

The Rainbow Times

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

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FREE!

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Opinions

Impolitically Correct: Our new Admin

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

Recently, President-Elect Barack Obama drew fierce fire from gay rights organizations around the country for asking high-profile Evangelical Rick Warren to give the invocation at his historic Inaugural ceremony this month.

Warren, the founder and senior pastor of the evangelical mega Saddleback Church, in Lake Forest, California, is best known for his

preaching at the nation's fourth largest place of worship and as a bestselling author of many Christian books. He has led numerous conferences on Christian ministry and the Evangelical faith. Warren has also been an outspoken opponent for politically-charged issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage.

During the 2008 presidential campaign, Warren, and his

See Correct on Page 5

Read TRT's Trans Column on P. 6 & Lesbian Voices on P. 14

C'mon Out – Just Ask! Advice column

By: Tetty Gorfine*

Dear Tetty,

I am feeling perplexed, and would appreciate hearing your take on some of the thoughts that have been running around my mind these days.

I am a female in my late twenties, on the butch end of the spectrum (though it seems to be a circle these days). I take issue with the term "queer," even though I support its gender-transgressive implications. That is, I appreciate the fluidity of gender and believe gender takes countless forms, limited only by the potential of human expression.

On the other hand, "queer" seems in many cases to have morphed into an excuse to closet oneself. To sum up a general sentiment of the women I've gotten close to over recent years: "Times have changed. I can see how labels like 'lesbian' and 'butch' had a place at one time, but we're past that. I'm not into labels. If push came to shove, or if my mother were describing me, I guess I'd be called a lesbian. I don't think it's anyone's business, really."

[Such a thought], gets me thinking. The women I've generalized above are straight-looking. They acknowledge that their behavior could be classified as lesbian or queer, but they hate labels. I was recently asked, "don't you think times have changed? These days if you're a lesbian you can still be a woman, you don't have to go shave your head and renounce patriarchy. That's what's so great about our time. It's much more tolerant."

I realize what I'm about to say might warrant rotten tomato launching if I were to announce this to my peers. I would rather wear compost than hide quietly behind their straight privilege. Their take on "queer" is a regressive move to the binary: It's a "don't ask, don't tell" M.O. that lets them act straight on the streets, and you-know-what in the sheets. Acquiescing to the term "gay," which many women do (I've noticed), is pandering to the mainstream. So, what can I do? I used to scoff at the term lesbian myself, until recently. It's almost 2009, they're all telling me to "get over it" because times have changed.

Times certainly have changed. Queer is the new straight. I think these women are closeted.

I eagerly await your insight.

Signed,

Generation Gap

Hello Ms. Feeling the Generation Gap:

You don't seem really to be asking a question, rather bringing up some very interesting and spicy issues that are relevant to the LGBT



TETTY GORFINE

sub culture (because of course most heterosexual people reading your comments would have no idea what you are talking about!). I will not say too much here since this is not really a mental health question. I will urge our readers

to go on the bulletin board of the LifeCourse Counseling Center website and continue this very worthy dialogue.

I will say however, that I have seen varying uses for the term queer. There are people for whom queer truly fits since they feel their identities' do not fit into the labeling we use. On the other hand, as I stated two issues ago in TRT, feminism has lost significant ground over the past 30 years. The fact that the word gay is used so frequently to refer to all lesbian and gay people, makes me crazy. Once again, women become invisible within this term. But I must also validate that for some gay and lesbian people their sexual orientation is not political. There are those who just want to live simple lives. Does that mean they are attempting to live with straight privilege? Is there an element of internalized homophobia for some of those who use the word queer? I don't know. Let's continue talking about this one!

Best,

Tetty

Dear Tetty:

I have been in a relationship with my boyfriend for 10 months. We had a perfectly happy relationship until a few weeks ago when we had a fight (our first major one). Out of anger I told him we should take a break to cool down. That lasted about a week and we tried rebuilding the relationship, however since then he says that he loves me but "has a wall up" that he can't get down. He said that I broke his heart and it might be better if we were just friends. I am trying to do every thing to convince him to work on the relationship together but he says he needs time alone to think. I think the more time goes on the harder it will be to get back together. He refuses to see me or talk to me yet he says he has not given

See C'mon Out on Page 10

The Controversial Couch

Lie back and listen. Then get up and do something

By: Suzan Ambrose/TRT Columnist

Thank goodness Massachusetts has finally de-criminalized marijuana. Now we can finally get on with the serious business of what's really important to fix in the world. Perhaps the sexual peccadilloes of our elected officials or the crimes against humanity that (soon to be ex) president George Bush and Co. has brought us? Or maybe Pope Benedict's recent speech that saving humanity from homosexual behavior was just as important as saving the rainforest? This may be Ben and Jerry's best shot at a new interesting ice cream flavor. Flaming Fruity Perversion/Conversion Crunch, anyone?



Because of all the things the Pope could have spoken to the world about during this tumultuous time in the history of our planet, the gays get first place again on what's wrong. Environmental concern and global awareness to bring the masses together, to become stewards of God's green earth-I get it. That's what the message of hope and love of our physical planet, our home, could have been about. But, no. The Pope took this moment to remind the world of the evils of being gay. I'm sorry...not being gay; just acting on your natural, normal, god-derived impulses. This brought to us from men in pink beanie caps and matching Prada shoes who wear hassocks!

Unfortunately, Pope Benedict's comments will allow some people to feel completely justified, more so than ever, to gay bash or bully. It allows homophobia to gain a more solidified foothold on the ladder of human rights abuses. (Merry Christmas, Rudolph: I'm sorry to say the gay reindeers won't be included in any reindeer games again.)

According to BBC News, Reverend Sharon Ferguson, chief executive of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement, described Pope Benedict's remarks as "totally irresponsible

See Couch on Page 18

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

In response to Susan Ambrose's article "The Controversial Couch" in your Dec. 4, 2008 issue, I am trying to determine whether her mention of Thomas Beattie, the "pregnant man," is meant to mock or somehow exclude him from the trans and/or queer community because he fought so hard to become a man and then had the gall to give birth—or a sincere attempt at including him in the infinite spectrum of gender that welcomes new combinations, including men giving birth, and allows us each to shape and define ourselves as we like rather than choosing an identity from a column marked A or B?

I believe Thomas Beattie to be a person who acknowledges, accepts and values all of his parts, both male and female, yet feels more comfortable or secure being perceived as a male person in this society. His body has the same teeth, hair, fingernails and toenails that he was born with, his brain remains untouched, and even his hormones are virtually the same save in different concentrations now.

So now that Beattie has moved from column A to column B it seems he is still expected to conform to society's notions of "male" no matter how he arrived there. He is both freak and any man; he wanted to be male so he better damn well act male (and that does not include havin' no babies!) and yet the sheer wonder and ecstasy of birth is still within his grasp as that has also been since his birth.

If we change one part must all of the others follow? Is it so awful to imagine a world where we can just be whatever we feel like being? Just imagine that. Respectfully, Trouble Mandeson Greenfield, MA

Dear Editor, [The Future of Northampton Pride]

Every first Saturday in May, the Northampton LGBT Pride March and Rally takes place bringing thousands of visitors to the area. It's an event that is now ...

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Research: Family Rejection of LGBT adolescents link to health outcomes

Groundbreaking Research Establishes Predictive Link to Negative Health Outcomes - Paper authored by San Francisco State University's "Family Acceptance Project's" Dr. Caitlin Ryan to be published "Pediatrics" journal

San Francisco, CA—For the first time, researchers have established a clear link between rejecting behaviors of families towards lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) adolescents and negative health outcomes in early adulthood. The findings will be published in the January issue of *Pediatrics*, the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, in a peer-reviewed article titled "Family Rejection as a Predictor of Negative Health Outcomes in White and Latino Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Young Adults." The paper, authored by Dr. Caitlin Ryan and her team at the César E. Chávez Institute at San Francisco State University, which shows that parents' rejecting behaviors towards their LGB children dramatically compromises their health, has far reaching implications for changing how families relate to their LGB children and how LGB youth are served by a wide range of providers across systems of care. The study and development of resource materials was funded by *The California Endowment*, a health foundation dedicated to expanding access to affordable, quality health care for underserved individuals and commu-



The LGBT Family Intervention Project Team, second from left-to-right is Dr. Caitlin Ryan, author of the Paper. Photo courtesy of the Family Acceptance Project

nities. "For the first time, research has established a predictive link between specific, negative family reactions to their child's sexual orientation and serious health problems for these adolescents in young adulthood—such as


depression, illegal drug use, risk for HIV infection, and suicide attempts," said Caitlin Ryan, PhD, Director of the Family Acceptance Project at the César E. Chávez Institute at SF State and lead author of the paper. "The new body of research we are gen-

erating will help develop resources, tools and interventions to strengthen families, prevent homelessness, reduce the proportion of youth in foster care and significantly improve the lives of LGBT young people and their families."

Major Research Findings:

- Higher rates of family rejection during adolescence were significantly associated with poorer health outcomes for LGB young adults.
- LGB young adults who reported higher levels of family rejection during adolescence were 8.4 times more likely to report having attempted suicide, 5.9 times more likely to report high levels of depression, 3.4 times more likely to use illegal drugs, and 3.4 times more likely to report having engaged in unprotected sexual intercourse, compared with peers from families that reported no or low levels of family rejection.
- Latino males reported the highest number of negative family reactions to their sexual orientation in adolescence.

See LGBT Adolescents on Page 8




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In 'The Name of God'

Faith, Family, and God: Challenge

By: Paul P. Jesep*

Theologian Alexander Men said that power and its application to impose conformity is the most corrupting, degrading, and spiritually abusive force in human history. Many seek conformity using the bible to define marriage, family, and morality. Conformity is nothing more than a false sense of emotional, intellectual, and spiritual security in an ever changing world.

Here's a New Year's challenge. Read the scriptural passages misused to impose conformity. In doing so, the LGBT and searching community may be surprised to learn that God hasn't rejected them. It also prepares community members to rebut those who misuse the bible to impose inequality.

Passages from Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18 and 19), as one example, have often been used to justify injustice. Gay and straight have probably heard about the story, but few have actually read it.

Two angels are greeted by a man named Lot. The heavenly visitors go into Lot's home when "all the townsmen of Sodom, both

young and old—all people to the last man—closed in on the house." They demand that Lot throw out the angels so they could be raped.

Lot refuses. Instead, he offers his two vir-

Jesus never discusses homosexuality. The Ten Commandments do not mention it. Overall, the bible is more concerned with heterosexual indiscretions.

gin daughters as a sacrificial substitute. Fortunately, the angels drive away the men before any violence occurs. Shortly thereafter, God wipes out both towns.

Something can be illuminating for both what is said and for what is not. Prior to the destruction, the Almighty observes, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great, and their sin so grave . . ." The Almighty had already determined that the towns were a problem. The Creator doesn't say why.

Sodom and Gomorrah could have been destroyed because of paganism, idol worship, or orgies with the devil. Destroying these towns would include women, children and the elderly. Were they all gay? No. The

Creator's wrath was not motivated by homosexuality. The story is not about two people in a loving relationship who happen to be of the same gender.

The Letters of Apostle Paul are also used to justify inequality. He condemned men sleeping with men in an age when the death rate from war, disease, and child birth was quite high. He lived when children played a central role to the economic survival and security of a family and the greater community.

He also wrote that slaves should respect their masters. Who today would use Paul to justify a return to slavery?

Jesus never discusses homosexuality. The Ten Commandments do not mention it.

Overall, the bible is more concerned with heterosexual indiscretions. There are only a handful of ambiguous, widely misunderstood references to homosexuality.

Many religious Americans uneasy about civil and human rights don't have time to become studied in scripture. This enables the ignorant, sanctimonious, and self-righteous to manipulate fears with a deceptively innocent, yet discriminatory message.

