women's Support Group**; every other Tuesday; 7 p.m.; Meet at CDGLCC at 332 Hudson Avenue in Albany. FMI: Q Diamond at (518) 462-6138.

(NY) **Youth Group**; Friday nights; 7 p.m.; 332 Hudson Ave. in Albany; Group offers peer support to LGBT& questioning individuals ages 13-19. A supportive environment for LGBTQ youth and their straight allies. FMI: Q Diamond (518) 462-6138.

(NY) **Confidential HIV Testing**; first Wednesday of each month; 6:8-30 p.m.; Provided by Project H.O.P.E., a program of the AIDS Council of Northeastern New York. Testing offered at the CDGLCC, 332 Hudson Ave., Albany. FMI: 518-462-6138.

LGBTQ TEA DANCE AT DANCE NORTHAMPTON. Second Sunday of every month; 3-6 PM; \$8 (includes lesson at 3:00) FMI: www.dancenorhampton.com.

(NY) **OUT DANCING** (for the LGBTQ community); every Wednesday evening; 7 to 8 p.m.; Saratoga SAVOY, 7 Wells St, Saratoga Springs, NY. For more information: 518-587-5132. <http://saratogasavoy.homestead.com/files/out-dancing.html>

(CT) Every Sunday; **ALL LGBT YOUTH to the Rainbow Room**; at the Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective; from 3-6 p.m.; 1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT; for LGBT youth and allies. 21

& younger.

(MA) **TransForming Families** - Transgender Support Group; Parents, partners, children and their transgender loved ones. Wednesdays, 7:30 - 9 p.m. in Hadley, FMI: www.transformingfamilies.org or 413-522-0522.

(MA) **EAST COAST FEMALE-TO-MALE GROUP (ECFTMG)**; 2nd Sunday of every month from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. FMI: 413.584.7616 or email: betpover@yahoo.com.

(VT) **TRANS SUPPORT**- Third Sunday of Every Month; in Brattleboro, Open to anyone whose identity or expression doesn't fit neatly into the gender binary, including transpeople of all genders and sexual orientations. FMI: Benjamin Robin: robin@benjaminrobin.net

(NY) **CAPITAL PRIDE SINGERS** LGBT and affirming mixed chorus. Rehearsals on Monday's, 7 PM, Emmanuel Baptist Church, 275 State St., Albany. FMI: 518-435-4636.

(CT) **LIVING SOULFULLY: A MONTHLY MEN'S GATHERING**; Meets on 4th Wednesday of every month from 7:30-9:00pm at the Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective. FMI: HGLHC at 860-2787-4163.

(NY) First and third Sundays of the month, 11 - 1 p.m. at the Rainbow Cafe, 332 Hudson Ave., Albany. FMI: Viktoria 518-438-6315.

(CT) **LGBT TEEN SUPPORT**- RainbowRoom is open every Sunday from 3:00pm-6:00pm and is located at 1841 Broad St., Hartford. RainbowRoom is an affirming and safe place for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and questioning teens and young adults 13 to 21. RainbowRoom is a drop-in center located in an intimate, informal space with room for a variety of activities.

of value, including the exclusive VIP party at the Brass Key, a Carnival Tee Shirt, and gift bag from our sponsors! FMI: 800-637-8696, or www.ptown.org/Carnival.asp

W. MASSACHUSETTS

August 6; **BSCC ANNUAL BARBEQUE PICNIC**; 5:00-8:00 pm; Pittsfield State Forest ski lodge @ 1041 Cascade Street (off Churchill Street), Pittsfield, MA. BSCC will provide beverages, paperware and cutlery, hamburgers, hot dogs, veggie burgers and rolls. Bring a main dish, salad, fruit or dessert to share. All are welcome. Picnic will be rain or shine; the ski lodge will be used in case of inclement weather.

Aug. 10; East Coast Female to Male Group Meeting: "Coming Out as Trans"; 3-6p.m., 146 Riverbank Rd., Northampton; FMI: www.umass.edu/stonewall

Aug. 10; **LGBTQ DANCE**; Dance Northampton; Second Sunday of every month; 3-6 PM; \$8.

Aug. 17-23; **PROVINCETOWN CARNIVAL THEMED WILD, WILD WEST**; Provincetown, MA. The VIP Pass is the best way to attend all of the Carnival Events! The pass retails for \$85 and includes over \$135 worth of Value, including the exclusive VIP party at the Brass Key, a Carnival Tee Shirt, and gift bag from our sponsors! FMI: 800-637-8696, or www.ptown.org/Carnival.asp

Aug 24-28; Register Now for the **SOCIAL JUSTICE MEDIATION SUMMER INSTITUTE**. Amherst. For those individuals interested in becoming trained in mediation with a social justice perspective. FMI: www.sjmediation.org.

Aug. 30; **"CRAZY"** Ogunquit Week; 10:00pm; Ogunquit, Maine. Grab your Bikini and Get Out of Boston for Labor Day Weekend! FMI: www.crazyogunquit.com

Sept. 20; **WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS GAY AND LESBIAN CONTRA DANCERS**; 4-10pm; Montague Grange; 34 Main St. Montague, MA 01351; FMI: (413) 367-9380/\$7-10, \$ w/student ID.

Oct. 19-26; **FANTASIA FAIR**, a week-long transgender event held every October in the GLBT resort town of Provincetown, Massachusetts.

CAPITAL DISTRICT OF NY

Aug. 8; **CDGLCC'S YOUTH BBQ**; For LGBTQ

youth ages 13-18. Save the Date! FMI: www.cdglcc.org

Aug. 8 -10; CDGLCC's Summer Open House Extravaganza!

Aug. 9; **CDGLCC'S SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT**; FMI: qdiamond@cdglcc.org or 462-6138.

Aug. 9; **THE RAINBOW RUMBLE SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT** - CDGLCC vs. Two Rivers LGBT Outdoor Club; 10am. Lincoln Fields (Morton and Eagle); We need players! FMI: qdiamond@cdglcc.org or 462-6138. \$5 entry fee to cover costs.

Aug. 10; **VINTAGE PRIDE POTLUCK BRUNCH**; For LGBTQ folks over 50. FMI: qdiamond@cdglcc.org or call the office at (518) 462-6138.

