

# The Rainbow Times

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

Year 1, Vol. 19 • Jan. 3 - February 6, 2008

[www.rainbowtimesnews.com](http://www.rainbowtimesnews.com)

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Photo by: Joe Oppetisano

## Opinions

## Best TRT stories of 2007 &amp; more

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

From our LGBTQI family to yours, we send you our best wishes for a Happy and Safe Holiday Season! As the year ends, we look back at TRT's first issue and our coverage throughout this year. Our March 2007 *Inauguration Party* was a success, and we had many community members share that joyous event with us. But, when it comes to news stories, we also have our pick of the most important TRT news coverage of 2007.

Our feature on *The Uncountable: An epidemic of Homeless LGBT youth* was, by far, one of the most important three-part series addressed by TRT. Another important story was the news that the first U.S. military member wounded in the Iraq war came "out", and so did the news from former basketball star and HRC spokesperson, Joe Amaechi. Other important news of support from our straight allies came in the April 1-15th issue, which showcased the *Episcopal Church's solidarity to our community* by not conducting any marriages for one year until/unless they could marry lesbian and gay couples too.

The news that we consider the most important 2007 news event in MA took place on June 14th when the *Massachusetts Legislature voted down a discriminatory anti-gay, anti-marriage Constitutional Amendment by a vote of 151 to 45*. The Rainbow Times proudly had a correspondent on site in Boston

at the State House, and brought you the up-to-the-minute historical news, updated every 15 minutes on TRT's website. When the vote was finally reached, the website was updated immediately and The Pony Express was sent to everyone alerting you of the historical precedent. Our site received the highest numbers of hits during that week and we thank you for that!

*The Visible Vote 2008* was a story that brought about change because it was the first time in the history of the U.S. that the 2008 Presidential Democratic candidates (or any candidate, for that matter) met to discuss the issues that solely pertained to the LGBT community. The Rainbow Times delivered to you our opinion and complete coverage of the Visible Vote 2008, which we called The Torn Vote '08.

Our special supplements: the *Wedding Supplement 2007-2008*, the *Back to School Issue* and the *Best Gay Holiday Gift Ideas Section* showed LGBT community members the support of the local companies catering to them/us. We have learned this year, and so have the many companies who are not paying attention to our market, that it does pay (or not) to advertise to us.

Our series *Queer Justice* became very popular during this year, and so did our *LGBT Health* and *Auto columns*.

See TRT on Page 4

## Love, Rights...and the Rest of It

By: JM Sorrell/TRT Columnist

Love is the thing, no? Rights are the purported foundation of the modern era of this country, right?

This time of the year, many people are more open about counting their blessings, sharing gifts, and being spiritually connected to something greater than themselves.

Something is off here. Must be the rest of it.

All but one Democrat/Republican presidential candidate use religious (Christian) bonding with the masses to intentionally or unintentionally support oppression.

The former Arkansas governor, Mike Huckabee, once advocated for the "plague" of AIDS to be contained by quarantine. In a recent interview with GQ, he stated, "There's never been a civilization that has rewritten what marriage and family means and survived." With this blatant ignorance, he believes that same-sex marriage will end western civilization. He neglected to address older standards of marriage, including polygamy and wives as property.

In September, Mitt Romney took out a radio ad in Iowa, called "traditional," and he stated that "we must oppose discrimination and defend traditional marriage: one man, one woman." He was responding to the judge there who gave the green light for equality.

Yes, read his sentence again. It's a fine example of compact contradiction.

Senator Barack Obama is a huge disappointment. He not only denounces same-sex marriage, but he had the audacity to defend himself in advance if he is wrong! On Meet the Press, he stated, "In years hence, I may be seen as someone who was on the wrong side



J.M. the JP

of history. I don't believe such doubts make me a bad Christian." Huh?!!

This glibly gook makes Senator Hillary Clinton seem consistent! She supported "In Defense of Marriage," which sounds as bad as it is; however, today, Clinton says that she believes in the "full equality of benefits—nothing left out," and that a strategy of civil union or domestic partnership language is the best strategy to achieve it." She covers her bases by noting the "moral, historical nature of traditional marriage."

Former Senator John Edwards opposes same-sex marriage, but is okay with civil unions.

The one person we can trust on this is the Representative Dennis Kucinich. He boldly supported same-sex marriage back in 2003, and he chastised any candidate who did not support "the right to marry the person of your choice" as equal opportunity for all Americans. He has not waived on the issue at all.

Clinton seems to be the viable bet here, but I find it as difficult to forget her history as I do with Al Gore (don't get me started on how he did little for the environment and much for corporate interests during his eight years in the White House. Frances Crowe is far more deserving of the Nobel Peace Prize).

I may write to Kucinich to ask him what I should do. Will keep you posted.

\* J.M. Sorrell is a Justice of the Peace. She believes in her civic duty to vote and in her ethical obligation to refrain from a so-called strategic approach to it.

## The Controversial Couch

Lie back and listen. Then get up and do something

By: Suzan Ambrose/TRT Columnist

2008 – A New Year begins – And it's a year I, for one, have been waiting a long time for. It starts off with a bang

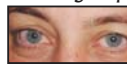
with the Presidential primaries, a few which will have already concluded by the time of this printing.

With all the media attention on the candidates so far, one may feel they're already saturated on what this election and these particular candidates can offer. But is that really the case? Are perspective voters being corralled into a very narrow view of what's out there? Are we being asked to vote on the merits of one issue, then hold our noses, vote, and hope it all comes out in our favor in the long run?

For the LGBT community, the issues may appear to be clear; the candidates we can support to represent us, maybe not so much.