It is gratifying when I encounter a reaction by those uneasy about equality after the facts above are shared. Their opinion may not be changed on the spot, but it becomes apparent that they've been given something to think about that turns out to be less threatening and far more reasonable. In 2009, consider learning about what is actually written in the bible. There are numerous interpretative books available from Amazon. It enables you to respond with measured logic and reason to those who are manipulated into believing that conformity is the Creator's will.

* Paul is a practicing attorney in Albany, priest and prelate in the Eastern Orthodox Church, and author of "Crucifying Jesus and Secularizing America – the Republic of Faith without Wisdom." He may be reached at VladykaPaulPeter@aol.com.

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Williams College Queer Film Festival hosted by *Images Cinema* from January 16th through January 22nd, sponsored by *The Rainbow Times*

Williamstown, MA—The *Williams College Dively Committee for Human Sexuality and Diversity* is proud to present *The Williams College Queer Film Festival 2009* from January 16-22 at *Images Cinema*, 50 Spring Street in Williamstown, MA. The highlight of the Festival will be the January 17 appearance of acclaimed writer, actor, and director John Cameron Mitchell to host the screening of his films "Shortbus" and "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" and to DJ at a dance party following.

"There are a ton of great queer films out there and very few make it to northern Berkshire County. So we have teamed up with *Images* to host this wonderful set of award-winning movies," Justin Adkins, Queer Life Coordinator at the College, explained.

The Festival starts at 8 p.m. on Friday, January 16, "The Edge of Heaven," a 2007 Turkish-German film written and directed by Fatih Ak'n, which won the *Prix du scénario* at Cannes. At midnight, join the South Hadley-based *Come Again Players* for a traditional live-cast midnight screening of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show."

Saturday, January 17, begins with free coffee and donuts at 11 a.m., followed at 11:30 by the film, "Breakfast with Scot," a 2007 Canadian comedy about a retired ice hockey

player turned sportscaster, whose quiet domestic life with his partner is disrupted when he becomes the legal guardian of his nephew.

Mitchell comes to Williamstown for the 4 p.m. screening of his 2006 film, "Shortbus," followed by a Q&A and discussion. At 9 p.m. his 1998 cult classic, "Hedwig and the Angry Inch," will be shown, followed by dance party at *The Log* (76 Spring Street) with Mitchell as DJ.

On Sunday, January 18, enjoy brunch at noon followed by a 1 p.m. showing of the 1999 satirical romantic comedy, "But I'm a Cheerleader," in which a high school girl discovers her true sexual identity when sent away to be "cured" of her homosexuality. To RSVP for the brunch, e-mail: justin.adkins@williams.edu

On Monday, January 19, "Rag Tag," the 2006 seriocomic by Adaora Nwandu, screens at 8 p.m., and on Tuesday, January 20, two documentaries—"Saving Marriage: The True Story of the Massachusetts Fight to Save Marriage Equality" (2006) and "Be Like Others / Transsexual in Iran" (2008)—will be shown at 7 and 8:45 p.m. respectively in a one-admission double bill.

The Festival concludes with the 2007

"XXY," the story of an intersex teenager, at 8 pm on Wednesday, January 21 and "The Bubble/Buah, Ha," a 2007 film about a group of 20-somethings sharing life, love, and a tiny apartment in modern day Tel Aviv, at 8 p.m. on Thursday, January 22.

Tickets for all screenings will be available from *Images* starting January 5. Regular ticket prices apply. Free for Williams College students with ID. For more information visit <http://williamsqueerfilmfestival.com/> and <http://www.imagescinema.org/> or call *Images' Movie Line*: 413-458-5612, or office: 413-458-1039

The Williams College Dively Committee for Human Sexuality and Diversity strives to develop an understanding of human sexuality and sexual orientation and their impact on culture through a broad array of programming that explores issues relating to gender difference, sexuality, homosexuality, and feminism, and that encourages a respect for and awareness of human sexuality and diversity.

This year's Festival is sponsored by *The Rainbow Times*, the region's premiere LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) newspaper, dedicated to increasing awareness of LGBT issues and serving as a vehicle to unify and strengthen the communities of western

Massachusetts, the Capital District of New York, north central Connecticut, and southern Vermont while providing quality news to its diverse readers. For more information visit: www.therainbowtimesmass.com

Correct from Page 2


church, hosted the Civil Forum on The Presidency, which featured both Barack Obama and John McCain, perhaps prompting Obama's latter invitation to Warren to speak at his Inauguration on January 20, 2009.

Recently Obama defended his decision for Warren's involvement by referencing his visit to Warren's Church by saying that "dialogue, I think, is part of what my campaign's been all about; we're not going to agree on every single issue, but we have to do is to be able to create an atmosphere where we can disagree without being disagreeable."


Obama has also attempted to reassure the gay community that he is a steadfast advocate of this highly marginalized group of individuals-us.

While I understand the concept of reaching across the isle and uniting with people of all

See Correct on Page 18




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Trans Opinions & News

Happy New Year to everyone! Do you have new resolutions for this year?

By: *Deja Nicole Greenlaw/TRT Columnist*

The New Year is upon us and it's actually 2009 now! Time does fly whether you have fun or not so every year is a reminder for one to pause and think about their life. To be a better person, to grow intellectually and spiritually, to stop time wasting habits or unhealthy habits etc are things that are worthy of pondering over to improve our lives. In that line of thinking I propose the following resolutions to be considered not only for Transfolk but for everyone:

- To be more tolerant of other people. We want people to be more tolerant of us. We should give them the same tolerance back.
- Do not judge others. There are always people who don't agree and there always will be. Do not pass judgment on them. You probably know how it feels to be judged and it's not a good feeling so please try not to judge others.
- Give others respect. We all want respect so

we should all be willing to give it.

- Politely ask others for respect. Sometimes we have to remind others to respect those of us who are "different" from who we were once perceived to be. If you are addressed improperly (wrong pronouns, old name etc) just politely remind those folks of their error.
- Be polite and respectful when asserting your rights. Do not let people walk all over you but do stand up for your rights in a polite and respectful fashion.
- Take responsibility for your actions. If you make a mistake, please acknowledge it and apologize to the offended party.
- Keep a smile on your face and love in your heart. This makes it easier to deal with others. Plus it may help you get your way! Everybody wins!!!



DEJA NICOLE GREENLAW

• Help those who need it. We all need help in our lives and we all need to grow. Sometimes we could use a hand and sometimes we can offer one.

• Learn to completely love yourself. How can you love others if you can't even love yourself? One needs to explore, accept and love oneself. If you are not quite there yet, therapy may help.

• Learn to help yourself, you'll feel better. Life is full of obstacles and sidetracks but there are also good things and opportunities available. And it's a great feeling when you accomplish something!

Times are changing and people are beginning to get used to us. They see us in public, work with us, live in the same neighborhood with us and shop in the same grocery stores and bookstores, and malls and restaurants as us. We are becoming very visible to the public and I bet that just about everyone has seen a Transperson in the past year. And guess what? We are not scary, or weird or demented or unbelievable as some folks would think.

After all, this is what they probably saw from the media depictions of us on TV (shows like the Jerry Springer show which show us as deceiving, lying, fighting crazies) or in the movies (where we are seen as psychotic killers) or in the weekly junk newspapers which label us as "Men who turn into women or vice versa" with before and after pics and just a lot of stupid sensationalism. No, Virginia, real Transpeople are real people and are just as boring as everyone else!

We, as Transpeople, are beginning to fit into society openly and I for one am excited that this day is finally here! Happy New Year and love to everyone!

Northampton Pride Guide Advertising Deadline

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Letters to the Editor from Page 2

celebrating 28 years, this coming May, 2009.

In 1999, about five weeks before Pride was to be held, I received a call from one of the two people who had organized the event for

the previous 2 or 3 years. I was told that the two individuals were not going to run Pride anymore, and "would the Northampton Area Lesbian & Gay Business Guild like to pick it

up?" Since I was the President of that (now defunct) organization, I said that I would see what I could do. Within days, 12-15 friends, new recruits, and LGBT community organizers met at the Center for the Arts, crammed into small offices, and planned that year's event. The march was in its third year (I think) of marching out of town to rally at the fairgrounds, having gotten too big for Pulaski Park, and it went off without any major problems. I was in my 8th month of pregnancy that May, and now with five children, I'm in what is now my 11th year of organizing Northampton Pride. I can say that it's been a wonderful experience to have been involved with so many of you in the community and to have worked with an amazing group of people. I can also admit that my time has come to let go of the reins and pass the torch to the next generation of LGBT leaders!

Last year, I announced to the folks who are regulars on our committee that this year would be my last "active year" of organizing this event. I set in motion a plan to train a successor for chairing Pride, and set aside time for mentoring this person. While that seemed like a great plan at the time, it now may need some additional help. In fact, we've lost more energy from our committee due to circumstances beyond our control, and it seems that unless a new group of the commu-

nity steps forward, the Northampton Pride March & Rally will either end after 2009, or need to seriously re-group.

I'm putting the plea out now, while most of the 2009 organizing season is still ahead of us. I am trying to give ample time for those who have the energy to step up now, and join us so that you will have an understanding for the years to come. While I am willing to continue in a small capacity in future years, I have put my share of energy in for the Northampton LGBT community, and I can no longer volunteer such huge chunks of my time to this event. Unless the responsibilities are spread out over a larger group, Pride will not continue. One or two people cannot be expected to do 85% of the work. And no, Pride does not make enough money to hire a paid staff person.

I call upon you now to step forward, future organizers, young LGBT people, to decide what your future Pride events will look like. Pride is a time of remembrance of those who have struggled before us, a celebration of all of our successes, and a coordinated effort to lead us into what our future holds! Jump onboard!

For more information, or to get involved, please contact me at info@NorthamptonPride.org. Thanks.

—Melinda Shaw

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Deep Inside Hollywood: New projects for Vin Diesel and Kristin Chenoweth



By: Romeo San Vicente*

Shankman Sails with *Sinbad*

From big screen confections like *Hairspray* to the subversive online delight *Prop. 8: The Musical*, gay director Adam Shankman

thrives on spectacle. So it's a no-brainer that the box-office-friendly filmmaker would want to resurrect a vintage crowd-pleasing hero like high-seas adventurer *Sinbad*. Shankman's been hired to direct *The 8th Voyage of Sinbad*, and he's eager for the project to leave port and start sailing soon. Getting a leading man confirmed would help - though both Keanu Reeves and Vin Diesel have been attached to the project, neither are currently signed, and there's no guarantee they will. Of course, if this long-in-development project creeps along at the pace it's been moving, the kid from *Two and a Half Men* will soon be old enough to play *Sinbad*. So like everything in Hollywood, it'll happen when the stars align.

Chenoweth Leaps from *Daisies* to *Legally Mad*

Actress and singer Kristin Chenoweth is currently dominating the competition in the run-



VIN DIESEL

(c) Twentieth Century Fox

ning to be America's next top gay-adored celebrity. She's endeared herself to queer fans with her lead role in Broadway's *Wicked*, her hilarious (and often tuneful) role on the brilliantly inventive and now tragically cancelled *Pushing Daisies*, and the shockingly funny online musical *Intervention*, a parody involving a gay meth-head who needs show tunes to guide him to rehab. And for *Daisies* fans who

need a regular TV fix of the tiny, sassy lady, Chenoweth has already lined up a new TV gig. She'll co-star on *Legally Mad*, a new lawyer show from David E. Kelley, as sprightly attorney Skippy Pylon, the daughter of the head of a big Chicago law firm. Skippy is described as an occasionally psychotic woman who enjoys being mistaken for a teenager. Sounds perfect! Look for the show on NBC.