Aug. 10; **FAMILY POTLUCK DINNER AND ICE CREAM SOCIAL**; Lots of fun for adults and their children! FMI: qdiamond@cdglcc.org or call the office at (518) 462-6138.

Aug. 10; **"TRANSCEND" MEETING**. 7:00 - 8:30 pm, South Congregational Church, Pittsfield, MA. Monthly support/social group meeting for the Trans community. Sponsored by BSCC. FMI: 413-822-7268.

Aug. 13; 2pm; **PROJECT HOPE** will be at the River Street Men's Club located at 540 River Street in Troy, providing FREE and Confidential HIV/STD testing. Rapid HIV testing results provided in that same session. FMI: 518-434-4686 ext 2327.

Aug. 14; **PROJECT HOPE** offering FREE and Confidential HIV and STD testing at Waterworks Pub located at 76 Central Ave in Albany; 11pm - 2:30am; Rapid HIV testing results provided in that same session.

FMI: 518-434-4686 ext 2327.

Aug. 16; **SCHENECTADY GENDER ALTERNATIVE** - Monthly Get Together; 7pm - 12:00 am; Yours Jazz Club; 145 Barret St, Schenectady; FMI: (518) 370-9865. Everyone is welcome, and you are free to dress in the gender of your preference. There is a \$5.00 meeting fee which we give to the owner of Yours (Joe) for letting us use the room.

Aug. 23; **MEN'S GROUP END OF SUMMER BBQ**, 1PM-?, CDGLCC; 332 Hudson Ave. Albany. FMI: Please RSVP to Joe at (518) 462-6652 or albanym311@aol.com.

Aug. 27; **PROJECT HOPE** will be at Capital District Gay and Lesbian Community Council located at 332 Hudson Ave. in Albany, providing FREE and Confidential HIV/STD testing. Rapid HIV testing results provided in that same session. FMI: 518-434-4686 ext 2327.

Sept. 5; First Friday at the Romaine Brooks Gallery featuring Alan Bennett Ilagan (Photography); Free; CDGLCC, 332 Hudson Ave, Albany; FMI: CDGLCC at (518) 462-6138.

Sept. 9; **WEIGHT WATCHERS**® in an LGBT-friendly setting! New program! 6:30pm; Come to Update New York's only lgbtq-friendly Weight Watchers meeting! Weigh-in starts at 6pm, and the kick-off meeting will have free registration and refreshments! Meetings will be held every Tuesday at 6:30pm at the Capital District Gay & Lesbian Community Council, 332 Hudson Ave in Albany. FMI: 518.462.6138.

N. CONNECTICUT

Aug. 9; **NEW HAVEN JAZZ FESTIVAL**; 6-9PM; with thousands expected to attend, this is a great opportunity to talk to community members and to demonstrate local support for marriage equality. To volunteer, contact Community Organizer Cari Bohm by email cari@lmfct.org or call 860-525-7777 x304

Aug. 17; **RAINBOWROOM**; 3-6pm; Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective; 1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06114. Come join us as RainbowRoom continues to be safe space for teens and young adults (13-21 years old) of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations to hang out, socialize and support one another as

well as having opportunities to help create a vision for the future.

Sept. 4; 5:30-8:30PM; **THE POND HOUSE CAFÉ** 1555 Asylum Ave, West Hartford. Hors d'oeuvres, Pasta Bar & Cash Bar; Admission: \$30 pre-paid/\$35 at the door. Vote for your favorite talent act online at ctaidcoalition.org for a minimum \$5 donation. Finalists will perform live at Connecticut AIDS Resource Coalition's, CARC, annual Summer Camp event on September 4th.

Sept. 13; **THE 15TH ANNUAL MICKEY PALLOTTO GOLF OPEN**: Sponsored by Hamilton Connections; held at Hunter Memorial Golf Course in Meriden. FMI: www.leeway.net/events.html

S. VERMONT

Aug. 8; **SPIRITUALITY**: 6:30pm, the Menspace. Final "summer movie" night! We'll close out our cycle of films that tie into spirituality with **DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE**, the follow-up movie to **WHAT THE BLEEP DO WE KNOW**. We'll begin at 6:30pm in order to have time to watch the movie and have a discussion following. FMI: Curtis @ 802-254-2400.

Aug. 9; **BIKE & BBQ**: 11am/2pm, Brad's in Peterborough. Brad's popular bike and BBQ. Please bring a dish to share, your swimsuit and a towel. If you choose to come to one of the two events, that's fine, but if you are arriving for just the barbecue please don't arrive until 2pm! FMI: Curtis @ 802-254-2400.

Aug. 12; **CORE GROUP**: 6pm Potluck, 6:30pm Group Discussion, at the Menspace. Help guide the Men's Program. Join us for a great potluck and then conversation about the program. We're actively seeking new members.

August 15-16; **BEAR FILM FEST** at Tree Frog Farm. The Bear Film Fest is in its fourth year, and this year the theme is cowboys get ready for some western fun! FMI: Curtis @ 802-254-2400.

Aug. 17; **TRANSGENER SUPPORT**: 5:30 - 8:30pm; Meeting in Brattleboro the third Sunday of every month. Open to anyone whose identity or expression doesn't fit neatly into the gender binary. Not a Men's Program event. FMI contact Oshee: oshee@benjaminrobin.net

Aug. 19; **POTLUCK**; 3pm, Mountainside, Hinsdale, NH; David Herrod is hosting another summer BBQ at Mountainside in Hinsdale. FMI: www.mountainsidenh.com/directions/

Aug. 24; **KAYAKING**; 11am, led by Brad on the Contoocook River, Peterborough, NH. Brad will lead a kayak trip down event down the scenic Contoocook River in Peterborough, NH. Kayaks are available for rent at E.M.S. just 1/4 mile away. Call E.M.S. at 603-924-7231 for info.

Aug. 29; **GAYME NIGHT**; 7pm, Howie's place in Chesterfield, NH. We're getting in all kinds of games these days. Come on over to Howie's with your favorite game... and a snack to share if you'd like. FMI: Howie @ 603-256-6995. FMI: Curtis @ 802-254-2400.

Aug. 31; **BRAD'S LAST BIKE & BBQ** of the season! 11am/2pm, Brad's place in Peterborough.

Sept. 7, **MEN'S PROGRAM PICNIC** at Townshend Dam.