Let's take, for example, some of the Democratic contenders in a recent LOGO television debate. Most of them said they support civil unions but wouldn't cross over the politically incorrect line that gay marriage was a definitive right we were entitled to. In fact, although they said they were all for equal rights for gays and lesbians, they stopped short of going all the way with marriage equality.

Is that political smarts in 2008? Probably. But isn't it (the unfortunate) kind of politics we've come to expect? And we accept it because we know no one can really say they support gay marriage, even if they do, as it would be political suicide? No one can "come out of the closet" and say gay Americans are



Americans and are thus entitled to all things hetero-granted? To be so candid may cost the politician their political lives.

This is a vein of politics I find downright hypocritical.

And yet, what are we offered on the other side? The Republican party has stood firmly against the "gay agenda" (like all gays wake up with the same list of "Things-To-Do-Today"? But no matter ... ) and "gay lifestyle." And because of that, it's hard to find a friendly advocate in that crowd.

Rudy Giuliani, when he was mayor of New York, he was considered pretty friendly to the LGBT community, even to the point of cross dressing in public on occasion. But, no more.

Mitt Romney, when running for governor of Massachusetts, couldn't speak warmly enough about all that needed to be done for gay rights, and if elected, he'd be the one to do it. But, no more.

These two are bigger flip floppers than John Kerry ever dreamed of being (but have we heard from the "liberal media" on that, hmmm?) It seems the Republican party is "open and affirming" when it comes to chameleons or charlatans. Or the Larry Craig's of this world.

And now, let's focus on the upcoming Republic primary leader at this time – Mike Huckabee, former governor of Arkansas. Governor Huckabee has soared in the polls, at least with evangelicals, the true base of the Party. A Baptist minister who loves to rock out on guitar, Huckabee can even seem likable and personable on first greeting. But once you look a little closer, it's obvious this

See Couch on Page 22

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Where can I find your newspaper in Albany? I've looked for it, but cannot find it.

Joe C., Albany, NY

Dear Reader,

You can find the newspaper in various locations in Albany. For a list of some of those locations, please visit: <http://www.therainbowtimesmass.com/distribution.html>

Dear Editor,

I didn't care for the "Is there a gay gene" story. I've read plenty of research that supports this theory, yet Dr. Lang seems to un-support it. I felt that more investigation needed to go into it. Just my opinion.

Rose S., Easthampton, MA

Dear Editor,

Your Holiday Party Rocked! The food, drinks, and door prizes were awesome. One question, though, what's with the absence of gay men to the event? A group of lesbians were asking that question when I joined in the conversation. Is it that the boys only wanna play with the boys, or are they not supportive of our community? It sickens me to think that, but their support is truly lacking. As a lesbian from MA I think that sucks! Theresa M., West Springfield, MA

## The Rainbow Times

351 Pleasant St., #322  
Northampton, MA 01060

www.therainbowtimesnews.com

editor@therainbowtimesnews.com

salesdept@therainbowtimesmass.com

Phone: 413-204-8959 • Fax: 866-310-8512

**Publisher**  
Grisel M. Ocasio  
**Editor-In-Chief**  
Nicole Lashomb

**Sales & Dist.**  
Ben Peterson

**Sales Associates:**  
SJ Seymour

**Columnists:**  
Dr. Renee Lang  
Jennifer Dexter  
Jack/ie Kennedy  
Suzan Ambrose

**Writers:**  
Lindsay Wilson

**J.M. Sorrell**

**Webmaster:**  
Jarred Johnson

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# GLAAD's best and worst of national news 2007

## THE BEST

1.) *The New York Times Spotlights the Struggle Against Anti-LGBT Hostility in Newark.*

In the New York region, media coverage of the LGBT community often focuses on Manhattan and other affluent areas where many gay people can seek out accepting communities. In a much-needed wake-up call, New York Times reporter Andrew Jacobs opened readers' eyes to the intense homophobia that continues to pervade Newark, New Jersey. In his Dec. 2 article "In a Progressive State, a City Where Gay Life Hangs By a Thread," Jacobs detailed the physical violence, the lack of community resources and the police hostility that LGBT people must face on a daily basis in Newark. More importantly, Jacobs took time to sensitively showcase the efforts of LGBT Newark residents to live openly in the face of violence and harassment. Jacobs made it clear that much more education and activism is needed before LGBT people in Newark can live openly without fear. This sobering reality was underscored by the article's conclusion, which featured a quote from Willie Harden, a homeless gay man. Harden explained, "It sounds crazy, but one day I'd like to walk down the street holding my boyfriend's hand with nobody saying one bad word."

### Read the story:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/02/nyregion/02newark.html?ref=todayspaper>

### Take action:

GLAAD encourages you to contact Andrew Jacobs and The New York Times to thank them for addressing the continuing problem of anti-LGBT violence and harassment in American cities.

Contact: [letters@nytimes.com](mailto:letters@nytimes.com)

## 2. The Denver Post Shares the Rich Stories of LGBT Elders

Too often, journalists overlook the stories of the thousands of LGBT seniors who continue to seek acceptance and community. Luckily, Denver Post reporter Lisa Kennedy found an occasion to address this topic by penning an exceptionally rich and engaging story about the residents of RainbowVision Santa Fe, one of the first planned enclaves for aging LGBT people. Weaving a remarkably in-depth discussion of gay history into a tour of the facilities and inhabitants of RainbowVision, Kennedy's Nov. 25 story "Living Out The Golden Years" revealed that many LGBT elders are still hesitant to come out to their heterosexual peers because they grew up in an era when LGBT people lacked positive representations in education and in the media. Kennedy concluded that LGBT-



inclusive retirement communities have finally provided gay seniors with an environment where they can be open and where they can share their histories with others. "People who have been isolated for years are coming here," said RainbowVision Vice President Joyce Bogosian. "We have people who are just coming out."