Oxygen Is Addicted to Beauty

What hath *Sunset Tan* wrought? That compellingly trashy reality series about the everyday dramas and intrigues of life in a Hollywood tanning salon was just the gateway drug for fans of dazzlingly ridiculous reality TV. In other words, get ready for the human apocalypse of *Addicted to Beauty*, Oxygen's latest reality entry. It's about the inner workings and, no doubt, odd-yet-sexy employees of a medi-spa where women (and those gay guys you see who are really into cosmetic surgery) can come in for a quick little lift, tuck, or Botox injection. Juggling what room is left on the TiVo schedule after this, *Sunset*, *Celebrity Rehab*, and occasional appearances by Janice Dickinson on QVC will be a difficult maintenance task all its own, but devoted watchers of junk television will surely find a way. Watch for ads featuring

overplumped lips to begin popping up in cities across the country sometime this year.

Meet *The People I've Slept With*

Romeo admits that his attention is easily captured by a provocative title, but that's not the only reason to get excited about the upcoming feature *The People I've Slept With*. For one thing, it's directed by queer filmmaker Quentin Lee, whose provocative and compelling filmography includes festival faves like the hilarious *Shopping for Fangs*, *Drift*, and the lovers-on-the-run epic *Ethan Mao*. This time around, Lee has assembled a cast that includes gay hottie Wilson Cruz, veteran actor James Shigeta (*Flower Drum Song*, *Die Hard*), and up-and-coming indie performers Karin Anna Cheung (*Better Luck Tomorrow*) and Danny Vasquez (*Quinceanera*) for the sexy ensemble comedy. Be on the lookout for this one when film-festival season rolls around in the spring - and maybe bring some one you've slept with to see it.


* Romeo San Vicente thought about making a movie called "The People Who Want To Sleep With Me," but a five-hour epic documentary would be way too expensive to produce. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

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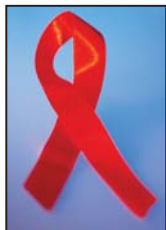
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Local Gay Happenings

AIDS Foundation's 2009 Masquerade Ball, this year's theme: "Fire & Desire"

The AIDS Foundation of Western MA is proud to announce the return of one of Western MA's premier events, The Masquerade Ball! "Fire + Desire" is the theme of this year's Ball which will be held on January 23, 2009 at the *Log Cabin* in Holyoke, MA. The doors of the event open at 6:30 p.m. when guests can enjoy the great *Log Cabin* fare. You will also be able to bid on many incredible auction items and enjoy some of the best entertainment our Valley has to offer! Tickets are going fast and we don't know how long they will last. Every year this event is a sell out!

Fans of the event are always anxious to see the amazing cabaret style show, and are very aware of the valuable benefits resulting from this fund-raiser. The money raised supports our neighbors in need who are affected by HIV/AIDS. The evening is entertaining, and also promotes the discussion of HIV/AIDS in the Valley. Currently over 12% of the state's total number of people living with HIV/AIDS are living in our community. As more people live longer with HIV the necessity of support and services becomes even greater. The AIDS Foundation prides itself on being there to



help those in need.

The AIDS Foundation of Western Massachusetts, Inc., (AFWM) is a non-profit public organization dedicated to assisting people who are living with HIV and AIDS in Hampden and Hampshire counties.

We are an independent organization that supplements the existing network of direct and indirect AIDS service organizations. Our goal is to provide practical and enlightened support to regional residents who are in need of financial, social, and emotional help. For more information about the Foundation and how you can volunteer or donate please telephone (413) 693-0224. We are also on the web at www.aidsfoundation.org or see page 16 of *The Rainbow Times*.

LGBT Adolescents from Page 3

"This study clearly shows the tremendous harm of family rejection, even if parents think they are well-intentioned, following deeply held beliefs or even protecting their children," said Dr. Sten Vermund, a pediatrician and Amos Christie Chair of Global Health at Vanderbilt University.

"In today's often hostile climate for LGBT youth, it is especially important to note that both mental health issues like depression and suicide and HIV risk behaviors were greatly increased by rejection. Given the ongoing HIV epidemic in America, in which half of all new cases of HIV are found in men who have sex with men and there is growing concern about prevention messages reaching young people, it is vital that we share these findings with parents and service providers who work with youth in every way," Vermund continued.

"When put to practical, day-to-day use and shared with families and those who serve LGBT youth, these findings will lead to healthier, more supportive family dynamics and better lives for LGBT young people," Vermund concluded.

The prevailing approach by pediatricians, nurses, social workers, school counselors, peer advocates and community providers has focused almost exclusively on directly serving LGBT youth, and does not consider the impact of family reactions on the adolescent's health and well-being.

Subsequent work with ethnically diverse families by the Family Acceptance Project indicates that parents and caregivers can modify rejecting behavior once they understand the serious impact of their words and actions on their LGBT children's health. In addition, even a little change in parental behavior appears to have a clear impact on decreasing LGBT young people's risk. This new family-related approach to working with LGBT youth being developed by the Family Acceptance Project engages families as allies in decreasing the adolescent's risk and increasing their well-being while respecting the family's deeply held values.

"The new family-related behavioral approach to care being developed by the Family Acceptance Project offers great promise to change the future for LGBT youth and their families by helping parents and caregivers learn how to support their LGBT children and to prevent these extremely high levels of risk related to family rejection," said Erica Monasterio, MN, FNP, in the Division of Adolescent Medicine and Family Health Care Nursing at UCSF. "Rather than seeing families as part of the problem, this approach engages them as an essential resource in pro-

moting healthy outcomes for their LGBT children."

"We are using our research to develop a new model of family-related care to decrease the high levels of risk for LGBT young people that restrict life chances and full participation in society," said Dr. Ryan.

"Our easy-to-use behavioral approach will help families increase supportive behaviors and modify behaviors their LGBT children experience as rejecting that significantly increase their children's risk. However, redirecting practice and professional training - from not asking about family reactions to a young person's LGBT identity to engaging families in promoting their LGBT children's well-being - requires a substantial shift on the part of both mainstream and LGBT providers, health systems and community programs."

"Family Rejection as a Predictor of Negative Health Outcomes in White and Latino Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Young Adults" is the first of many research papers on outcomes related to family acceptance and rejection of LGBT adolescents, supporting positive LGBT youth development and providing family-related care to be released by the Family Acceptance Project.


Methodology

The Family Acceptance Project uses a participatory research approach. The research sample included 224 LGB young non-Latino white and Latino adults, ages 21-25, who were open about their sexual orientation to at least one parent or primary caregiver during adolescence. These youth were recruited within California from 249 LGBT-related venues. Family rejection measures in the survey were developed based on a prior in-depth qualitative study of LGBT adolescents and families throughout California from 2002-2004.


About the Family Acceptance Project

The Family Acceptance Project is a community research, intervention and education initiative that studies the impact of family acceptance and rejection on the health, mental health and well being of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth. Results are being used to help families provide support for LGBT youth; to improve their health and mental health outcomes; to strengthen families and help maintain LGBT youth in their homes; to develop appropriate programs and policies; and train providers to improve the quality of services and care these youth receive in a wide range of settings. For more information, please visit <http://familyproject.sfsu.edu>.

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Queertations: Say what?!

By: Rex Wockner

"We feel a deep level of disrespect when one of the architects and promoters of an anti-gay agenda is given the prominence and the pulpit of your historic nomination. We urge you to reconsider this announcement."

—Human Rights Campaign President **Joe Solmonese** to Barack Obama Dec. 17 after Obama announced that prominent evangelical preacher Rick Warren will deliver the invocation at the presidential inauguration.

"Religious leaders obviously have every right to speak out in opposition to anti-discrimination measures, even in the degrading terms that Rev. Warren has used with regard to same-sex marriage. But that does not confer upon them the right to a place of honor in the inauguration ceremony of a president whose stated commitment to LGBT rights won him the strong support of the great majority of those who support that cause."

—**Gay U.S. Rep. Barney Frank**, D-Mass., Dec. 18 after Barack Obama announced that prominent evangelical preacher Rick Warren will deliver the invocation at the presidential inauguration.

"Why is (Pope) Benedict so obsessed with gay sex? He seems to talk about it all the time, issuing an almost weekly tirade of denunciations that borders on a compulsive disorder. This prejudice is par for the course. The Vatican recently opposed a United Nations statement condemning homophobic violence and the criminalization of same-sex relations. Without gay priests and bishops, the Catholic Church could barely function."

—British gay activist **Peter Tatchell** in a Dec. 23 statement.

"McCain's gumptious partner, Sarah Palin, (was) a walking faux pas who got her cues from the great almighty Gosh (and who was done much more appealingly by sketch comic Tina Fey than by herself). Palin's good-golly demeanor (wink, wink)—which was served up in the purpose of right-wing viewpoints and a clear insufficiency of savvy—was pretty much terrifying. Most memorably, she boasted about how, in parts of Alaska, you can see Russia from your back door. Honey, I can see New Jersey from my window, but that doesn't mean I understand it!"

—*Gay Village Voice* columnist **Michael Musto** in his year-end wrap-up, Dec. 23.

"In an HBO documentary set to air Jan. 29, disgraced evangelical leader Ted Haggard says he never claimed to be heterosexual, as was once reported, and he continues to struggle with same-sex attraction. (Haggard says,) 'The reason I kept my personal struggle a secret is because I feared that my friends would reject me, abandon me and kick me out, and the church would exile and excommunicate me.'"

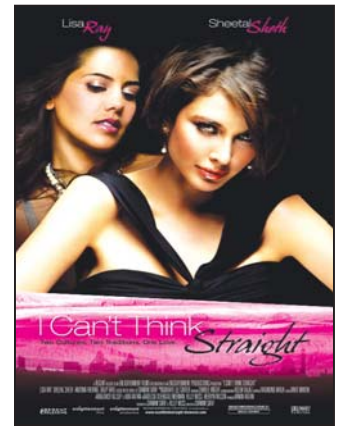
—From a news article in Colorado Springs' **The Gazette**, Dec. 17.

New Lesbian romantic comedy: "I Can't Think Straight," to premiere in Northampton

"I Can't Think Straight" is a multicultural lesbian comedy that is definitely worth seeing" says Jaime Michaels, Producer of the Out! For Reel Film Series. "It's also really exciting that the film's New England Premiere is happening in Northampton. This will be a huge community event at the Academy of Music Theatre." "I Can't Think Straight" will premiere for one show only on Friday February 6, 2009, 7:30 p.m., at the Academy of Music Theatre in Northampton, MA. Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door, \$8 for college students with current ID. To purchase advance tickets online or to view the film trailer, visit: www.OutForReel.org. Tickets may also be purchased at four ticket outlets: *Pride & Joy*, Northampton, *Food For Thought Books*, Amherst, *World Eye Bookshop*, Greenfield, and *The Odyssey Book Shop*, South Hadley.

"Sensual, witty, and elegant" is how one Los Angeles Times film critic describes "I Can't Think Straight". Set in London and Jordan, the film is about the passionate attraction and romance between two beautiful women, a confident Jordanian Palestinian business owner who is about to be married and a shy British Indian writer who loves lesbian culture but hasn't come out yet. Filmmaker Shamim Sarif ("The World Unseen") cleverly juggles different cultures, countries, politics, and religions within the classic romantic comedy structure. "I didn't feel I could depict a Middle Eastern family without touching on politics and religion. They are the primary topics of conversation in that region, for good reason. But in doing so, I wanted to show a view of both sides, and part of the reason for choosing the romantic comedy genre was to explore this in a lighter way," states Sarif. "Having a young, dynamic Palestinian woman as the protagonist was an interesting departure, and the way the Arab family in the film discusses the Israeli-Palestinian conflict felt very real to me," says Executive Producer Lisa Tchenguiz-Imerman. Producer Hanan Kattan (a Palestinian) agrees.