Submit your non-profit calendar event/s* online at: therainbowtimesnews.com

TRT

*Certain restrictions apply. Small for-profit events/groups, 35 words or less, are considered for a small fee. Large/for-profit events are not considered. All submissions appear online.

LMAF urges signing of pledge to help CT get marriage equality

Do you know that CT anti-gay opponents recently launched a major campaign to amend the Connecticut Constitution to exclude same-sex couples from marriage? In November, a question on the ballot will ask whether Connecticut should hold a Constitutional Convention to amend our Constitution. Take the Pledge to VOTE NO

on amending our Constitution.

Sign the Vote NO Pledge

The Connecticut Constitution has a long and proud history, earning our state the nickname, The Constitution State. Our Constitution—like all Constitutions—is meant to provide order, stability, and balance in government. This foundational doc-

ument, which has served our state so well, is not meant to address the hot issues of the day. Calling a Constitutional Convention is an expensive and unnecessary process with

uncertain outcomes. We, the undersigned, support our Constitution and oppose the calling of a Constitutional Convention.

To sign the pledge visit: www.lmfct.org/

Top 10 Things You Can Do to help win the Freedom to Marry for Same-Sex couples in CT*

1. Contact your state legislators and tell them why marriage equality is important to you and those you love.
2. Write a Letter-to-the-Editor of your local paper about why Connecticut legislators should finish the job they started in 2005 by passing civil union legislation, and give same-sex couples the dignity and respect they deserve by supporting marriage equality.
3. Come to a community organizing meeting near you! Dates are on www.lmfct.org
4. Sign up to host a party for Eat, Drink, & Be Married! on the weekend of April 4-6, and join over a thousand others around the state who will raise funds, have fun, and raise awareness for the marriage equality campaign. Information is at www.lmfct.org.
5. Attend or host a house meeting for your legislator, where you and other constituents can talk from the heart about why equal marriage rights is important to your community. Contact info@lmfct.org to find a house meeting in your area.
6. Help us educate others about the marriage equality issue. Invite speakers from LMF's Speaker's Bureau to come talk to your class, church group, or civic group.
7. Volunteer to go door-to-door in your

community to education voters about the marriage equality issue and identify pro-marriage supporters. Training provided!

8. Make a donation to Love Makes a Family in honor of a friend, partner, parent, sibling or loved one. You can donate online and write a note to them, which we will share with them. A great way to support the right to marry and let them know that you support them and GLBT equal rights!

8. Arrange a screening of the new film, Marriage Makes a Word of Difference, to a group in your community. This 43-minute film was created by Emmy award winning filmmaker Fran Rzeznik of Guilford, about the struggle for marriage equality in Connecticut. It is compelling, inspiring, and provocative! Contact Carol at carol@lmfct.org or 860-525-7777.

9. Tell us your story! Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) and Love Makes a Family are working to find and tell the stories of LGBT individuals, couples and families. Help us by sharing your story at <http://www.glad.org/ct/storySurvey.php>

10. Vote!

* For information contact info@lmfct.org or call 860-525-7777 or go to LMAF's website: www.lmfct.org.

CT Neighborhood Organizations

AIDS Testing: www.guardinhealth.org
Gay Father's Group: (203) 938-2881Hartford
Community Center: (860) 724-5542CT Freedom to Marry Coalition: (203) 791-9553Love Makes a Family: www.lmf-ct.org (860) 525-7777Married Lesbian Support Group: truicolor@aol.com (203) 430-9227
Married Men's Bisexual Support Group of Hartford: (860)264-5605Metropolitan Community Church of New Haven: (203) 397-2312New Haven Gay & Lesbian Center: www.nhglcc.org (203) 387-2252
PFLAG Danbury: www.pflag.org; (203) 797-4743Connecticut's Kids: (203) 256-8414
Senior Lesbians Happily at Play (SLAPHAPS): Kathy (203) 929-8113
True Colors CT: www.ourtruecolors.org; (888) 565-5551National

Runaway Switchboard: (773) 880-9860Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF): 135 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105 - 860.247.6090
Info. and Referral program: (800) 479-2949 or Greater Hartford 524-0601 - Statewide women's rights organization working to end discrimination and hate crimes; provides free legal information and referral to the LGBT community.
XX Club (Twenty Club): Rev. Cannon Jones - 45 Church Street Hartford, CT 06141-0387 - (860)646-8651 - Provides knowledgeable info., and ongoing peer support to transsexuals. 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month, 2 -5 p.m.
connecticut View (cTVieW): A Transgender social and support club, for the TV, TG, TS, CD, both male and female. Monthly meeting in New Haven as well as e-membership, and more. A no dues club, with all the frills: www.transgender.org/ctv/

Marriage Makes a Word of Difference: Watch the winner of an Audience Award at the 2008 CT Gay and Lesbian Film Festival online

Emmy award-winning filmmaker Fran Rzeznik of Guilford's remarkable film, Marriage Makes a Word of Difference, portrays the personal struggles and political challenges of Connecticut's same-sex couples and their families who are fighting for the freedom to marry.

Many of these loving couples have been in committed relationships for more than a decade, but despite their dedication to each other, they continue to be denied the

respect, dignity, and legal protections that marriage provides. Through compelling interviews and archival and "slice of life" footage, Marriage Makes a Word of Difference celebrates our common humanity, and shows why marriage equality is a fundamental civil right.

To watch the film online, visit: www.lmfct.org/site/PageServer?pagename=movie

Lesbian Best Sellers*

1. The L Word: Season 5
2. Love My Life
3. Finns Girl
4. Affinity
5. Spider Lilies
6. Itty Bitty Titty Committee
7. Exes & Ohs - The Complete...
8. For the Love of Dolly
9. Water Lilies
10. Four Minutes

* By wolfevideo.com

Gay Best Sellers*

1. Shelter
2. You Belong to Me
3. For the Love of Dolly
4. Four Letter Word, A
5. S is for Sexy
6. East Side Story
7. The Houseboy
8. Surveillance 24/7
9. The Curiosity of Chance

* By wolfevideo.com

www.rainbowtimesnews.com



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Did you know that Connecticut is considered one of the top 10 states with people living with AIDS. Connecticut has a case rate of 21.1 per 100,000 compared to the U.S. rate of 15.2., according to www.allianceforliving.org from CT.