### Read the story:

[http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci\\_7550872](http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_7550872)

### Take action:

GLAAD encourages you to contact Lisa Kennedy and thank her for thoughtfully spotlighting the lives of LGBT elders.

Contact: [lkennedy@denverpost.com](mailto:lkennedy@denverpost.com)

## 3. The Fort Worth Star-Telegram Educates Readers About LGBT Lives Affected by Workplace Discrimination

When the House of Representatives passed the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) in a historic vote in November, many media outlets covered the story by quoting lawmakers and non-profit spokespeople. The Fort Worth Star-Telegram went further by telling the stories of LGBT people affected by workplace discrimination and revealing the importance of ENDA to their livelihoods. In the Dec. 4 article "Workplace Measure Faces Tough Road," Star-Telegram reporter Anna M. Tinsley told the story of Fort Worth resident Lynn Johnson, who had been fired for being openly gay and who now works for a company with a non-discrimination policy. "There are some people whose occupations don't have that comfort," Johnson explained. "Someone could walk in

today to them and say, 'You're gay...and we don't want you here anymore,' and there's not a leg to stand on for it." Additionally, Tinsley explored the consequences of the removal of gender identity protections from ENDA by interviewing Rochelle Evans, a young transgender woman facing workplace discrimination. By giving a human face to the debates surrounding ENDA, Tinsley educated readers about the significance of this legislation to thousands of lives.

### Read the story:

<http://origin.dfw.com/mla/dfw/18077467.htm>

### Take action:

GLAAD encourages you to contact Anna M. Tinsley and thank her for sharing the stories of LGBT people impacted by workplace discrimination.

Contact: [atinsley@star-telegram.com](mailto:atinsley@star-telegram.com)

## THE WORST

### Fox News's Hannity & Colmes Lack Balance in Boy Scouts Story

Television debate programs can serve as perfect forums for people on both sides of an issue to argue their case. Fox News's Hannity & Colmes failed to provide this kind of balance on a Nov. 20 segment about the City of Philadelphia's demand that its chapter of the Boy Scouts end its policy of anti-gay discrimination or else lose its city-subsidized

building. In addressing this story, co-host Sean Hannity quickly took sides by asserting that the Boy Scouts "talk about God, faith, family, and country. And that's their views, and they're keeping kids out of trouble. Why would people just get involved to try and just destroy the organization?" While the program featured two Boy Scouts representatives to defend their organization, it failed to include a guest who could illustrate the harm caused by the Scouts' policy of barring or removing gay scouts who want to be open and proud about who they are. Though co-host Alan Colmes briefly argued against the city's financial support of the Boy Scouts, this unbalanced program lacked any discussion about the message that this national organization's policy of anti-gay discrimination sends to young people across the country.

### Read the transcript:


<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,312425,00.html>

### Take action:

GLAAD encourages you to contact Hannity & Colmes with your views about their unbalanced coverage of the Boy Scouts issue.

### Contact:

E-mail [hannity@foxnews.com](mailto:hannity@foxnews.com) or e-mail [colmes@foxnews.com](mailto:colmes@foxnews.com)



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**Biz Feature Story? Showcase  
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## In 'The Name of God'

# Church leaders at odds over gay marriage, unite against gambling

By Jay Lindsay/AP Writer

BOSTON (AP)—Religious leaders who took opposing sides in the state's turbulent gay marriage debate have found something to bring them together again: Casino gambling.

Gov. Deval Patrick's proposal to bring three casinos to Massachusetts has united religious groups who were once entrenched foes. It was just six months ago that one of the toughest gay marriage battles—over a ballot question that would have banned the marriages—ended when lawmakers killed the question.

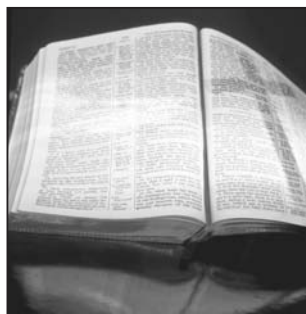
"You would like nothing better than to hold grudges. But in government you can't do that," said Kris Mineau of the Massachusetts Family Institute, a leading anti-gay marriage lobbying group whose mission statement says its committed to affirming the Judeo-Christian values.

"They've extended the right hand of fellowship to me, and likewise, and we're moving on," Mineau said.

Mineau already has worked closely with pastors who disagreed with him on gay marriage, speaking at two Massachusetts Council of Churches forums this month to educate clergy on how to fight expanded gambling.

The council's recent newsletter also brought together two leaders who disagreed on gay marriage in jointly written column against casino gambling.

The Rev. Aida Fernandez leads the Metro Boston Hope District of the United Methodist



Church and believes allowing gay marriage is a "matter of justice and compassion." And Bishop Gilbert Thompson, senior pastor at Jubilee Christian Church in Boston, opposes gay marriage and has said, "to say there is such a thing as a gay Christian is saying there's an honest thief."

They found common ground in fighting to keep casinos out of state. Fernandez said their differences on gay marriage are irrelevant.

"He is entitled to his opinion," she said. "That's the way he thinks and I leave him to God."

Patrick's proposal would bring one casino each to the western, southeastern, and Boston regions of the state. He says the casinos would

generate 20,000 jobs and \$400 million in annual revenue.

But clergy say the price is too high. Their stand isn't based on moral objections to gambling which aren't shared by all faiths, including a Catholic church that reaps significant profits from bingo games.