"I was very happy that Lisa Tchenguiz-Imerman, who is Jewish and of Arab background, saw in the film's cultural roots the potential that I did." The British Indian culture, particularly the trouble families can have in



coming to terms with homosexuality, is also addressed. "We wanted a lightness of touch in dealing with these issues, not to reduce their power, but to highlight them in a more accessible way," explains Sarif. The international cast includes Canadian actress Lisa Ray ("Water", "The World Unseen"), Sheetal Sheth ("The World Unseen", "Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World"), and comedic actress Nina Wadia ("Bend It Like Beckham"). Out! For Reel Film Series presents the best in first run Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans films from around the world. Out! For Reel is committed to building and strengthening our LGBT and ally communities by providing film events that offer insightful, entertaining, and positive portrayals of LGBT life experiences. Close to 2000 people have attended Out! For Reel's four premiere screenings this past Fall in Northampton. "The overwhelming success of the Out! For Reel Film Series is a clear reflection of our LGBT community's networking power of networking and the love we have for LGBT cultural events and for coming together en masse as a community," states Michaels. For more information about "I Can't Think Straight" tickets, sponsorships, directions, and film synopsis, visit: www.OutForReel.org.

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2. The L Word: Season 5
3. Itty Bitty Titty Committee
4. Butch Jamie
5. Treading Water
6. k.d. lang: live in london
7. The Gymnast
8. Shelter Me (Riparo)
9. Drifting Flowers
10. I Wish You Would-Explicit

* By wolfevideo.com

Gay Best Sellers*

1. Another Gay Sequel: Gays...
2. Arizona Sky
3. Whirlwind
4. Shelter
5. Adored: Diary of a Porn...
6. He Likes Guys
7. Boys Briefs 5: Schoolboys
8. Dantes Cove Season 3
9. Schoolboy Crush
10. The Lair: Season Two

* By wolfevideo.com

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"It's Happening Here!"

C'mon Out Just Ask from Page 2

up on us totally yet. I am trying to convince him to attend the couples counseling with me, I'm making some headway with that but could use your advice in the mean time. Should I give him his space or try harder to convince him that I would never hurt him the way he thinks I did. Also, how can I persuade him to attend some couples counseling sessions with me? I love this guy and want to do whatever I can to salvage the relationship yet I can't get him to communicate.

Dear Unsigned:

You are correct in trying to coax your boyfriend to see a therapist with you. Something happened during your fight which he says "broke his heart." It does not seem that you understand what this means. For him, it is very significant. In order to repair this, you both need to know what happened to his heart.

You seem to take a good deal of responsibility for his pain when you say you would "never hurt him the way he thinks." From the information you're providing me, I can't know what hurt him. Most times when people are deeply injured, something in the present has triggered some old hurt from the past. For real healing to occur, I believe you two must understand what it was that hurt him. You can work on anything you may have done to contribute to this injury and he has the opportunity to heal something from the past. Then together, the two of you get to figure out how not only to avoid this heart break in the future, but to join as a couple in aiding each other's healing by not unintentionally repeating the old hurt. All relationships from time to time trigger painful things. How could this not be when two people mean so much to each

other? Relationships can be very painful and bring up very sore hurts. And relationships can help heal those hurts by conscious participation.

As a way to help him decide to try some counseling, ask him exactly what hurt him. Try to do so with openness and no defensiveness. Just listen. It is an enormous gift when we just listen to another person. How often in life do we not feel heard? Listen and try to understand from his viewpoint. This does not necessarily mean you are to blame or you should take on the blame. Hear him out and then ask him to go see someone together so you can work with it some more.

I wish you the best,
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 also 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, bisexual and transgender individuals.

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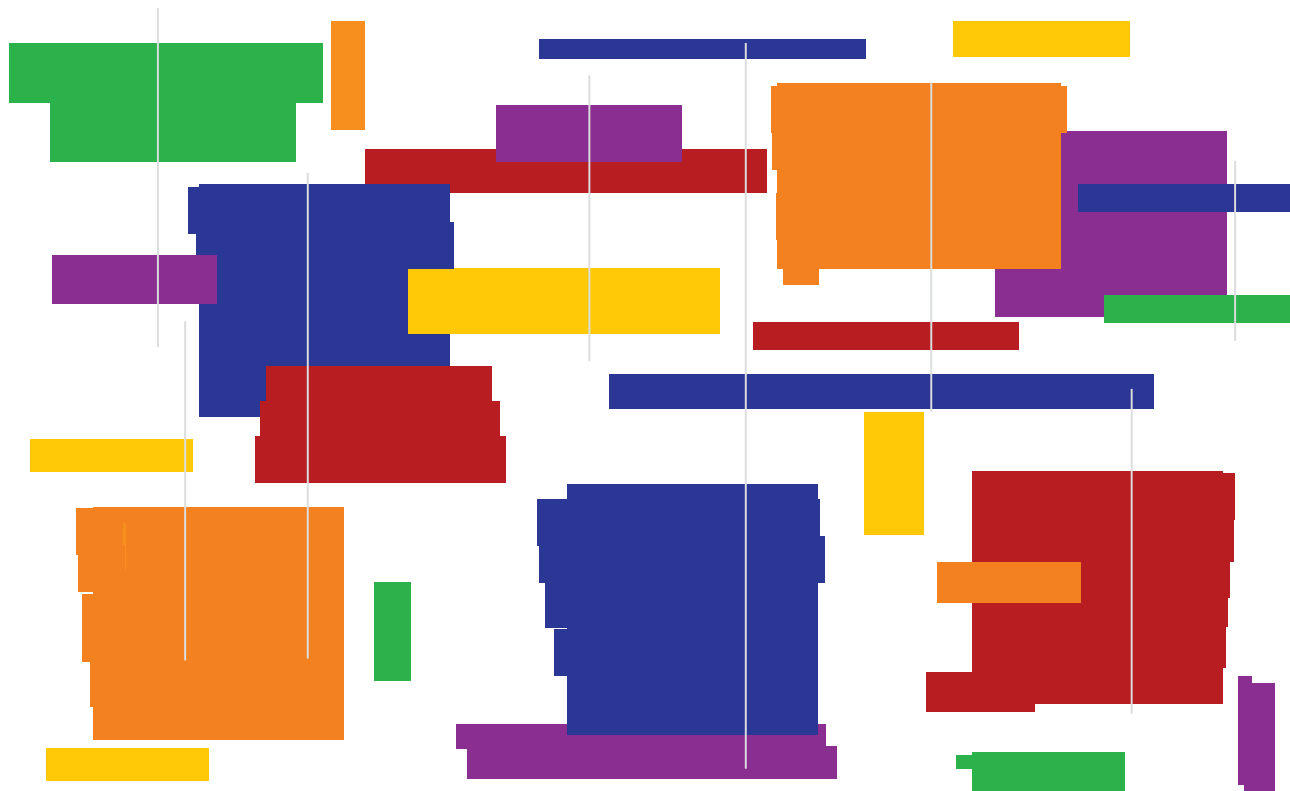
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Street Sense & LGT News

Given all of the negativity that is transpiring in our world, what hopes do you have for the New Year?



Claudia Cook
Proprietor and groomer
Zoom-n-Groom
Florence, MA

"The good news is, there's a bargain to be had in every market!"



Gina Hernandez
Holyoke, MA

"I hope Barack Obama makes gay marriage a federal right, a priority. We should get all the rights, no exceptions! I want it all!"



Jen Fortes
Art teacher
Athol, MA

"I'm hoping that there is a change coming with Obama. I really want change-like getting out of this war!"



Judy Gauthier
Proprietor, Cleaning Co.
Bennington, VT

"People coming together, where people have jobs again, especially the young people...I hope the economy's going to come back."

Poll: Majority of U.S. adults favor legal protections for Gay and Transgender Americans

Pulse of Equality Survey, Conducted by Harris Interactive, Reports that 75% Favor Either Marriage or Civil Unions/Domestic Partnerships for Gay and Lesbian Couples

New York—A new survey conducted by Harris Interactive in the wake of the passage of and protests against California's Proposition 8 reveals that majorities of Americans favor a broad range of policies and legal protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people.

The Pulse of Equality survey, commissioned by the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), shows that majorities of Americans favor either marriage or civil unions/domestic partnerships for gay and lesbian couples, as well as gay- and transgender-inclusive hate-crimes laws and non-discrimination laws, and allowing openly gay service members to serve in the armed forces, while a majority opposes laws that would ban adoption by qualified gay and lesbian couples.

According to the Pulse of Equality telephone survey among 2,008 U.S. adults ages 18 and older, conducted from Nov. 13-17, 2008, Americans support key policy proposals that affect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Among them:

Three-quarters of U.S. adults (75%) favor either marriage or domestic partnerships/civil unions for gay and lesbian couples. Only about two in 10 (22%) say gay and lesbian

couples should have no legal recognition. (Gay and lesbian couples are able to marry in two states, and comprehensive civil union or domestic partnership laws exist in only five others and the District of Columbia.)

U.S. adults are now about evenly divided on whether they support allowing gay and lesbian couples to legally marry (47% favor to 49% oppose).

Almost two-thirds (64%) of U.S. adults favor allowing openly gay military personnel to serve in the armed forces. (The current "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law bans military service by openly gay personnel.)

About six in 10 (63%) U.S. adults favor expanding hate crime laws to cover gay and transgender people. (Hate crimes laws cover gay and transgender people in 11 states and the District of Columbia, and an additional—20 states' laws cover sexual orientation but not gender identity.)

A slight majority of U.S. adults (51%) favor protecting gay and transgender people under existing laws that prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations. (Existing non-discrimination laws cover gay and transgender people in only 12 states and the District of Columbia, and eight

other states' laws cover sexual orientation but not gender identity.)

Nearly seven out of 10 U.S. adults (69%) oppose laws that would ban qualified gay and lesbian couples from adopting children. (In several states, gay and lesbian couples are banned from adopting.)

"In the Pulse of Equality survey, we observed a positive relationship between knowing a gay or transgender person and one's attitudes toward them and the policy issues that affect their lives," said Laura Light, Vice President of Public Relations Research for Harris Interactive. "Based on other surveys we have conducted on attitudes toward LGBT people and issues, the results of this survey suggest that public sentiment in the U.S. is trending toward greater acceptance of gay- and transgender-related policy issues."

Across the LGBT-related policy proposals, there were statistically significant differences in support with respect to age, gender, race/ethnicity and religion. People under 65, and especially those 18-34, were more supportive than people over 65. Women were generally more supportive than men, with women age 18-34 often being more supportive than other segments. Hispanics were more supportive than Whites and African-Americans in showing strong support for

allowing openly gay military personnel to serve in the armed forces. African Americans were more strongly supportive than Whites and Hispanics of expanding existing hate crimes laws to cover gay and transgender people. Mainline Christians (a category that includes, among other denominations, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians) and Catholics were more supportive than Evangelical Christians, and Mainline Christians were often among the more supportive segments on a variety of issues.


The survey also revealed that there has been greater acceptance of gay and lesbian Americans over the last five years. Approximately two in 10 Americans (19%) reported that their feelings toward gay and lesbian people have become more favorable over the past five years, with contributing factors including: knowing someone who is gay or lesbian (79%), the fact that laws have been passed that protect gay and lesbian people (50%), opinions of family or friends (45%) and religious leaders (21%), news coverage of gay and lesbian issues (41%), and seeing gay or lesbian characters on television (34%) and in movies (29%). Nearly three out of four Americans (73%) personally know or work with a gay or transgender person, and half of those who know or work with someone who is gay or transgender know five or more gay or transgender people.

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See Gay & Trans on Page 13



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Gay & Trans from Page 12

"The visibility of the past several years, and the intense conversations of the past few weeks, seem to have galvanized a majority of Americans' support of equality for gay and transgender Americans," said GLAAD President Neil G. Giuliano. "While this expression of support is encouraging, particularly after the setbacks we experienced on Election Day, it's not something we can rest on. There is a lot of work to be done. We must all do what we can to sustain and expand this emerging wave of grassroots activism so that it leads to laws and policies that extend full equality under the law to all Americans – lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and straight."

Giuliano suggested that one of the crucial issues facing LGBT people is that many Americans aren't aware of the injustices that they face.

"Majorities of Americans clearly favor equality for gay and transgender people," Giuliano added, "but we've seen that too many still mistakenly believe that the intolerance and injustices we face are things of the past. So it's more vital than ever that we tell our stories, illustrate the injustices we face, and remind people of the common ground we

share."