More Connecticut News on Pages 16

LGBT News Briefs from Around the Country

Hate crime charge filed in transgender beating

GREELEY, Colo. (AP)—Prosecutors in Greeley are treating the beating death of a transgender woman as a hate crime.

The Weld County district attorney's office filed criminal charges against 31-year-old Allen Ray Andrade including first-degree murder and committing a bias motivated crime, which is also a felony.

Andrade is accused of killing 20-year-old Justin Zapata, who lived as a woman and was known as Angie.

According to court documents, Andrade told investigators he and Zapata went on a date after meeting online. He allegedly confessed to beating her with a fire extinguisher after realizing Zapata was biologically male.

The arrest affidavit said Andrade took a fire extinguisher off a shelf and struck Zapata twice in the head, telling investigators he thought he "killed it." He allegedly told investigators that he struck Zapata again as she struggled to sit up.

Andrade was also charged with first-degree aggravated motor vehicle theft for allegedly stealing Zapata's car. He was also charged with committing identity theft against Zapata's sister.

Out-of-state cash floods gay marriage initiative

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Millions of dollars in out-of-state money is flooding the ballot-proposition campaign to ban same-sex marriage in California.

Supporters of the ban have taken in more than \$1.2 million from out-of-state contributors.

In opposition, gay and lesbian rights groups around the country put more than \$1.3 million into the fight against the ballot initiative.

That figure was before Bruce Bastian—a co-founder of the WordPerfect software company—opened his checkbook and donated one (M) million dollars.

Bastian grew up in a conservative Mormon family in Twin Falls, Idaho. He went on a mission for the church and received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Brigham Young University. But he has been in odds with the church's view on homosexuality since coming out as a gay man.

Bastian, who lives in Orem, Utah, says he felt he had to level the financial playing field.

Same-Sex Suit: NYCLU upstate fight same-sex couple wins insurance

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP)—The New York Civil Liberties Union says a lesbian couple who married in Canada have won their fight against a western New York insurance company over spousal health care benefits.

The NYCLU sued Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Western New York on the couple's behalf earlier this month. The lawsuit accused the insurer of discrimination and of breaching its contract with the school district that employs one of the women.

According to the NYCLU, Blue Cross & Blue Shield now says it will cover married same-sex couples.

A spokeswoman for the insurer did not immediately respond to a request for comment Monday. The company said earlier it was awaiting guidance from regulators in cases of gay marriage, which is not legal in New York.

Transgender fights Cleveland on locker room policy

CLEVELAND (AP)—An embarrassing question from a boy in a locker room inspired Karen Deamons to fight the city: Why was there a woman in the men's room?

Deamons decided last month she would no longer abide by Cleveland's requirement that she change in the men's locker room at the indoor pool at the city-run Cudell Recreation Center. A transgender who identifies as a woman—but has not had sex-change surgery—Deamons wants to be able to put on her bathing suit in the women's locker room.

Deamons, 53, said she filed a complaint June 2 with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission. She's also asking the Ohio Legislature to pass a bill that would prohibit cities from discriminating because of sexual orientation or gender identity.

The city's stance toward Deamons is not discriminatory, Cleveland Law Director Robert Triozzi said.

A letter that Deamons carries with her from endocrinologist Thomas Murphy said

Deamons possesses the mind, personality and behavioral characteristics of the female gender. Transgender men and women should go about their lives as the gender they identify with, Murphy said.

"It's just kind of the common sense approach," said Kristina Wertz, legal director for the California-based Transgender Law Center. "Someone should use the restroom that corresponds with their identity and their appearance."

Judge: principal mistreated gay students

PONCE DE LEON, Fla. (AP)—A federal judge scolded a Panhandle school principal, saying the official led a "relentless crusade" against gay and lesbian students at Ponce de Leon High School.

Student Heather Gillman and the American Civil Liberties Union sued the Holmes County School District. A federal judge ruled that Davis violated Gillman's rights by silencing all pro-gay messages.

According to the suit, Davis told a gay student it wasn't right for her to be homosexual and held a morality assembly, according to testimony. The court's opinion was released last week.

In response to the ruling, the district is training teachers in free speech issues this. School Superintendent Steve Griffin said Monday that Davis is no longer a principal; he now teaches American government classes.

New Studies on Marriage for Gay and Lesbian Couples

The new study published by UCLA's William Institute reports that gay and lesbian couples take advantage of their ability to marry or form civil unions in states where it is available. The report's data is representative of the eleven states that recognize marriage, civil unions, domestic partnerships or other legal arrangements for gay and lesbian couples.

The research director of the Williams Institute states, "Marriage clearly gets the most enthusiastic response from [gay and lesbian] couples, as we're seeing in California."

In another study, the University of Illinois found that lesbian and gay couples

with children and strong religious beliefs are more likely to hold a commitment ceremony. The researchers behind the study said their findings suggest that lesbians and gay men are seeking to protect their children. Mothers and fathers were 3.5 times more likely to have a commitment ceremony than couples without children. The researchers, who surveyed 190 gay couples, also suggested that faith communities are an important source of legal education and advocacy for families with lesbian or gay parents.

For more information, visit: www.fresnobee.com/547/story/766646.html

Rainbow



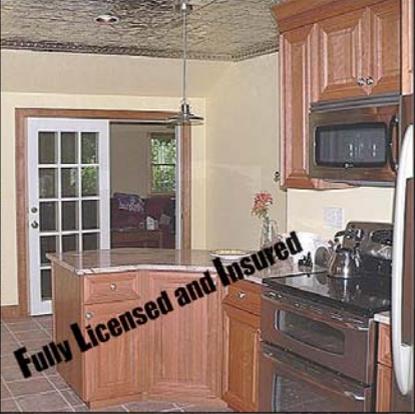
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- 2006 Civic Coupe, #PI0829, 14K **\$18,749**
- 2005 Civic SI Sedan, #LI0853, 28K..... **\$15,988**
- 2007 Civic Coupe SI, #PI0879, 29K..... **\$18,995**
- 2006 Civic Sedan, #PI0837, 39K..... **\$16,995**
- 2006 Civic Coupe, #UI0924, 51K **\$14,929**
- 2006 Civic Sedan, #UI0955, 59K **\$14,500**
- 2008 Civic Sedan, #LI0990, 12K..... **\$19,495**
- 2007 Civic Coupe, #911026, 9K..... **\$17,895**
- 2006 Civic Sedan, #PI1028, 51K..... **\$15,995**
- 2005 Civic Sedan, #PI1030, 28K..... **\$15,749**
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- 2007 Accord, #PI0925, 4 Dr., Auto., 22K..... **\$20,995**
- 2005 Accord LX, #LI0986, 4 Dr., Auto., 24K... **\$19,995**
- 2007 Accord LX, #LI0988, 5 Spd., 27K..... **\$16,995**
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More Queer Voices