Instead, clergy say a huge expansion of gambling will lead to a spike in addiction which will hit the poor hardest because they're most likely to gamble to escape financial strain. They predict statewide increases in numerous social ills, including personal bankruptcy, spousal abuse, divorce, desertion and crime.

The shared opposition to casino gambling has something in common with the sharp differences over gay marriage because it's all rooted in what clergy think is best for families, said Rev. William Bradbury, pastor of Grace Episcopal Church in New Bedford.

"There's a common thread there," said Bradbury, who supports gay marriage. "We just both look at the gay marriage issue from different perspectives."

Bradbury was among several Episcopalian clergy from southeastern Massachusetts — where a casino is proposed in Middleborough — who sponsored an anti-casino resolution that passed the Convention of the Diocese of Massachusetts last month. The convention, made up of lay people and clergy, declared its "opposition to any further expansion of gam-

bling in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts."

The Episcopal Diocese is part of the Massachusetts Council of Churches, an ecumenical group which has taken a lead in organizing the anti-casinos push.

Executive Director Rev. Jack Johnson said more pastors forums are planned. Meanwhile, its Web site offers sample sermons, bulletin inserts and tips on writing state legislators as part of a coming push to engage local congregations in grassroots opposition.

The Catholic Church, by far the state's largest church, has so far said little in opposition to Patrick's plan, which House speaker Sal DiMasi said lawmakers won't formally consider until sometime next year. Edward Saunders of the Massachusetts Catholic Conference said to expect the church to step up efforts once that date gets closer.

"Timing is all part of this," he said.

Johnson said religious groups and secular casino opponents will be far outspent by casino advocates. But he said a united religious community can be a formidable force in the coming debate.

"I mean, we have thousands of churches," he said.

Such unity is rare on a volatile social issues, and can be short-lived.

"There will be another day for the marriage agenda," Mineau of the Massachusetts Family Institute promised. "That's not over yet."

## TRT from page 2

We added the daring page "In the Name of God" to showcase the lengths into which people go to "do" things to others "in the name of God." Also, our Featured Business Page, features LGBT-owned businesses and what they so "proudly" offer to our community, our families and allies.

From a business standpoint, TRT was Northampton's Pride 2007 Main Sponsor and the maker of the Northampton Pride Guide. TRT was also one of the main media sponsors of Hartford Pride '07 and the maker of Hartford Pride's 2007 Guide. This year we also sponsored The Rays of Hope, to join in the fight against Breast Cancer.

The original bi-weekly newspaper became a monthly by the Fall of 2007 (due to increased demand for more news and content). We also increased TRT's number of pages to 24 and

expanded its coverage to the Capital District of NY (Albany, Schenectady & Troy), thus making it a 4-state (MA, CT & VT) LGBTQI newspaper printed out of Western Massachusetts. TRT is also now proudly working with Albany Pride to sponsor this wonderful week-long Pride celebration in '08. From Albany too we also proudly support, and continually showcase Libby Post's thought-provoking column Lesbian Notions.

Most importantly, our commitment to always remain vigilant to disseminate the LGBTQI news that matters to you is a continuous promise that we will continue to renew in this upcoming year. We have published LGBT news throughout the year, and we will continue to do so in the years to come.

We cannot thank you enough for your support! We could not keep doing it without your faith in us, and without your loyalty. Happy Holidays and enjoy your New Year!

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## LET'S GO GLOBE HOPPING!



Turtle Island Quartet Photographer: Jay Blakesberg

### TURTLE ISLAND QUARTET WITH STEFON HARRIS, DIVINE DUKE

**Tuesday, February 5, 7:30 pm, Bowker Auditorium**

The beautiful sacred music of jazz great Duke Ellington forms the backbone of this incredible project featuring the Grammy award winning Turtle Island Quartet and one of today's most formidable jazz vibraphonists - Stefon Harris. Sponsored by Florence Savings Bank and WFCR 88.5FM



### ADAM RUDOLPH'S MOVING PICTURES

**Thursday, February 28, 7:30 pm, Bowker Auditorium**

Rudolph re-invents world music for sophisticated listeners fusing many languages, instrumentation and cosmologies into a very artful and keenly constructed performance. Presented in collaboration Magic Triangle Jazz Series



### MONTEREY JAZZ FESTIVAL 50TH ANNIVERSARY JAZZ ALL-STARS

**Tuesday, March 4, 7:30 pm, Concert Hall**

This musical celebration is a stirring tribute to the monumental Monterey Jazz Festival featuring Terence Blanchard, James Moody, Benny Green, Nnenna Freelon, Derrick Hodge and Kendrick Scott.

Sponsored by Fathers & Sons, The Davis Group, The Daily Hampshire Gazette and WFCR 88.5FM



### CHRISTIAN MCBRIDE BAND

**Saturday, March 29, 8pm, Concert Hall**

Christian McBride is THE bassist-in-demand and has arguably become the most acclaimed acoustic and electric bassist to emerge from the jazz world in the 1990's.

This performance is part of a day-long high school jazz festival and competition sponsored by the Fine Arts Center and UMass Department of Music and Dance.

Sponsored by WEIB 106.3FM, United Wealth Management Group



### LILA DOWNS

**Friday, April 25, 8pm, Concert Hall**

Motivated by the songs and stories of the Oaxacan people, Lila Downs' extraordinary voice pays homage to her ancestral roots and reinvigorates the soul. "Exotic beauty and startling voice...she is a reflection of a 21st century world culture where ethnicity and national boundaries blur." "Una belleza exotica y una voz sobresaliente... ella es un reflejo de una cultura del siglo 21 donde las fronteras etnicas y nacionales se desvanecen." Lorenza Muñoz, Los Angeles Times.