About the Survey

GLAAD commissioned Harris Interactive to conduct a nationally representative survey among U.S. adults over the age of 18. The objective of the study was to understand public opinion on LGBT people and LGBT-related policy issues. The total sample includes 2,008 U.S. adults ages 18+, surveyed from November 13 to November 17, 2008. Interviewing was conducted by telephone using random digit dialing (RDD). Results were weighted as needed using age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region, number in household, and household income to be representative of the U.S. population of adults age 18 and over. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points.

About GLAAD

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) is dedicated to promoting and ensuring fair, accurate and inclusive representation of people and events in the media as a means of eliminating homophobia and discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation. For more information, please visit www.glaad.org.



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Gay Travel

Out of Town: Gay-Friendly Caribbean Hideaways



By: Andrew Collins*

It's dominated by sunny, tropical weather and has plenty of direct flights from North America and Europe. In the eyes of many travelers, there's no place more stunning than the Caribbean. Among gays and lesbians, however, the region hasn't quite emerged as a major vacation option, and it may never become one - at least to the degree Puerto Vallarta, Fort Lauderdale, and Ibiza are. But the number of GLBT-friendly resorts is rising steadily, and on most islands, you'll now find at least one or two noteworthy resorts or vacation compounds eagerly welcoming gay guests.

Although broadly similar in climate, the different islands of the Caribbean offer marked contrasts with one another in topography, culture, and personality. Some are better suited to scuba-diving and lazing on the beach, while others offer an abundance of hikes through lush rain forests and over rugged mountains. Puerto Rico's largest city, San Juan, is the only spot in the region that offers much in the way of gay nightlife, and attitudes toward gay travelers are fairly welcoming throughout Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, St. Barthelemy, and Curacao, with other islands slowly but steadily warming to the GLBT market.

Here are six inviting Caribbean retreats, from posh, all-inclusive spa resorts overlooking the sea to cozy eco-lodges nestled on

hibiscus-choked hill-sides.

Calibishie Lodges - Dominica

The pristine, largely undeveloped, and extremely mountainous island of Dominica differs from many others in the Caribbean - it's without huge, all-inclusive resorts, and it's geared more toward budget-minded adventure travelers than it is well-heeled luxury seekers. Don't come here expecting swank boutiques and high-end restaurants, but if you love hiking to secret waterfalls and geothermal-volcanic lakes, this is the island for you - it's also a great destination for diving. The gay-friendly Calibishie Lodges is a tranquil, affordable compound of six simply but handsomely furnished units on a verdant bluff surrounded by gardens. Views take in the sea and, in the distance, the island of Guadeloupe.

The rooms have shaded balconies, clean white-tile bathrooms, and a tasteful, unfussy decorating scheme. You can dine on some of the island's freshest and tastiest food (Creole-style fish, garlic chicken, omelets, burgers) at the property's open-air Bamboo Restaurant, which overlooks the pool. Within a short walk



Photo by: Andrew Collins

is one of the better beaches on the island, and the staff can help you to arrange adventure tours, from sea kayaking to diving to mountain biking.

Caribe Mountain Villas - Carolina, Puerto Rico

This gorgeous, gay-owned compound of vacation villas offers the perfect balance of rural seclusion and proximity to urban sophistication. The property is set in a hilly rain forest—it has a large pool, a tennis court, and great views of lush foliage. But it's also a mere 11 miles from San Juan, with its pulsing gay bars, charming old town, trendy restaurants, and fine beaches.

The four guest villas come in a few configurations—some have two bedrooms, with the largest unit sleeping up to six guests. Each has its own deck or terrace, full kitchen, and plenty of room to spread out and relax. If it's a dramatic view you're after, book the Mountain Top Coqui villa—its broad terrace looks for miles out over the region's greenery. Hosts Jeff Harpell and Martin Nemeth provide highly personalized attention and assistance, but they're also happy to leave guests to their own devices. This is an ideal option for extended stays.

Inn on the Blue Horizon - Vieques, Puerto Rico

The larger of two islands off the east coast of Puerto Rico, Vieques has steadily developed considerable cachet among eco-tourists, gays and lesbians, and - more recently - jet-setters. A chic W Hotel will open on the island in April 2009. Offering a far more intimate but still highly luxurious experience, the Inn on the Blue Horizon has been popular with GLBT travelers - not to mention plenty of

celebrities and business moguls - for many years. It's on the island's peaceful southern coast, near the village of Esperanza.

There are just nine guest rooms, most of them set inside cottages with large private porches. All have well-chosen colonial antiques, tile floors, and original paintings and drawings. You can take a dip in the pool, or mingle with other guests in the open-air tropical cocktail bar. This is a truly romantic retreat, as discreet as it is low-keyed. An added bonus to staying here is the chance to dine at the inn's Carambola Island Restaurant, which serves outstanding contemporary Caribbean and American fare.

Le Sport - St. Lucia

With a stunning beachfront location at the rugged northern tip of St. Lucia, the upscale, all-inclusive Le Sport resort has long had a following with gays and lesbians - it's an adults-only, spa-oriented property that's perfect for a stress-relieving vacation. The resort is well-suited to couples or singles, and it encourages guests to develop their own personalized spa-retreat programs, complete with sporting activities (golf, diving, tennis, windsurfing, fitness and yoga classes, and so on), body and beauty treatments, and exceptional meals at the trendy Pan-Asian restaurant TAO.

Personal guides help guests decide how best to spend their time - and yes, one option is simply whiling away the day reading a book on gorgeous Caribbe Beach. Although Le Sport is a mainstream property with a predominantly straight clientele, the clothing-optional sundeck, elegant piano bar, and sophisticated vibe ratchet up the GLBT appeal. Accommodations are attractive and tasteful. High-end units have water views, mahogany four-poster beds, iPod docks, and Kohler-brand BodySpa multiple-nozzle jet showers.

Lions Dive Hotel - Curacao

Perhaps no island in the Caribbean has made a more concerted effort recently to attract gay and lesbian visitors than Curacao, a dry and gently hilly island off the coast of Venezuela that's part of the Netherlands Antilles. The Dutch influence affects everything on Curacao from architecture to food to social attitudes, and it's this progressive mindset that helps make the island so popular with GLBT folks.

See Caribbean on Page 19

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Queer Cinema You Can't Miss!

Call me Troy (LGBT)

Genre: Documentary; Not yet rated

Director: Scott Bloom

Release Date: 00/00/00

Notes: Premiered at 2008 Palm Springs International Film Festival

Synopsis: A rousing, riveting paean to a hero of the contemporary fight for GLBT rights, *Call Me Troy* traces the life and times of the charismatic Reverend Troy Perry, a founder of the Metropolitan Community Church in Los Angeles, self-proclaimed "polar teddy bear" and tireless activist for gay rights and protections since coming out of the closet himself some 40 years ago.

Bruno (G)

Genre: Comedy; Rating: Not yet rated

Distributor: Universal Pictures

Starring: Sacha Baron Cohen

Release Date: 05/15/09

Synopsis: Bruno (Baron Cohen) is a gay fashionista from Austria who fancies himself as "the voice of Austrian youth TV."

The Baby Formula (L)

Genre: Comedy, Romance; Rating: Not yet rated

Director: Alison Reid

Distributor: Grindstone Media

Starring: Megan Fahlenbock, Rosemary Dunsmore,

Angela Vint; Release Date: 07/01/09

Notes: Initial release in Canada.

Synopsis: Athena (Vint) and Liliith (Fahlenbock) are two lesbians that are desperate to give birth to their own biological child. In order to have their own child, they experiment with a scientific process that makes sperm from their own stem cells. The best part of this film is that it was shot while Vint and Fahlenbock were actually pregnant!

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Clean up your act!

Happy New Year to all of my readers, and to those who have also read the novel of which I am the protagonist, "Friend of the Firm," thank you for indulging me. Normally this column involves some type of legal issue, but this month I have decided to get personal.

Those of us who make New Year's resolutions that are so easily decided but difficult to maintain need to get the ball rolling! This column will provide tips and tricks to help you get on track and stay there.

No more excuses. No more self-deprecation. Take stock of your life, decide what you want to improve and make a vow to do it. There you have it...your resolution.

Go ahead, make a resolution. Need to stop smoking? Lose weight? Do a better job managing your money? Learn a new language or skill? Find a new job?

Whatever your resolution, if you are serious about keeping it, you can help yourself stick to it by cleaning up your act. That means to stop, yes, cease and desist, your slovenly ways and get busy.

Start by cleaning your room. You heard me, clean your room! It's simple and it's free, but also an extremely effective way to make sure you start the year off right. Wash your bedding, scrub the windows and walls, vacuum everything, sweep, mop, scrape and peel; whatever it takes to make your bedroom spic-and-span for the new year. Wash the dirty clothes and organize your drawers and closets. Give clothing you don't wear to charity. The next step is very important and not to be overlooked: open the windows, turn on the fan and air out your room for at least two hours. Light candles and place them in the corners to clear out stagnant air and trapped gasses. Clearing the clutter will release endorphins and help keep you focused, and that will make it easier to keep your promise to yourself.

If your resolution involves stopping a bad habit, perform a ritual burning. Burn an object

that represents the thing you are trying to rid yourself of. If it cannot easily be burned, write it down and burn the paper.

If your resolution involves a new beginning, perform a ritual incense burning while you clean your room. Every time you pass by the smoke, say aloud what you have resolved to do. This isn't voodoo...it's a reminder to yourself that this is important to you and will impress the vow on your mind. You might need to burn incense daily for a while until your resolution takes hold and becomes a habit.

Next, choose a trusted friend or family member and tell him/her what your resolution is. Then vow to pay them one dollar every time you relapse. If you have resolved to stop smoking and smoke three times in one day, you owe your friend three dollars. Be sure to pay up and ask the friend to keep the money in a safe place for future use. For every day you keep your resolution for the entire day, put a dollar in a shoe box under your bed. At the end of each month, you and your friend should compare which stash has the most money. Make a game out of it! Tell your friend to make a big deal out of how much money is in her stash at the end of each month. Then your friend should stuff the money in her wallet, doing so right in front of you. Your friend should not, under any circumstances, return the money to you.

At the end of the month you will hopefully have about thirty dollars in the shoe box. You can use that money treat yourself to something special that doesn't interfere with your resolution, put it in a savings account toward a vacation, give it to charity, whatever. The box under your bed and your friend's stash should be empty at the beginning of each month.

Keep your bedroom clean! Dirty clothes go in the laundry and clean ones are hung up or

HRC: Concern about So-Called "Provider Conscience" regulations, sacrifice LGBT patient care

WASHINGTON—The Human Rights Campaign recently expressed concern over Department of Health and Human Services regulations regarding "provider conscience." These regulations purport to interpret federal law to allow a health care provider to refuse to provide any health care service or information for a religious or moral reason. These regulations could impair LGBT patients' access to care services if interpreted to permit providers to choose patients based upon sexual orientation, gender identity or family structure. In addition, under these regulations a provider might be able to refuse to administer an HIV test to a gay patient, and even be exempt from the statutory duty to tell the patient where else he could receive the test. Under the regulation, a pharmacist could refuse to fill a prescription for hormone therapy if she has religious objection to transgender people. The regulations would also threaten women's access to comprehensive health care by permitting pharmacists to refuse to dispense contraception even when doing so significantly burdens the patient's access, or to refuse to

participate in an emergency abortion even when the woman's health is at risk. The regulations override many state laws protecting patients' access to medical services.

"These regulations sacrifice patients' right to medical care, permitting providers to refuse to do their jobs when they choose," said HRC President Joe Solmonese. "We ask the Bush administration: what happened to 'first, do no harm'?" Denying patients legal, safe medical treatments for any reason is simply wrong, and violates the trust that all Americans, regardless of our sexual orientation or gender identity, place in our doctors, nurses, and pharmacists."