Lesbian Notions: The fearful “F” Word men don’t like



By: Rev. Irene Monroe

Michelle Obama won't use the F-word. Alice Walker called it by another name. And when Hillary Clinton used the F-word, before she ran for president, she got clobbered with rumors stating she was an L.U.G.—lesbian until graduation—because she got married to Bill, and then an L.A.G.—lesbian after graduation—because of her marriage to Bill.

With the Democratic National Convention meeting his month, the delegates that identify themselves with the F-word—as “Feminists for Obama”—will come out in droves. The trek to Colorado will be made by dykes, dykettes, dykelings, bi-sisters, transfolk, and, oh yeah, our straight sisters, too. But as my LBT friends have pointed out to me, the sisterhood between straight feminists and us is strained at best and nonexistent at worst. And with Hillary Democrats moving slowly over to the Obama camp, we LBT women also move with hesitancy, given Obama's stance on same-sex marriage.

While the fault lines of race and class are rearing up among “Feminists for Obama,” so too are the fault lines of gender expression and sexual orientation, as LBT women attempt to convince our straight sisters that our families, like theirs, matter.

And while I believe many of our straight sisters understand our struggle, will they forge a sisterhood with us against a presidential candidate who supports civil unions for same-sex couples but not marriage?

During the DNC in Boston in 2004, our

issues got swept under the convention-floor rug. In the Democrats' effort to neither bash Bush nor bring up hot-button topics that might turn away swing voters, the elephant in the middle of the convention floor was the issue of marriage equality. The Democrats donned Republican drag and left Boston renegeing on one of the DNC's platform promises: to support “equal responsibilities, benefits, and protections” for LGBTQ families.

In the Democrats' rhetoric to secure a safer world for all children, they did not understand that our children must grow up with the same rights as others and that the

Michelle Obama told *Washington Post* writer Anne E. Kornblut in May 2007, just months after her husband's announcement of his run, that she's not a feminist.

“You know, I'm not that into labels,” Michelle Obama told Kornblut. “So probably, if you laid out a feminist agenda, I would probably agree with a large portion of it...I wouldn't identify as a feminist, just like I probably wouldn't identify as a liberal or a progressive.”

When white feminists pounced on Michelle Obama for not using the F-word for herself, many African-American sisters came to her rescue, stating that many

African-American Shaker settlement in Philadelphia in the 1870s and lived with each other for more than 30 years, would be labeled lesbians in today's climate. Walker disputed Humez's right, as a white woman from a different cultural context, to define the intimacy between two African-American women.

But many African-American sisters don't use *either* term because both have been and continue to be used for lesbian-baiting in the African-American community. That's where Michelle Obama fits in.

At the 2004 convention, DNC delegates who were supporters of marriage equality were disallowed from bringing signs into Boston's Fleet Center for “security reasons” and because “the campaign wants to get a consistent message out.” Of the 4,300-plus delegates, 255 were identified as LGBTQ. And although one would think that these 255 should have been the loudest advocates for marriage equality, they too skirted the issue for fear of losing the election.

Let's not make this mistake again. Because the distance between straight “Feminists for Obama” protecting their families and LBT women protecting our families is just one child away.

** Rev. Irene Monroe is a nationally renowned African-American lesbian activist, scholar, and public theologian, whose writings have appeared in the Boston Globe, the Boston Herald, the Bay State Banner, Cambridge Chronicle, and Metro News. She can be reached care of this publication.*

And with **Hillary Democrats** moving slowly over to the Obama camp, we **LBT women** also move with **hesitancy**, given Obama's stance on **same-sex marriage**.

children of LGBTQ parents must also have those rights.

And can we, this time, rely on straight “Feminists for Obama” to help us?

Feminists have fought for reproductive justice and family protection for years. But they have also viewed us LBT women as a liability to the women's movement. In 1969, Betty Friedan, then president of the National Organization for Women, and an icon of the “Second Wave” of feminism, called us “the Lavender Menace,” creating a chasm between straight and LBT feminists.

Going into the convention this year, “Feminists for Obama” face not only the expected infighting characteristic of the feminist movement, but also, with the current backlash to feminism, their own struggle for legitimacy. And a woman who benefited from the all the feminist movements—past and present—and could be important to their cause is not a feminist: the Democratic presidential nominee's wife, Michelle Obama.

African-American women don't use the term “feminist,” but instead prefer “womanist,” because of the racism embedded in the feminist movement and the strained history between white and black women that remains unaddressed.

But if truth be told, the creation of the word “womanist” was to conceal “the Lavender Menace.” Alice Walker specifically devised the term in response to Jean Humez's introduction to the book *Gifts of Power: The Writings of Rebecca Jackson, Black Visionary, Shaker Eldress*. Humez suggested that Rebecca Jackson and Rebecca Perot, who were part of an

Fantasia Fair 2008: the October you can't miss

Fantasia Fair is a week-long transgender event held every October in the GLBT resort town of Provincetown, Massachusetts. The Fair is a “full immersion” experience, meaning that attendees can and usually do spend an entire week living 24/7 presenting their gender as they wish.

Started in 1975, “FanFair” is the oldest and longest-running gathering of transgender persons for mutual education, support, collaboration and socializing. Every year the Fair grows in its scope, character, and assistance to the gender explorer. FanFair continues to be the leading annual program promoting an individual's ability to thrive in a real-life situation, and receive positive reinforcement and encouragement. This allows the cross dresser, MTF transsexual, FTM transsexual and all the gender diverse to experience life in an open and caring environment—something unique in a world that typically has difficulty understanding and accepting gender diversity.

Couples find support, friendship and



caring, and enjoy the opportunity to share and partake of workshops and sessions that explore and recognize the ups and downs of a TG partnership.