Sponsored by Bank of America, La Prensa/LinkLatinos.com and 93.9 The River



Academy of Ancient Music

### ACADEMY OF ANCIENT MUSIC

**Saturday, February 23, 8pm, Concert Hall**

One of the world's foremost period-instrument orchestras shines in a program that includes the music of Bach, Telemann and Handel.

Supported by The Vidda Foundation Global Gourmet

Join us at the University Club to sample some of England's old world cuisine, updated to the 21st Century, that will warm your heart and soul. All for the prix fixe of \$25. Seating begins at 5pm.



### DAN ZANES AND FRIENDS, PAJAMA PARTY

**Friday, February 29, 7:30 pm, Concert Hall**

2007 Grammy winner Dan Zanes occupies a unique place in American music where sea shanties, Broadway standards, folk music, fiddle tunes, and the spirit of rock-and-roll collide. It's one big musical pajama party, and everyone's invited!

Sponsored by FamilyFun Magazine, Easthampton Savings Bank and WRNX 100.9FM

Please come at 6:30 for our annual pre-show party for families. Join the staff from FamilyFun Magazine for some hands-on craft activities and free milk and cookies for everyone while they last.



### LEAHY

**Wednesday, March 12, 7:30 pm, Concert Hall**

The eight brothers and sisters comprising Canadian super group Leahy deliver a triple threat of fiddle-driven music, step dancing and vocals.

Sponsored by Coca Cola, Hampshire Hospitality Group and WGBY TV57

Global Gourmet

A pre-show dinner for families full of Celtic charm.

Dinner is \$25 for adults/\$6 for children and is held at the University Club on campus. Seating begins at 5pm.



### RONALD K. BROWN/EVIDENCE

**Saturday, April 12, 8pm, Concert Hall**

Fusing ballet, West African dance and hip-hop with the spoken word, Ronald K. Brown's eclectic dance company, Evidence presents his dazzling latest work, One Shot inspired by the photographs of noted African-American documentary photographer Charles "Teenie" Harris.

Sponsored by Yale Gerton and The Valley Advocate Funded in part by the National Dance Project of the New England Foundation for the Arts, with lead funding from Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Additional funding provided by The Ford Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, JP Morgan Chase Foundation and MeLife Foundation.

Global Gourmet

Step out in style for some fine dining at the University Club before the equally elegant performance by the Ronald K. Brown Dance Company/Evidence. All for the prix fixe of \$25. Seating begins at 5pm.



### IMANI WINDS

**Wednesday, April 30, 7:30 pm, Bowker Auditorium**

The five accomplished musicians of Imani Winds expand the boundaries of the traditional wind quintet and explore the links between European, African and American music traditions.

Sponsored Juster Pope Frazier Architects and WEIB 106.3FM



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## Queer Cover News

# Colton Ford: Feel the difference

By: Michael A. Knipp\*

Porn is a hard act to follow. Literally. But former skin-flick actor Colton Ford, whose foray into filmed fornication gained him underground notoriety in 2002, is trying to put his penis-bearing past behind him.

Two years ago he allowed cameras to follow his transition from porn star to pop star in the documentary film "Naked Fame." And next year, the fruit of that years-long labor will come to fruition as Ford prepares to drop his debut album, Tug of War, a glistening, gutter-rich release that gives his chops a shot at professional redemption.

The question is, will anyone accept his shift from tight-arsed top to talented troubadour? Or will the cocksure crooner forever be the well-hung hunk who played "Head Games"?

In a recent interview, Ford attempts to untangle that tawdry web—in anticipation of Tug of War's February release—by detailing how he became an adult-film A-lister, the reason he has no regrets, why his new career makes perfect sense, and why he thinks you should bank on him.

Because, if all goes well, there truly won't be a check his a%ge can't cash.

**Michael A. Knipp:** There's no point in beating around the bush, so let's get right to it. Before you embarked on your new career as a recording artist you were a porn star. How did you fall into that career?

**Colton Ford:** First, let me clarify something. I've been a recording artist for about 25 years, and I've been performing and making music all of my life. I did porn for 10 months. What I'm doing now with my music is a continuation of a long journey for me. The opportunity to do porn came to me six years ago through my partner at the time, Blake Harper. **MK:** How old were you when you started making adult films? What were you doing before you turned to porn? Why did you decide to go that route?

**CF:** I was 39 when I did porn. Before that, I was in a jazz quartet, had two major label deals, was signed to Denise Rich, paired up with Frankie Knuckles, basically just doing my musical thing. In between my deals, I had a corporate job. The corporate experience was always a means to an end, and it had to end. An opportunity to do porn came to me through my partner at the time, and after thinking about it I decided to go for it. It enabled me to get out of corporate America, experience a fantasy with my partner and create Colton Ford, which I've used to draw attention to my other endeavors.

**MK:** What was it like filming sex and getting paid for it? Did it demean your intimate encounters in any way?

**CF:** It was work. Sure, there were moments of pleasure, but the priority was to get the shots needed for the scene. Very mechanical.



Colton Ford

As for getting paid for it, I wouldn't have done it otherwise. It in no way demeaned anything in my mind, but it does require that you diligently separate the whole porn thing from your every day experience.

**MK:** Did you ever feel morally bankrupt? How did your family take it when the first film came out?

**CF:** For me, the whole preoccupation with the porn experience is kind of funny. I mean it is what it is, and [it] has the weight that you give it. I would feel morally bankrupt if I was somewhere shooting at people, you know what I mean? This is just consensual sex. Everyone does it, and some people share it with others. It's that simple. My family has been cool. They know who I am and recognize that the experience didn't change me.