HRC submitted comments objecting to these regulations when they were proposed, asking the administration to amend them to protect patients while preserving religious liberty. We are now calling on Congress to take action to eliminate these harmful regulations, and will encourage the incoming HHS leadership to amend them through the regulatory process. For more information visit: hrc.org.

The Connecticut Gay Men's Chorus is seeking experienced singers (age 18+) for its 2009 season. The CGMC, more a musical rep company than a typical chorus, produces musical comedy shows that are fully staged and costumed. Productions are held in December and April/May on Connecticut's premiere stages, including the Shubert in New Haven and the Bushnell in Hartford. Auditions will be held in New Haven on January 13 and 20 at 7:00 pm. Please prepare one vocal piece that showcases your talent; pianist will be provided. For more information call 1-800-644-2462 or email info@ctgmc.org. Visit our website at www.ctgmc.org.



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www.lmf-ct.org (860) 525-7777/Married Lesbian Support
Group: tricolor@aol.com (203) 430-9227

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See Act on Page 18

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New law protects retirement savings for lesbian and gay couples

President Bush has signed new law ensuring that partners who inherit 401(k) savings can protect them from unfair tax penalties

WASHINGTON—The Human Rights Campaign today hailed the passage of a law that protects partners who inherit retirement savings. The Worker, Retiree and Employer Recovery Act of 2008 (WRERA), signed by President Bush today, contains technical corrections to the Pension Protection Act of 2006 (PPA). PPA made it possible for employers to allow any nonspouse beneficiary of an employee's retirement plan—including an employee's same-sex partner—to roll inherited retirement benefits directly to an individual retirement account (IRA) and avoid immediate taxation. WRERA requires that all employers provide this rollover opportunity to nonspouse beneficiaries.

"This legislation secures much-needed pro-

tection for lesbian and gay couples," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. "Our community faces unique challenges in preparing for retirement because we are denied Social Security spousal and survivor benefits. Protecting our hard-earned retirement savings is even more crucial to us, and until now, the tax code made it that much harder."

Before 2007, partners who inherited retirement plan savings typically faced immediate taxation on inherited benefits, unlike different-sex spouses, who could roll savings over to an individual retirement account (IRA) with no tax penalty. Under the PPA, as of January 1, 2007, qualifying plans could permit any nonspouse beneficiary—including a

domestic partner, parent or sibling—to roll over inherited retirement benefits paid as a lump sum directly to an IRA. Qualifying plans include defined benefit plans (pensions), 401(k) plans, employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs), profit-sharing plans, money purchase plans, 403(b) plans and governmental 457(b) plans.

Unfortunately, this provision of the PPA was subsequently interpreted to be optional for employers, meaning each company had to affirmatively adopt this protection for partners under each qualifying plan. Under the WRERA, all qualifying plans that pay lump sum benefits to nonspouse beneficiaries are required to provide the rollover opportunity as of January 1, 2010.

"This is progress toward eliminating the more than 1,000 inequities that our families face under federal law," continued Solmonese. "U.S. employers should make the rollover provision available as quickly as possible—before the 2010 deadline—and LGBT workers should ensure their partners and children are designated as beneficiaries."

An instructional resource for employers is available at www.hrc.org/issues/8606.htm. *The Human Rights Campaign is America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality. By inspiring and engaging all Americans, HRC strives to end discrimination against LGBT citizens and realize a nation that achieves fundamental fairness and equality for all.*

CA Attorney General: Proposition 8 invalid, fatally defective, lacks compelling grounds

In a brief filed on December 19, California Attorney General Jerry Brown asked the California Supreme Court to declare Proposition 8 invalid, explaining that the ballot measure is fatally defective because the government lacks the compelling grounds necessary to deprive "people of the right to marry, an aspect of liberty that the Supreme Court has concluded is guaranteed by the California Constitution." Brown believes that Prop 8 is indefensible and cannot stand, and separately agrees that the marriages of 18,000 couples contracted between June and November are still valid, a position also taken in briefs submitted by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's administration on December 19.

In November, the California Supreme Court agreed to review the validity of Proposition 8 in response to a lawsuit filed by *Lambda Legal*, *The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)* and the *National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)*. The groups argue that Prop 8 is invalid because it improperly attempts to undo the constitution's core commitment to equality and deprives the courts of their essential role of protecting the rights of

Constitutional Change Does Not Apply to Existing Marriages

California Attorney General Jerry Brown agrees that the marriages of an estimated 18,000 same-sex couples between June 16 and November 4, 2008 are still valid in the state of California and must continue to be honored by the state. There is nothing in the language of Prop 8 that suggests the initiative could apply to couples who have already legally married. *Lambda Legal* is committed to seeing that all couples married in California continue to receive legal protections and have their marriages respected as required under California law.

minorities. According to the California Constitution, such a radical change in the way the courts and state government work cannot be decided by a simple ballot measure. The legal groups filed the writ petition on behalf of Equality California and six same-sex couples.

The California Constitution makes clear

that a major change in the roles played by the different branches of government cannot be made by a simple majority vote through the initiative process, but at the very least must first go through the state legislature. Changes to the underlying principles of the constitution must be approved by two-thirds of both houses of the legislature before going to voters. That didn't happen with Prop 8, and that's why it's invalid.

The groups filed a writ petition in the California Supreme Court before the elections, arguing that the initiative should not have appeared on the ballot. The court dismissed that petition without addressing its merits.

This would not be the first time the court has struck down an improper voter initiative. In 1990, the court struck down an initiative that would have improperly attempted to strip the state's courts of their role as independent

interpreters of the constitution.

"If the voters approved an initiative that took the right to free speech away from women, but not from men, everyone would agree that such a measure conflicts with the basic ideals of equality enshrined in our constitution," says *Lambda Legal* Senior Counsel Jenny Pizer. "Proposition 8 suffers from the same flaw. That's too big a change in the principles of our constitution to be made just by a bare majority of voters."

Executive Director Kevin Cathcart has spoken out against racial scapegoating in the wake of Proposition 8, and warns that it is wrong and weakens our movement.

On November 4, Americans witnessed the historic election of Barack Obama, but passage of antigay ballot initiatives like Proposition 8 shows we still have much to do on the road to equality. Read more in *Lambda Legal's* 2008 Election Spotlight.

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Queer Opinions

Couch from Page 6

in the face parody of Christianity this year called *A Pink Christmas*, featuring a manager stall with two Josephs and two Marys? How absurd, no? Preposterous! Even blasphemous, many might think. This is a scene that could never have actually been a reality—so why make a mockery of this event, sacred to so many?

Throwing stones at the Church is one way many gay activists hope to shed light on the

hypocritical body of sanctimonious men who wield a ton of power and say they speak for God. Matthew couldn't have said it better, from his own book in the bible: "And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own? How can you think of saying to your friend, 'Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,' when you can't see past the log in your own eye? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye."

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Amen to that.

And yet, could it not be said that this very same event, this immaculate birth, wasn't just as hard to stomach 2000 years ago? Who would even think about believing a story in which a pregnant, unwed mother had just been told by an angel the baby inside of her was put there by a Higher Power? That seems like a completely mind-boggling thing that would have been called into question by the very folks who say God didn't make me gay. And yet, they accept this—by hiding behind the word faith.

The Associated Press reports that Amsterdam ratcheted up the controversy over the week by having another manger exhibition in which a male entertainer known as Wendy Mills posed as Mary in a blonde wig and high-heeled black boots and holding a plastic doll. Another man played Joseph in black leather trunks and a silver shawl. (Is this "I'm Dreaming of A Leather Christmas"?)

Frank van Dalen, chairman of Pro Gay, which organized the event, said gays were not satisfied with being tolerated, but wanted to be "socially accepted as an indivisible part of society. Our objective is not to be offensive.

Correct from Page 5

walks of life, should that be done at the expense of others?

"I commend President-elect Obama for his courage to willingly take enormous heat from his base by inviting someone like me, with whom he doesn't agree on every issue, to offer the Invocation at his historic Inaugural ceremony," Warren released in a statement. Yet, it was Obama's base that led him to the White House victory in the first place.

The gay community was one of the many mar-

This is about visibility." And visible you have made us, Mr. Dalen.

It's a fine line between making a point and not crossing the line. I'm sure there will be many that will be deeply disturbed by the images that *A Pink Christmas* has offered up. But perhaps more disturbing should be the ones the Pope and friends would have us live by.

Save the Rainforest? You betcha. Because I, for one, can see the forest for the trees. And the only thing I'm willing to see become extinct would be the less than charitable feelings towards gays and lesbians spoken by Pope Benedict and those who believe as he does.

Grab a spoon; we've got a lot of Ben and Jerry's to go through.

** Suzan Ambrose, when not trying to get extra sleep, watching Alfred Hitchcock films or reading mystery novels can be heard on her call-in radio program, The Naked Truth, Monday evenings at 8 pm, on 103.3FM, Northampton, MA. Also catch the show streaming on the web at www.valleyfreeradio.org.*

ginalized communities who paved the way for Obama to be elected as the nation's Commander-in-Chief. Shouldn't there be a degree of loyalty to the people who helped to put you, Mr. President-Elect Obama, in the position you are in or is it always about politics? As for me, I beg to differ. It is an impossible task to always please and appeal to everyone around you, no matter how many politically correct moves you make. There will always be something impolitic about being political. Or, am I the only one that feels this way?

Act from Page 15

folded and put away. Windows should be opened monthly and the room aired out. Clean your room every week, spending at least an hour getting it back in shape with clean linens, clothes, empty waste cans and clean floors and windows. While you are doing this, constantly remind yourself of your resolution.

Additional tips for keeping those resolutions:

If you need legal help, contact a lawyer. For help with finding the right lawyer go to www.findlaw.com or contact the State Bar for your state.

If you need help figuring out how to resolve financial issues, contact a not-for-profit organization that counsels people on how to handle their money, or contact a financial advisor that has been referred to you by someone you know and trust.

If you need to make peace with someone, take the first step by dissolving your pride and make a positive move toward them. It might not be necessary to tackle the issue that led to

the problem. You could simply say something nice or offer to buy their lunch one day. Try to see yourself in their place and accept their weaknesses like your friends accept yours.

Build your own self-esteem by forgiving yourself for whatever you might have done to offend yourself, just as you would forgive someone else for a similar thing if they asked for forgiveness and then worked to make it right. Along with this, you have to work to make it right to yourself. Stop punishing yourself for past deeds and/or actions and vow to do better.

If you need to resolve a mental-health issue such as depression or bi-polar disorder, contact your doctor or a mental-health professional. For additional information visit www.nimh.nih.gov.

And finally, stand in the middle of your freshly cleaned room, take a deep breath of the cleansed air, look around and say aloud, "I resolve to . . ."

Have a great year!!
SheldonBailey.com

TRT Yours 1st! Yours to keep!

Caribbean from Page 14

There's not a huge nightlife scene, but restaurants and bars around the island are quite friendly, and there is one gay bar, Lyrics. Several hotels enthusiastically welcome "family," including the reasonably priced Lions Dive Hotel, which might very well be the best choice for gay fans of scuba diving in all of the Caribbean.

Just a five-minute drive from the capital city of Willemstad, this eco-friendly hotel fronts a private, palm-shaded beach with direct access to National Curacao Underwater Park. There's a PADI dive center on premises, as well as a spa and fitness room. Lions Dive Hotel offers expert diving instruction, geared toward everyone from novices to experts, and guests have plenty of chances to explore the many spectacular dive sites around the island, including its famed reefs. Rooms are functional and pleasant, with tile floors and balconies - many have direct ocean views. There are also six full apartments with kitchens. Other amenities include a beach bar cafe, a full-service restaurant, and two pools.