Your next Fantasia Fair promises to be an exciting, fun, and educational opportunity. Your CD or TS self will be able to develop confidence by exploring life in a real community without boundaries. Attendees can spend a full week in beautiful Provincetown, enjoying the seaside beauty and the friendship of many wonderful T folks. Yes, you really are welcome and free in all of Provincetown, and, yes, you will make friends you will keep forever.

This year Fantasia Fair will take place on October 19-26 in Provincetown. For more information about costs, directions to the event, etc., please visit: www.fantasiafair.org/

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Authors on Authors: Jennifer L. Jordan's *Selective Memory* mystery novel

By: Ruth Perkinson/TTRT Author Reviewer

It's easy to understand why Jennifer L. Jordan's latest psychological thriller, *Selective Memory*, was short-listed for a *Lambda Literary Award*. This novel, which is the sixth in her Kristin Ashe mystery series, is a page-turner: fast-paced and full of deep, dark intrigue.

When classical pianist Alexandra Madigen crashes her car and suffers a traumatic brain injury, she hires Kristin Ashe, a private investigator in Denver, to piece together her life—bit by bit—over the last twenty years. As the fine-tuned plot unfolds, we find that at the bottom of the memory loss is the beautiful yet elusive Clarissa who has played a shadowy role in Alexandra's life from the start. Clarissa, who first fell in love with Alexandra in high school, is back and the haunting re-enactment of how their mysterious lives unfold proves well worth staying up past midnight to read on.

Jennifer L. Jordan threads together a mystery that encompasses the fits and furies of her subject. And, at the same time, she throws in her ever-humorous companion and workmate, Fran Green, who peppers the plot with her humor and new spot on a radio show for lesbians. Coupled with

this is the Test-A-Mate subplot that has Kristin dressing up and trying to bait a cheating lover. It's a great release from the ominous and complex, Alexandra Madigen.

The story also delves into Kristin Ashe and who she is an investigator. She's miffed by her client many times and struggles to find the answers to the life this woman led. She has trouble sleeping, has a fight with Fran, and at times doubts why she's doing any of the investigating she does.

The plot and characters are always compelling and Jennifer L. Jordan's book, *Selective Memory*, is one for all mystery lovers—or not. She's just changed this writer (who usually reads non-fiction) into wanting to read the first five books in the series. In my book, Jennifer L. Jordan wins the prize for creating a story and characters you want to know more and more about—on every level!

To learn more about Jennifer L. Jordan and her books, please visit her at www.jenniferljordan.com and check out the ad on page 22, which has more information.

* Ruth Perkinson has written three books for *Spinsters Ink* and can be found on the web at www.ruthperkinson.net

Rhea from Page 10

the [American] politicians in office. Canada is a much more liberal country.

MR: Tell me about the first few years coming to America. Were you seeking stardom?

CR: I moved here with \$300; I bought a pair of earrings for \$220 the second day I was here. I lived my sister. She was really sweet; she came to every show. I was working three jobs at the time: stand-up comedy, spraying perfume at Bloomingdale's, and fighting off the lunatics that were spraying back.

MR: What do you consider the major turning point in your career?

CR: The day that I did *Comic Relief* [8]. I met Whoopi that day, which led me to Hollywood Squares, and ultimately upped my stand-up career. People knew my first and last name!

MR: Let's get personal for a minute: How did you handle all the gossip surrounding your weight when you were hosting *The Biggest Loser*? What does that kind of negativity do to your self-esteem, especially when you can't escape it?

CR: It's not of interest to me; I don't find it interesting. It's mean-spirited. I don't even acknowledge it.

MR: In your latest role you play Noleta, a trashy sort of lady who lives in a trailer, on LOGO's *Sordid Lives: The Series*. What drew you to this project?

CR: The character herself was part of the reason. Besides that, the script was well written and the [original] movie was hilarious. Noleta is a fully developed, three-dimensional character. I embraced her.

MR: How do you get into character—any particular methods?

CR: Have you seen the wardrobe and the hair and makeup; it was hard not to [get into character]. [Noleta's] a real person. My father was really ill at the time as well, so I was already very vulnerable. It was easy to tap into the real part of life.

MR: I spoke with one of your *Sordid Lives* co-stars recently—the lovely Rue McClanahan—and she mentioned that someone on the set isn't very popular, that this person is somewhat of a prima donna. I'm sure you love to dish with the best of 'em, so can you give any insight into who's at the center of this controversy and why?

CR: I don't know how that rumor got started—I think it's from some crazy blog. It's not me because I love her. I can dish, but this doesn't have any resonance.

MR: You have a large gay fan base—why do you think that is? Where did it come from?

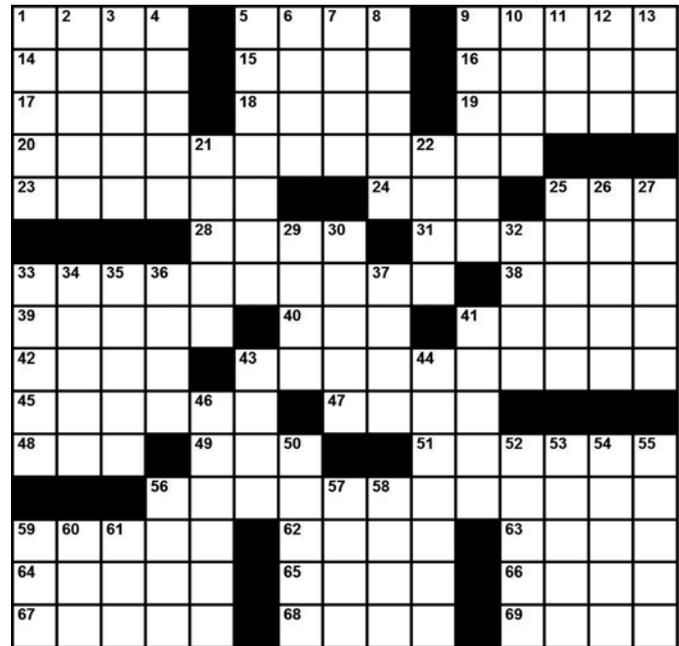
CR: I think because—there's naturally this affinity. I have this hyper sense when somebody's not being nice to someone else. I like to root for the underdog. I get the LGBT community, and I think it gets me.