**MK:** Any regrets?

**CF:** No regrets. It was a very unique experience and adventure.

**MK:** With that behind you, now you're breaking out as a pop artist. You've been performing music on and off for 25 years, but why now did you want to leave the adult industry

and pursue a music career?

**CF:** My musical endeavors have been a constant in my life. I got everything out of my porn experience that I was going to get, so when it was time for me to move on, it was time for me to move on. It just so happened that things started opening up again with my music right around the time I was getting out of the adult industry.

**MK:** How is it going for you so far?

**CF:** It's going great! Things are really starting to move now that we are getting closer to the release of the album. The business of music is, by its nature, unstable and out of control. I just try to stay focused on the things that I can control and enjoy all that is happening now.

**MK:** Are you dealing with any resistance within the music industry because of your previous profession?

**CF:** As you would probably expect, there are some people that are having difficulty viewing my project as a credible one but that's OK. They'll come around. I'm getting a tremendous amount of support outside of that small group.


**MK:** I've heard some of your songs and they're not bad. But, it's probably gonna take a lot more than a good song for people to take you seriously. How do you plan to combat the haters?

**CF:** Well, I would encourage any "hater" to listen to the whole album before they form their opinion. There's a lot in there musically that I think speaks to a wide audience. Beyond that, I try not to personalize shit. Love the "Four Agreements!" I keep my eye on the prize, push forward, and continue to represent my intentions through my work.

**MK:** How do you think mainstream America will accept your music, or are you specifically targeting the GLBT demographic?

**CF:** Mainstream America is Gay America, Black America, Hispanic American, Asian America, etc. I'm targeting anyone who is open to what I think is great music. I'm looking to reach people of all types, ages and backgrounds. Now, I am fully aware that music is a subjective thing. What one person feels is hot, another person may not necessarily like. I just try and please myself musically and get my work out there for people to hear.

See Colton on Page 15



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# Make your move more than Smooth

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

Most of us can relate to a bad moving experience and often moving goes anything but smooth. In this exclusive business feature, TRT brings this special report about a local moving company who has all of "your moving needs handled" smoother than ever.

Smooth Movers was found by veteran local business owner Melinda Shaw, former owner of Kidsports, Hadley, Mass., and Shane O'Brien in August, 2007. According to Shaw, she and O'Brien make the perfect partnership in their new venture.

"My business partner, Shane O'Brien, moved my family in 2006 and we were very impressed with him then," said Melinda Shaw, owner, Smooth Movers, Florence, Mass. "Over the last year, and before I closed Kidsports, we talked many times about collaborating on a venture, and since he has the expertise in moving, and I know business and marketing, it seemed a good fit."

Currently, Smooth Movers is ready to accommodate residential or commercial moving needs of the community it

serves.

"We move locally, mostly, although we can also do Interstate moves," said Shaw. "We can move commercial and residential properties, which include everything that one to five strong people can pick up. Our specialty is piano moving, mostly because Shane has moved so many of them and done it well each time, but all kinds of heavy furnaces, hot tubs, boilers and odd size objects would also fall into that category. Pianos are usually very valuable, and most owners want to have the best people handling their prized possessions. That would be us!"

Embarking on a new business venture, there have been some challenges along the way. Although in this case, the challenges appear to be advantageous, according to Shaw.

"I think that dealing with the state and federal regulations have been the hardest part, as well as launching the business at the END of the moving cycle, but it's also giving us time to get the kinks out before we start our busy season," said Shaw.

A lifelong entrepreneur, Shaw has the skills and experience for running a successful business.



"My first business was in 6th grade, when I took a picture of my teacher, who was retiring, and printed up copies to sell to my classmates at 25 cents each," said Shaw. "I think that the paper cost more than that, but I was a budding entrepreneur, so I wasn't looking at the bottom line much! Since then, I have owned a restaurant in Ithaca, NY, a massage practice, a custom stained-glass and jewelry business, as well as my last enterprise, Kidsports, which I closed this past June after owning it for 13 years."

Moving rates are \$ 95.00/hour which includes 2 crew members, a truck, and

the equipment to pack and move, including different dollies for specific purposes, according to Shaw.

"What sets us apart from other movers is that we are new, and being new we're eager to show people that we are a great company who will treat them and their property with the utmost respect," said Shaw. "Our crew is very professional, we work hard, we don't slack at all, and we are dependable, so please give us a try!"

For more information or to schedule your next move, contact Smooth Movers at 413-587-0786 or e-mail [info@smooth-moversnoho.com](mailto:info@smooth-moversnoho.com)

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## QueerJustice

# The next legal steps to your LGBT divorce

By: Jennifer Dexter/ITRT Law Columnist

**O**K, so you have filed your complaint for divorce, now what? As I stated last month the court will send you something in the mail letting you know what to do next and when you need to be in court.

If your complaint was filed under 1A, your next court date will be an uncontested hearing date. On that date both parties must appear. When the Court Officers call your case, you will go into the Court room and stand before the Judge. After a hearing on the separation agreement, the court, within thirty days of the hearing, will make a finding as to whether or not an irretrievable breakdown of the marriage exists and whether or not the agreement has made proper provisions for custody, for support and maintenance, for alimony and for

the disposition of marital property.

Thirty days after the court has made the determination of irretrievable breakdown, it will enter what is called a "judgment of divorce nisi." This is a preliminary judgment that the Judge enters after trial or hearing.

In some instances the judge will enter the judgment immediately. A Judgment of Divorce Absolute is the final judgment that enters automatically 90 days after entry of the judgment of divorce nisi. Until the final judgment is issued, you are not legally free to



Atty. Jennifer Dexter

remarry.