Sand Castle on the Beach - St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands

Drawing a mostly gay clientele, the lesbian-owned Sand Castle on the Beach is located on St. Croix, the largest of the U.S. Virgin Islands. With a charmed location right on a long crescent of pristine beach, this friendly, 21-room hotel offers a splendid setting for sun-worshippers. Other amenities include a large pool, and an excellent restaurant with seats facing the sea and live music on Saturday evenings. You can snorkel and swim right at the hotel beach, and the staff can also arrange tours of the island's historic forts and plantations, horseback rides through the rain forest, and sailing and kayaking trips.

The hotel also has a special arrangement with the island's leading dive outfitter, S.C.U.B.A.

Sand Castle on the Beach offers commitment-ceremony and wedding packages - this is a pretty incredible setting to exchange vows. For the ultimate romantic getaway, you might book one of the top suites - these have private patios facing the beach, terra-cotta-tile floors, full kitchens, and unbeatable views. But if you're already stretching your budget a bit, and you don't plan on spending a ton of time in your room, you can save a bundle by staying in one of the perfectly lovely studios, which are brightly furnished and have small kitchenettes but no view to speak of. Whichever room you book here, you're always steps from the inn's pool and the turquoise seas of the Caribbean.

** 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: OutofTown@qsyndicate.com.*

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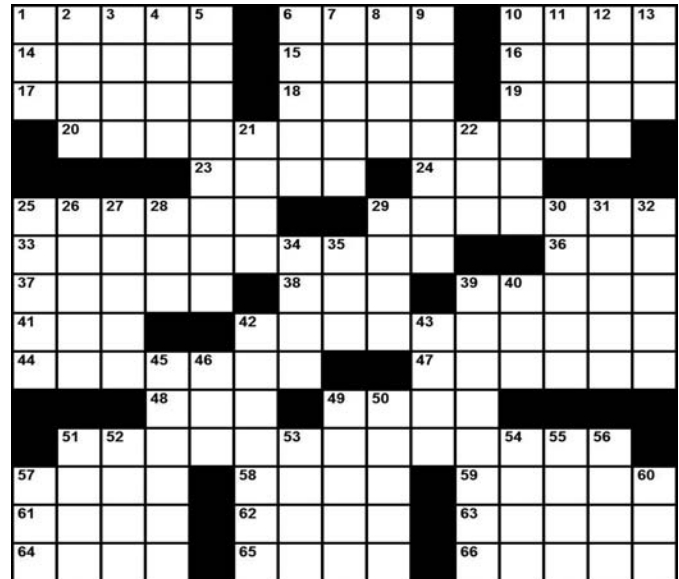


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Q Puzzle: "Way Out"

Hint: The word "way" is deleted from phrases to change their meaning



Across

- 1 Went down, on the beach
- 6 Dorothy Gale's home
- 10 Word on Warhol's can
- 14 Tim of *Rocky Horror* fame
- 15 A *Streetcar Named Desire* director Kazan
- 16 Bear that may be a minor
- 17 Burke of baseball
- 18 Not worth oral treatment
- 19 Sighted at a gay bar
- 20 Bold plays with songs?
- 23 Wilbur's male partner
- 24 No to Rimbaud
- 25 Member of the mimosa family
- 29 Ann Bannon or Edgar Box
- 33 Cheer for critic Edmund?
- 36 Went lickety-split
- 37 Easily screwed
- 38 Aladdin's monkey
- 39 Mortimer, with a wooden head
- 41 Club where you can dance with a sailor
- 42 Gertrude's upright?
- 44 Cock head?
- 47 Rubber
- 48 Queer ___ three-dollar bill
- 49 Angelina's tomb-raiding role
- 51 Confection named for Harvey?
- 57 Apartment ___
- 58 Daniels formerly of *The L Word*
- 59 Pink, for one
- 61 Sherman Hemsley religious sitcom
- 62 Rex Reed et al. do this to movies
- 63 Start of a Sappho title, perhaps
- 64 Ares of *Xena* and others
- 65 Where to catch a ferry underground
- 66 Sondheim's staff members

Down

- 1 Heart chart, for short
- 2 Stick it in your socket
- 3 Title for Uncle Remus' bear
- 4 Laszlo of skincare products
- 5 Stuff for a low job?
- 6 Amelie Mauresmo's woman
- 7 How to moan in bed
- 8 Michael Nava's lawyer Henry
- 9 Tab Hunter was this kind of idol
- 10 *Valley of the Dolls* author
- 11 Cartoon Network's *Moral* ___
- 12 Treats as a sexual object
- 13 He blew on pipes
- 21 Emulate Allison Bechdel
- 22 Leopold or Loeb
- 25 Caligula's lamb
- 26 Market bear's fear
- 27 Open-mouthed fivesome
- 28 Cleveland cager, for short
- 29 Spitting sound, in comics
- 30 Carpet layer's calculations
- 31 1914 battle site of Cocteau's country
- 32 Biblical witch's home
- 34 Type of crime
- 35 "How may ___ of service?"
- 39 A graffiti artist may shoot it off
- 40 Vardalos of *Connie & Carla*
- 42 They make heads roll
- 43 Sal Mineo played one in *Rebel Without a Cause*
- 45 Chicken hawk's weapons
- 46 Fab Five syllable for many a straight guy
- 49 Bishop Gene Robinson isn't in this group
- 50 Wing for Julia Morgan
- 51 Note to Jared Polis' staff
- 52 Put out
- 53 Tail for Pluto?
- 54 Chastity in gay activism
- 55 Loads
- 56 Straddled a stallion
- 57 Go the other way
- 60 Lawyer's thing

Solution on Page 20

Queer Reviews

Mean Machine: Mixed martial arts fighter Ryan Ford tackles Ginch Gonch

By: William Yeoman

"I'll knock out anyone who makes fun of me in my Ginch," warns Ryan "The Real Deal" Ford. And he means it too. Standing 5 feet 11 inches and weighing 170 pounds, the mighty-muscled, multi-tattooed Mixed Martial Arts welterweight fighter is the new celebrity face of underwear fave, Ginch Gonch. "Ginch Gonch reminds me to take at least two moments each day from my rigorous training and smile. After all, I'm living my childhood dream."

'In it to win it,' Ford aims to become champion of the MFC (Maximum Fighting Championship) and the UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship) leagues. With his record of 5 wins and no losses, he's on his way. His most recent and most anticipated win was against Pete Spratt of the UFC via submission, where Ford first used the move he has become famous for, the Rear Naked Choke.

He is the son of retired boxer Allen Ford, once ranked third in the world and recently inducted into the Boxing Hall of Fame. As the celebrity face of Ginch Gonch, the young Ford is making history of his own, becoming the first professional Martial Arts Fighter to win an endorsement contract with a leading underwear brand.

Q: How did you become the new face of Ginch Gonch?

A: A lot of my buddies wear it and I reached out to the company for some digs. After chatting with them, badda boom badda bing, I was in the back of a dump truck doing my thing. Q: Did you have to fight former campaign model Benjamin Bradley for the job?

A: Who is Benjamin Bradley?

Q: He was one of the original Ginch Gonch boys.

A: Not familiar with him. So to answer your question, I didn't fight him. I don't fight 'boys' anyway.

Q: Fighting is in your blood. Is it true your dad was a boxing champ?

A: Yes, he was. My dad, Allan Ford, was ranked third in the world and was inducted into the Canadian Boxing Hall of Fame.

Q: Did he inspire you to get into the ring?



Photo courtesy of projectpublicity.com

A: I guess he did. I always wanted to be like Dad.

Q: But you went a different route—the mixed martial arts ring. Why?

A: I started boxing but it just wasn't hardcore enough for me. I wanted to go crazier in the ring, and nothing is more intense than MMA fighting.

Q: How do you explain the overwhelming popularity of the sport?

A: MMA fighting is raw and animalistic. It's not controlled. Anything can happen and that really appeals to a lot of people.

Q: Is the sport aware of its huge gay following?

A: Gays are guys and every guy likes to see a good fight.

Q: Yeah, but many gay men aren't watching for the fight. Many are watching because half naked guys wrestling is, well, pretty hot ... (Laughs) I don't know how to respond to that except to say that yeah, I'd agree I'm pretty hot.

Q: Is homophobia a problem in the league?

A: Not that I'm aware of.

Q: Would an "out" fighter be accepted?

A: If someone's hardcore enough to kick ass

in the ring, they deserve to be there. What they do outside of the ropes doesn't matter after the bell rings.

Q: What would you say to guys who believe two grown men wrestling in a ring is pretty gay?

A: If it was said as an insult, I'd punch him out. You know what, I'd punch him out anyway because hateful bigoted words should not be tolerated anymore.

Q: What has been your toughest match?

A: They've all been tough but I can say my favorite fight so far was when I won against Pete Spratt of the UFC. I brought him down with a Rear Naked Choke.

Q: What's a Rear Naked Choke hold?

A: It's a move where your arm wraps around your opponent's neck and then you grab your own biceps on the other arm. No one can get out of my Rear Naked Choke.

Q Puzzle Solution from P. 19

E	B	B	E	D	F	A	R	M	S	O	U	P
C	U	R	R	Y	E	L	I	A	U	R	S	A
G	L	E	N	N	M	O	O	T	S	E	E	N
B	R	O	A	D	M	U	S	I	C	A	L	S
				M	R	E	D	N	O	N		
A	C	A	C	I	A		P	E	N	N	A	M
G	R	E	A	T	W	H	I	T	E		R	A
N	A	I	V	E		A	B	U		S	N	E
U	S	O		S	T	E	I	N	P	I	A	N
S	H	U	T	T	L	E		E	R	A	S	E
			A	S	A		L	A	R	A		
		M	I	L	K	Y	C	A	N	D	Y	B
Z	E	R	O		E	R	I	N		C	O	L
A	M	E	N		R	A	T	E		A	N	O
G	O	D	S		S	T	Y	X		N	O	T

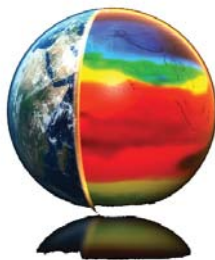
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Q: Who is your biggest rival in the ring and how do you plan to bring him down?

A: Every single fighter in the league is my biggest rival. I'm bringing them all down!

Q: What is your ultimate goal?

A: My goal is to become welterweight champion of the MFC (Maximum Fighting Championship) and the UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship). I'm on my way.

Q: You're the first Mixed Martial Arts fighter to win a national apparel campaign. Why were you chosen?

A: Because I'm rough and tough and I look great in my Ginch.

Q: Does your vigorous training help you look good in briefs?

A: I train three times a day including five mile runs, boxing, wrestling, kick boxing, weight lifting, strength and conditioning. Yeah, I'd say it helps.

Q: Ginch Gonch is a wild and crazy underwear brand. Are you as wild and crazy?

A: Look at me. What do you think? Yeah, I'm crazy. I like to party like a rockstar and kick ass "Real Deal" style in the ring.

Q: You've said in interviews that your athletic idol is "Pretty Boy" Floyd Mayweather. Why is that?

A: Because he walks the walk and talks the talk. He has incredible ambition and an animalistic passion for competing that makes him unstoppable.

Q: Do you subscribe to Ginch Gonch's philosophy of "live like a kid"?

A: You bet I do. Everyone has to have fun in life.

Q: Besides the new Load'N & Dump'N's, what is your favorite Ginch collection?

A: The multiple stars because they remind me what I'm shooting for.

Q: What do other fighters say about your underwear when they see you changing in the locker room? Have any dared to make fun of you?

A: No one has made fun of me. In fact, the opposite. I got all my buddies wearing Ginch in the ring now. Dudes are constantly asking me to get them free gear.

Q: How have your fans reacted to the campaign?

A: They love it man! I think they've come to expect crazy shit from me so they like it.

Q: The most important question: briefs or boxers?

A: Both. I switch depending on the day.

Ginch Gonch's newest line, *The Load'N & Dump'N* collection, featuring playful dump trucks, is in stores now. For more info, go to www.GinchGonch.com.

TRT Not plain, LGBT **HOT!**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS?

This month check out our LGBTQ events online.