MR: Now that filming the first season of *Sordid Lives* is wrapped up, what's next? Will you return for a second season?

CR: Absolutely! Have you seen the guy I had sex with? You would return as my understudy!

* Who is Mikey Rox? Who gives a f\$#@%! But you can find him at www.mikeyrox.com.

Q Puzzle: Greek Team



Across

- 'N Sync member Lance
- Joe.My.God, for one
- Bear
- Opening for the crack of dawn
- 15 Time that drags
- 16 Michael of *Miss Congeniality*
- 17 *Peter Pan* pooch
- 18 Spread it on your muffin
- 19 "Let's hit the sheets!"
- 20 Athlete of 1976, 1984, 1988
- 21 One that stays in a bed
- 22 Benjamin Hoff's *The ___ of Pooch*
- 25 Flower for Foucault
- 28 Signs of *The Lion King*?
- 31 Dildo, e.g.
- 33 Athlete of 1968
- 38 Architecture, to Julia Morgan
- 39 They make points by touching the body
- 40 Bill written by Alice Paul
- 41 Bosom buddy
- 42 They're performing, in *Fame*
- 43 Athlete of 1984
- 45 Sauce for two sailors?
- 47 Vidal's Breckinridge
- 48 *The L. Word* network
- 49 Charlotte of *Facts of Life*
- 51 "More! More!" on Broadway
- 56 What the athletes in this puzzle competed in, for the U.S.
- 59 Dinah of a golf classic
- 62 One way to San Francisco
- 63 Satisfy fully
- 64 *The Wizard of Oz* scorer Harold
- 65 Sailor's patron
- 66 "___ she blows!"
- 67 Alfred Kinsey's tool
- 68 Word before admiral, in the navy
- 69 Student org. for "family" and friends

Down

- 1 They slide into openings at keggers
- 2 Like unhappy lovers, maybe
- 3 Gays, technically, after a 1973 APA vote
- 4 Place where men wear makeup
- 5 Opened up, like a pansy
- 6 *Pandora's Box* heroine
- 7 Jackie's designer
- 8 Rub it in
- 9 What a cruiser is looking for
- 10 Country north of Thailand
- 11 Women's rights, for short
- 12 *A Chorus Line* song
- 13 Become husband and husband, e.g.
- 21 Syllable pairs before "Don we now our gay apparel"
- 22 Get in the sack
- 25 *The Wizard of Oz* producer Mervyn
- 26 *Cara of Fame*
- 27 Has more than a one-night stand
- 29 River of Ulrichs' country
- 30 Vital fluid
- 32 *Love Songs* poet Teasdale
- 33 Where to find nipples
- 34 *Winery of The Color Purple*
- 35 Prefix with sexual
- 36 TV portrayal of Robin's partner
- 37 Like sexy undies
- 41 Common name in the land of Wan Yan Hai
- 43 Noise of an ass
- 44 ___ set (package)
- 46 Art historian Raven
- 50 An old flame?
- 52 Playbill lists
- 53 Montgomery Clift's hometown
- 54 Raise the price of, at Barney's
- 55 Gay former NFL player Tualo
- 56 Cartoon Network's *Moral* ___
- 57 In need of some rays at Laguna Beach
- 58 La Douce role of Shirley
- 59 Carrier to Copenhagen
- 60 National gay org.
- 61 Plug attachment

Queer Voices from NY

Lambda Legal urges Newfield Central School District to retract its Stance on New York Human Rights Law

Newfield, NY— In an effort to persuade the Newfield Central School District (NCSD) to abandon its stance that the New York Human Rights Law (NYHRL) does not apply to public schools, Lambda Legal today sent school board members a letter outlining the legal flaws in their position and warning of future consequences for students who may face antigay discrimination.

"No other federal or New York law bars sexual orientation discrimination in public schools as specifically and effectively as the Human Rights Law does," said Hayley Gorenberg, Deputy Legal Director of Lambda Legal. "It's unconscionable for a

public school district to argue that the Human Rights Law does not protect the students in its care."

Two parents filed a sex discrimination complaint against NCSD alleging that their sons were unfairly disciplined while other students who were also misbehaving were not. In addition to disputing the facts, the school rejected the applicability of the NYHRL, arguing it only applies to "education corporations and associations," which, in its view, does not include public schools. A state judge ruled in favor of the NCSD, citing a 1974 appellate decision. However, Lambda Legal's letter points out that the court's analysis is outdated because a law

that went into effect after the court's decision defined "education corporation" to include public schools.

Though the case at hand does not involve antigay discrimination or harassment of gay students, the school's legal strategy would, if effective, wipe out a vital protection for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students, which led to Lambda Legal's interest in the matter.

In October 2007, Lambda Legal submitted a similar letter to the Ithaca City School District asking it to revise its stance that the NYHRL did not apply to public schools. The case involved a student who alleged that she was the victim of relentless racial

harassment and that she was given little to no help from the school district. The State Supreme Court judge ruled that the NYHRL applied to schools, but the district appealed the finding. After receiving Lambda Legal's letter, the local school board held a hearing, and on October 23, 2007, the board unanimously voted to rescind the challenge. Ithaca City School District Board of Education member Seth Peacock said, "I want to thank Lambda Legal for their involvement in this case. Their letter, I think, allowed many of us to look at this issue differently."

Pride Agenda's comments on Repeal of the 1913 Massachusetts Residency Requirement Law

New York, NY—"We are thrilled that Massachusetts has lifted its residency requirements on marriage. Now New Yorkers can drive across the border to a neighboring state, get a marriage license that will be recognized as fully legal and valid here at home, and have access to the vast majority of the 1,324 rights and responsibilities that come with it.

While we realize that some families will go to Massachusetts because they desperately need the protections that come with a



marriage license, we believe that LGBT New Yorkers should not have to leave their home state to get married. We look forward to a day in the near future when New York State stops discriminating against our families and issues marriage licenses to same-sex couples. The State Assembly, Governor Paterson and a majority of New Yorkers also look forward to this day. Now it's time for the State Senate to act."

ty of New Yorkers also look forward to this day. Now it's time for the State Senate to act."