If you filed under section 1B your first court date will be what is called a case management conference. You will determine what time frame is needed to complete the discovery process. During a divorce you are entitled to "discovery". Discovery is the term used to describe the disclosure of information or physical evidence that can be used at trial.

Once the case management conference is completed the court will schedule a pre-trial conference. When you appear on that day you will discuss with the Judge what issues you both agree on and what issues you don't agree on. The Judge may discuss with you the possibility of going to mediation before you go to trial. The purpose of mediation is to get you and your spouse to talk about the divorce and

to see if you can come to an agreement.

If mediation fails, you will have to go to trial. At trial both of you will present evidence to the Judge. The final decisions lie with the Judge. After the Judge makes his/her findings and enters a judgment, the same principles apply as stated above.

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

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

## HRC & Showtime co-host 'The L Word' premiere events

WASHINGTON—The Human Rights Campaign and SHOWTIME are teaming up to host more than 43 premiere parties to celebrate the new season of *THE L WORD* in communities across the country, primarily on Sunday, Jan. 6, 2008. Three large-scale premiere events will be hosted in Los Angeles, CA, and New York, NY on Sunday, Jan. 6, 2008, at 9:00 PM (ET/PT), and in Atlanta, GA on Thursday, Jan. 3, 2008 at 7:00 PM (ET/PT). *THE L WORD*, a groundbreaking series about the lives, careers and relationships of a group of women in Los Angeles, is

in its fifth season. It airs on SHOWTIME on Sundays at 9:00 p.m. (ET/PT), a new time slot for the show.

"For four seasons, *THE L WORD* has brought loving, honest portrayals of GLBT lives into millions of homes. This visibility is crucial to opening hearts and minds," said HRC President Joe Solmonese. "We're proud to work with SHOWTIME to toast the beginning of the fifth installment of the series. Not only is this a chance for communities to come together around great entertainment, but it also provides an opportunity to raise aware-

ness of the fight for equality."

"The show's goal is to entertain and we are gratified if, at its best, it also challenges viewers to examine people's differences as well as what makes us alike," said Ilene Chaiken, creator and executive producer of *THE L WORD*. "In the interest of achieving equality for all Americans, I am honored to partner with HRC to get that message to millions of people."

Special guests at the Los Angeles premiere include HRC President Joe Solmonese, *THE L WORD* series regulars Jennifer Beals, Oscar

nominee Marlee Matlin, Katherine Moennig, Laurel Holloman, Mia Kirshner, Leisha Hailey, Rose Rollins, Pam Grier, Rachel Shelley and creator and executive producer, Ilene Chaiken. Actress Jane Lynch will emcee the event, and music acts Lisa Dewey & The Lotus Life and The Start will perform. The New York party will feature MTV reality star Dani Campbell of "A Shot at Love with Tila Tequila" and musician *Bitch*. All event attendees will receive an advanced copy of the second episode on DVD along with other giveaways and prizes. FML: [www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org)

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**noho**



# Standards of Care: A witty view of a trans-formation

By: **Lindsay Wilson/TRT Reporter**

How would you feel if your mother, a gender therapist, could not accept that you were transgendered? That was the issue posed to an audience crowded into a classroom in Smith's McConnell Hall on recently during a reading of "Standards of Care," a play by Tobias K. Davis.

Davis, 26, a Smith graduate and current employee, presented the play which follows the life of Nancy, a gender therapist, who does not want to believe that her daughter "Jessica" would prefer much rather to be called "Jason." The play interweaves the interactions between Nancy and Jason, and Nancy and her patient "David," a 34-year-old Female to Male (F2M) who is in therapy seeking a recommendation for "bottom" surgery.

Davis said he wanted to explore what it might be like for a gender therapist with a transgendered child and to "raise the stakes and make it even more dramatic." The play's conflict was loosely based on a similar situation had by a trans person that Davis met through a trans circle.

The play's title is derived from "The Standards of Care for Gender Identity



TOBIAS K. DAVIS

Disorders" by the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, a handbook used by mental health professionals to help diagnose the characteristics and treatment of

transgendered patients.

The play progresses as Jason goes to the local LGBT youth center where he accidentally meets David, who volunteers at the center talking with teens about his trans experience. A few scenes later, Nancy and David begin a relationship that crosses the doctor-patient line. Eventually, the play comes to a dramatic end as the connections between the three are realized and Nancy is forced to look at the hypocrisy within her relationships with David and Jason.

According to Davis, he tries to write plays that are accessible to those who do not have any experience with transgendered people but

that are also true to life and enjoyable for people who are transgendered.

"There's not a lot of theatre about trans people, there aren't a lot of stories being told and I think that our community has a lot of really good stories," Davis said.

Davis has written plays such as *Crossing*, a one act play which poses the question, *What if Jesus were F2M?* and *The Naked I: Monologues from Beyond the Binary*, a transgendered version of the *Vagina Monologues*. (In September of 2003, *The Naked I* was selected to be a part of the first ever Transgender Theatre Festival in New York City.)

"I think there is this sense that there is a desire for a community," said Davis. "Usually when a bunch of trans people get together it's the Day of Remembrance, or Pride, or it's a conference. ... There is a community around

here, but I feel that there are not a lot of reasons [to get together] that are not political or intellectual."

According to Davis, he has always been drawn to theatre.

"I think there's something that sets it apart from other media because you and the actors are breathing in the same room," he said. "I think that in terms of gender theory, the whole concept of gender as a social construct and as something that you sort of put on and perform lends transgender material very well to the stage."

The play was sponsored by the Smith College Staff Council Diversity Community forum and is open to the public. The play will be fully produced by the 20% Theatre Company Twin Cities in Minneapolis this June.