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HUBBARD STREET
DANCE CHICAGO,
02/04/09



TOMÁS
KUBÍNEK,
02/13/09



LUIS BRAVO'S
FOREVER
TANGO,
02/27/09



NATIONAL ACROBATS OF
CHINA
03/09/09



CANTUS,
02/12/09

HUBBARD STREET DANCE CHICAGO

Weds, February 4, 7:30 PM | Concert Hall

Recognized worldwide for its exuberant, athletic, and eclectic approach to dance, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago has been an innovative force in contemporary dance for over three decades.

Pre-performance talk by Five College Associate Professor of Dance Constance Valis Hill 6:45 - 7:15 PM in Lobby.

Sponsored by Florence Savings Bank, Prudential Sawicki Real Estate, and 93.9 The River.

Celebrate Mardi Gras and Let The Good Times Roll
NEW ORLEANS' HOT 8 BRASS BAND
Fri, February 6, 8 PM | Bowker

Auditorium

These longtime featured artists at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, capture the rhythm and the pulse of the city's magnificent celebratory street music.

Sponsored by WEIB 106.3FM
Reserved Seating: \$25, \$15 | Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15.

The Arts Give Back
For our furry friends, please bring an item from the Dakin Humane Society's wish list. Visit www.dakin-shelter.org for a list of needs.

TOMÁS KUBÍNEK

Fri, February 13, 7 PM | Concert Hall
Part vaudeville, part improv, and completely magical, this artist of

international renown leaves his audiences with a comically altered view of life's creative possibilities.

Sponsored by Baystate Medical Practices, FamilyFun Magazine and 93.9 The River.

FamilyFun Pre-Show Party
Please come at 6 PM for our annual pre-show party for families. Join the staff of FamilyFun and Wondertimes Magazines for some hands-on craft activities and some healthy snacks for everyone while they last.

MARIZA

Thurs, February 19, 7:30 PM, Concert Hall

The reigning ambassador of Portuguese fado, Mariza has been seducing audiences globally with her

awesome singing, charismatic stage presence, and powerful blend of traditional and contemporary songs.

Sponsored by United Wealth Management Group, The Rainbow Times, WGBY TV57, 93.9 The River and the UMass Office for Student Affairs and Campus Life.

Join us in the lobby prior to the show for a Portuguese cultural celebration beginning at 6:30 PM.

LUIS BRAVO'S FOREVER TANGO

Fri, February 27, 8 PM, Concert Hall

Widely applauded for its elegant artistry and sizzling sensuality, Luis Bravo's Forever Tango is a Broadway favorite that continues to wow audiences worldwide.

Sponsored by Fathers & Sons, Bank

of America, WGBY TV57, El Sol Latino, La Prensa and WEIB 106.3FM
Global Gourmet
Prix Fix dinner at the University Club & Restaurant for \$25. Call 545-2511 for menu and tickets.

NATIONAL ACROBATS OF CHINA Mon, March 9, 7:30 PM, Concert Hall

This dazzling company of 35 performers will mesmerize and mystify you with stunning displays of the best in Chinese martial arts, illusion, and acrobatics.

Sponsored by Finck & Perras Insurance, Easthampton Savings Bank and 93.9 The River. Co-presented with the Asian Arts and Culture Program.



TRINITY IRISH
DANCE, 03/27/09



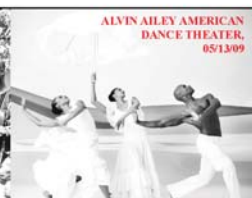
MUSICI DE MONTRÉAL
04/05/09



NATIONAL PHILHARMONIC OF RUSSIA
04/19/09



TOUMANI DIABATE SYMMETRIC ORCHESTRA
05/13/09



ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN
DANCE THEATER,
05/13/09

CANTUS

Thurs, March 12, 7:30 PM | Bowker Auditorium

From art songs to folk songs, from Smokey Robinson to Richard Strauss, Cantus' brilliant sound, innovative programming and heart-felt singing have garnered the highest praise from critics and audiences alike.

The Cantus performance is support in part for the Vidda Foundation and the Chamber Music America Residency Endowment Fund.

TRINITY IRISH DANCE

Fri, March 27, 8 PM, Concert Hall

Athletic and hard-driving yet graceful, this sensational Irish-American dance company crosses cultural boundaries to create a new cutting-edge vocabulary for Irish step dancing.

Sponsored by Coca Cola, Peoples Bank and 93.9 The River.

The Arts Give Back

Please bring an item that will meet the needs of families in transition at Jessie's House. For a complete wish list, visit www.jessieshouse.org.

Global Gourmet
Prix Fix dinner at the University Club & Restaurant for \$25. Call 545-2511 for menu and tickets.

I MUSICI DE MONTRÉAL

Sun, April 5, 3 PM, Concert Hall

Beyond the ensemble's laser-like precision, cohesion, expressiveness, assurance, and compelling flair, the centerpiece of this program features the Mussorgsky classic with digital large-scale projections of paintings by acclaimed artist Natasha Turovsky.

Performance talk by visual artist/violinist Natasha Turovsky 2:15 - 2:45 PM in Lobby.

NATIONAL PHILHARMONIC OF RUSSIA

Sun, April 19, 7 PM, Concert Hall

Composed of the country's leading symphonic virtuosos, the orchestra will perform Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 2 and Romeo and Juliet, Liadov's The Enchanted Lake, and Prokofiev's Four Pieces from Romeo and Juliet Suites.

Pre-performance talk by Lonfranco Marcelletti, 6:15-6:45 PM in the Lobby.

Global Gourmet
Prix Fix dinner at the University Club & Restaurant for \$25. Call 545-2511 for menu and tickets.

EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

Wed, April 22, 4-7 PM, Fine Arts Center Plaza

Join us April 22 for an Earth Day Community Celebration with a drum circle with members of the Toumani Diabate Symmetric Orchestra. There will be food

and other fun activities. Come one, come all, bring your drums-it's free! Festivities begin at 5 PM; drum circle begins at 6 PM.

TOUMANI DIABATE SYMMETRIC ORCHESTRA

Thurs, April 23, 7:30 PM, Concert Hall

Described as the "Jimi Hendrix of the kora," Toumani Diabate is an ardent experimentalist. The Symmetric Orchestra, Diabate's terrific pan-African band, contribute to a buoyantly jubilant sound that will rock the Fine Arts Center. Join in the party spirit!

Pre-performance talk by Professor Olabode Omojola 6:45-7:15 PM in Lobby.

Sponsored by 93.9 The River and The Green Living Journal.

The Arts Give Back
Please bring your old, extra, or unwanted cell phones to donate to the New England

Learning Center for Women in Transition. To find out more, visit www.nelcwit.org.

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Weds, May 13, 7:30 PM, Concert Hall

Exhilarating and endlessly inspirational, the extraordinary dancers of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater have dazzled audiences from New York City to China with their thrilling fusion of power, grace, and unparalleled artistry.

Pre-performance talk by Five College Associate Professor of Dance Constance Valis Hill 6:45 - 7:15 PM in Lobby.

Sponsored by The Davis Group, WFCR 88.5FM/WNNZ 640AM and The Daily Hampshire Gazette.

Global Gourmet
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The Outfield: Being Black at Big Green



By: Dan Woog*

Jamal Brown spent four years at *Dartmouth College* running, studying, and trying to figure out where he felt most comfortable: in its small gay community, or its equally tiny African-

American one.

A year after leaving, the *Ivy League* graduate still does not know.

"It was a constant struggle," Brown recalls. "I had black female friends, but not a lot of black male friends. I was generally respected by the black community as an athlete, but at times I wasn't acknowledged because I'm gay. And the gay community there really embodied white gays. To this day, I'm trying to find out where I belong."

Brown's road to the rural New Hampshire campus began 3,000 miles away, in Sacramento, Calif. He was an only child, but his many male cousins helped create a "macho sports environment." In high school, Brown was a successful track and cross-country runner, but spent much of high school denying his attraction to other guys.

"I butched up my voice," he says. "I blasted hardcore music. I cried and wondered, 'Why me?' It was pretty stressful through junior year—not a lot of fun."

Early in his senior year, Brown and his best friend—a fellow yearbook editor and student government leader—came out to each other. "We supported each other," he says. "But I still could not be free. There were still no gay athletes to look up to."

As an African American, Brown felt an expectation to "embody a great sense of masculinity. I was supposed to be manly and straight."

By the end of senior year, he worried much less. He'd achieved academic and athletic suc-

cess; he was heading east to a prestigious school. The summer after graduation was "incredible." He attended his first Gay Pride event, in San Francisco, and hung out at gay clubs.

Yet Brown still led a double life. He was not out to his family, and though he had come out in his Dartmouth application essay, he wondered what being a gay college athlete would be like. The school had a reputation for homophobia, Brown says, so he prepared for four years in the closet.

When he got to campus, he saw "open and honest" gay people. As their gaydar kicked in and they smiled at him, he felt terrified. But soon he met the man who would become his boyfriend, and slowly Brown came out - but only outside the locker room.

He was terrified what his Big Green teammates would say. If he'd been forced to decide, Brown says he would have chosen track over his boyfriend.

But that was a frustrating position to be in, so one day Brown changed his Facebook profile to "interested in men." The first reaction from a teammate surprised him: The runner told Brown, "We'll always be there for you." As it turned out, they were.

Brown eased into talking about his boyfriend with the team. When he came out to his coach, Sandra Ford-Centonze, she became his "second mom." He calls his track experience "phenomenal. I never thought I'd have that relationship with a varsity coach, or at a Division I team. I feel incredibly privileged."

At the same time, Brown heard comments that made him cringe—"pansy" and "that's so gay" flew around the locker room. Then there were the things he didn't hear, but sensed. "The sprinting culture is strongly masculine," Brown says. "I know people said stuff when I wasn't around."

Though he was an out, proud, and accomplished runner, at times he felt alone. "I had no one to connect with," Brown laments.



Courtesy of Matt Fries Photography Inc.

"And there were no resources at Dartmouth for gay male athletes." Whenever he performed badly, Brown wondered if others thought it was because he was gay. He pondered quitting.

Brown worked through his issues by involving himself in LGBT campus groups.

And, he says, despite his discouragement, his teammates did indeed pull him through.

"No matter how many times I was pissed off by a seemingly benign joke, they always encouraged me. They wanted me to compete and do my best."

Ultimately, he says, his college experience was a good one. "I went through so many positive and negative things," Brown says, but notes that he'd do it all again. "I learned so much, and met so many great people. I learned never to give up, and constantly challenge everyone around me. I learned to love life."

Before he graduated, a first-year teammate came out to Brown. The younger athlete said he'd met Brown as a high school junior; Brown's insights into gay life at Dartmouth encouraged him apply.

"I cried tears of joy that night," Brown says. "I'll never forget beautiful moments like that."

* 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
29yo full time transgendered woman living in upstate NY. I am looking for a long term relationship with someone in the age range of 22-45. www.Debbie-Vine.41.com
Email: debbie_vine@hotmail.com

"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

Hey, 18 yo looking for a man in Western MA, for romantic relationship... under 20 ONLY. Thanks. Contact: Josh at PrynceShybo@gmail.com

I am open-minded, nice, intelligent, good looking in an old fashioned way, youthful and historical. Contact Douglas at Doross51@yahoo.com

BiCurious

SWBIF looking for friendship and possibly more in Springfield/Noho area. Very new to scene 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.

Women 4 women

Looking to meet women in the Springfield/Northampton MA area for friendship and fun! Diva's, Oz, dinner/coffee/drinks in NoHo or Springfield. Movies, the beach, you name it let's get together and do it! Contact Kris at dolphinstarnight@yahoo.com

Looking for other women for outdoor activities: biking, hiking, and cross country skiing. I like to cook, especially coming up with healthy tasty recipes. Walks in the woods, sitting by a cozy fire, enjoying all life has to offer. Contact: Treesyster@aol.com.

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