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1913 from Page 2

In addition, a "June analysis by the Williams Institute at the U.C.L.A. School of Law, estimated that Massachusetts could add \$111 million to the economy over three years by taking the step it did this week to allow out-of-state couples to marry there. The report also suggested that the move could result in 330 new jobs and increase state and local revenues by \$5.1 million."

According to the Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, GLAAD, Gov. Patterson's decision places NY on par

with Rhode Island and New Mexico for honoring same-sex marriages performed in Massachusetts.

Is it possible that even those who oppose same-sex marriage will be avid supporters, not because of altruistic reasons, but rather because of individual economic vitality in a time when we are living in a fiscally futile nation?

**Nicole C. Lashomb is the Editor-in-Chief of The Rainbow Times. A seasoned writer and former vocalist, Lashomb can be reached via email at: editor@therainbowtimesnews.com. (no hyphens).*

NY: Novice rides 350 miles to raise AIDS funds



LAKE PLACID, N.Y. (AP)—A novice rider has bicycled 350 miles from Jones Beach on Long Island to upstate Lake Placid to honor his late brother and raise money for AIDS research.

Tom Monks wheeled into Lake Placid at noon Wednesday.

The self-described "average guy" from Long Island told the Plattsburgh Press-

Republican that the ride up Route 22 has taken him five days.

Monks' ride has been in honor of his brother, Jimmy, who died of AIDS in 1991. Monks says his ride has raised more than \$6,500 for the Center for AIDS Research and Treatment in Manhasset, Long Island.

The 44-year-old Monks chose to ride to Lake Placid because his family has a summer place at Sekon on Upper Saranac Lake.

Q Puzzle Solution from P. 21

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The Outfield: Who would Jesus root for?



By: Dan Woog*

Each year at the NCAA women's basketball Final Four, the scene was the same. Pat Griffin sat at the Women's Sports Foundation's "It Takes a Team" booth, handing out literature about LGBT issues in athletics. Each year, Griffin—a former coach, professor emerita at the University of Massachusetts, and director of "It Takes a Team"—would sneak over to the Athletes in Action (AIA) and Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) booths, surreptitiously seeking out antigay materials.

Last year, she decided to introduce herself. Soon Griffin and representatives from the two Christian organizations pulled up chairs, and engaged in a spirited—but respectful—conversation.

"We ended up liking each other," Griffin recalled. "That surprised me, because I was 'Christian-phobic.'" The women shared stories of feeling disrespected - Griffin as a lesbian, the others as Christians - and realized that, despite their differences, they believed in their own truths, and respected the others for believing in theirs.

Inspired by that meeting, Griffin and FCA's Debbie Haliday—athletic director and coach at Hillcrest Christian School, and a former Division I basketball and softball player—helped organize a panel at this year's Women's Basketball Association Conference in Tampa. Titled "Seeking Common Ground," it featured three lesbians and three Christians. Their frank discussion - including a provocative question-and-answer session with 40 audience members, evenly divided between lesbians and Christians—galvanized everyone.

The panelists' worst fears—that a bible-

thumping Christian or agitated lesbian would disrupt the proceedings—were not realized. Instead, each woman spoke about her hopes and fears. Together, they indeed found common ground.

"We all love women's sports, and agreed it's been good for us," Griffin said. "We all recognized the need for respect and safety in sports. I realized I don't need everyone to accept me as a lesbian. But I do need to participate in sports safely. We all agreed that's important."

"I felt well respected by Pat, though my choices in life are different than hers," said Haliday. "She did not in any way shame me, or cause me to feel unaccepted. I was very grateful for that, and I deeply desire to do the same. I don't see Jesus isolating Himself in His days on earth, and I want to be like Him in every way."

Each panelist saw the others as unique individuals. An especially poignant moment came when AIA staff member and former Division I basketball coach Tracey Wolff described her conflict about a gay relative's wedding. Many Christians urged her not to attend, but she went. After the panel, a few lesbians told Wolff how hurt they felt when loved ones did not attend their own ceremonies. "Going to the wedding was a very difficult decision, but hearing from those ladies reinforced that it was the right decision for me," Wolff said.

"Both groups have been standoffish to each other," noted Helen Carroll, director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights' "Homophobia in Sport" project, and a former athletic director and basketball coach. "We didn't know how to approach each other. Pat walked across that bridge, and made it happen."

As the panelists spoke, barriers fell. Carroll said she found common ground with the Christians in two important areas:



PAT GRIFFIN

the desire to give all athletes a fair chance, and the responsibilities of being a parent.

"As leaders, we all have a responsibility of showing others that we can transcend our differences," Carroll said. For example, believing that homosexuality is wrong, a Christian coach had refrained from telling a lesbian athlete to go to the campus LGBT center. At the panel, the coach said she now realizes it is her duty to go see how the center's resources can help athletes.

For her part, Carroll said, "Now I don't feel so reticent talking to Christian coaches who may feel my lifestyle is not sanctioned by God. I can approach those coaches much more easily now."

Importantly, Carroll added, "We agreed not to try to change anyone's minds. We know there are differences we'll never agree on. That's not a negative; it's just an acknowledgment of what not to focus on. This was more about finding common ground, to help all our student-athletes."

A highlight for Carroll came when a coach in the audience said, "If Jesus walked through that door, He would be proud of everyone one of us today."

Griffin concluded the panel by saying, "I can play on any team with any woman here, or coach any of you." Wolff said later, "That's so true. We're all on the same team."

When the panel was over, Griffin walked up to the AIA and FCA booths. The women greeted her warmly, and introduced her to other Christians. "I felt welcomed, but I didn't feel compromised in my beliefs," the LGBT activist said. "It just felt right."

*Dan Woog is a journalist, educator, soccer coach, gay activist, and author of the "Jocks" series of books on gay male athletes. Visit his website at www.danwoog.com. He can be reached care of this publication or at OutField@qsyndicate.com.

Q Classifieds

PERSONALS

Trans

"SWEET TRANSVESTITE" MTF, 51, smiling, slim, healthy, balanced, love to shop, garden, cook, kayak, kiss. Looking for a GG as sweet as me to ride off into the sunset with. Contact "Jennifer" at: j.nytop@yahoo.com.

Men 4 Men

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and testing the waters. Great sense of humor and kind heart. College educated and intelligent. Contact Ashley at honour_huston@hotmail.com or call 413.883.0396.

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