## NH civil unions: Boom for businesses, tourism

By: **Beverly Wang/AP Writer**

BETHLEHEM, N.H. (AP)—If the rainbow-painted deck chairs, fluttering rainbow flag and purple shutters don't make it clear, the Highlands Inn's toll-free number, 877-LES-B-INN, leaves no doubt as to whom this White Mountains resort caters to.

Inkeeper Grace Newman began hosting commitment ceremonies at this self-proclaimed "lesbian paradise" in the 1980s. Newman says she has lost track of the number of commitment ceremonies that have happened there; she estimates about 300 couples have honeymooned at the inn after getting civil unions in Vermont or marriages in Quebec, Canada, both short drives away.

In 2008, the inn's 25th anniversary coincides with another milestone: legal recognition of civil unions by New Hampshire beginning Jan. 1. Newman, veteran host and overseer of many a union, isn't wasting any time.

Two New Hampshire couples have agreed to get civil unions during the inn's annual New Year's Eve dance after the clock strikes 12.

From the North Country to the Statehouse steps, other gay couples are making similar plans.

Beginning in 2008, five of six New England states will provide some form of legal recognition to same-sex couples: marriage in Massachusetts; civil unions in Vermont, New Hampshire and Connecticut; domestic partnerships in Maine. Rhode Island does not allow same-sex marriages, but does not explicitly ban them, making the state one of only a few whose gay residents can legally marry in Massachusetts.

As ceremonies for gay couples go mainstream in New Hampshire, some innkeepers, hotel managers and tourism marketers are working to get some of the expected upswing in business.

## Surgeon performs first colorectal procedure in Western Ma. using new robotic technology

NORTHAMPTON, MA—Cooley Dickinson Hospital-affiliated general surgeon Holly K. Michaelson, MD, has performed the first robot-assisted partial colectomy in Western Massachusetts.

Michaelson performed the procedure on a local woman in mid-December at the new Kittredge Surgery Center using the da Vinci® S Surgical System, a surgical robot that combines the most up-to-date advancements in robotics, computer technology, and the skill of the surgeon. The advantage of the robotic system includes less pain, faster recovery, smaller incisions, minimal scarring, and less loss of blood.

"This is an example of Cooley Dickinson having the best technology available in a community hospital setting, performed at a brand new state-of-the-art facility," Michaelson says.

The da Vinci system accurately interpreted the surgeon's hand, wrist and finger movements on instrument controls into corresponding movements of the surgical instruments positioned inside the patient through small puncture incisions.

"Robotic assistance allows for greater technical accuracy and maneuverability," Michaelson adds.

A colectomy is the partial removal of the colon. The procedure using the da Vinci lasted about two hours. The patient was able to eat a meal the same night and return home two days following the procedure. According to Michaelson, if the procedure had been performed using invasive methods, the post-operative hospital stay would have been about one week.

Cooley Dickinson Hospital surgeons began using the da Vinci S Surgical System in July.



Holly K. Michaelson MD

Since then, the da Vinci S has been used to perform 34 surgeries; most of those surgeries have been radical prostatectomies (surgical removal of the prostate.)

For more information about the minimal-

ly invasive surgery and robotics program at Cooley Dickinson Hospital visit [www.cooley-dickinson.org](http://www.cooley-dickinson.org).

Cooley Dickinson Hospital, a member of the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Alliance, is an acute-care hospital located in western Massachusetts.

Cooley Dickinson Hospital seeks to become a model for health care delivered at our nation's community hospitals.

In November, Cooley Dickinson Hospital was awarded the 2007 Betsy Lehman Patient Safety Award at the fourth annual Betsy Lehman Patient Safety Conference in Boston. The only western Massachusetts hospital to take top honors, Cooley Dickinson was praised for implementing improvement initiatives that, over time, have eliminated hospital-associated infections such as central line blood stream infections and ventilator-associated pneumonia.



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## Inglañol Latin Beat

# Epoca de Fiestas, lo que podemos hacer, y agradecimiento a nuestros líderes

Por: Wilfred Labiosa\*

El pasado año ha sido uno de muchas oportunidades para nuestras comunidades latinas y GLBT. Algunas de estas oportunidades las hemos usado hasta el máximo pero otras han sido olvidadas o no les ha sido dada la importancia que ameritan. Estas oportunidades que se nos presentaron o no están presentando no tienen precedentes. Aprovechemos estas oportunidades para así crecer unidos en el 2008. Es importante celebrar que tengamos a un hombre de color como gobernador en Massachussets, que tengamos legisladores que nos apoyan. Sin embargo, al celebrar también pensar en maneras de poder unirnos aun más para ser una comunidad con ideales, sueños de fraternidad y libertad de expresión.

De las oportunidades políticas que se nos presentaron, algunas las usamos, y otras ni le

dimos importancia. En la última convención constitucional estuvimos presentes y los legisladores se dieron cuenta y votaron en contra de una enmienda constitucional que hubiera retrocedido el movimiento para derechos GLBT como lo es la legalización de matrimonios "gay". En la política, lo/as transgéneros recibieron el apoyo de legisladores y comenzaron un importante movimiento político para que se incluyan los derechos de todo/as sin importar nuestra expresión de género.

En el 2007 no usamos nuestro voto, como lo pudimos haber usado. Perdimos a unos de nuestros más importantes aliados en el concejal municipal de Boston, Felix Arroyo. Mucho/as no fueron a votar y fue el año con menos votos en todas las elecciones. Es increíble, pero hemos perdido a una de las únicas voces latinas en la política de la ciudad de Boston. Ahora hay que esperar hasta las próximas elecciones. Espero que aprendamos

de estas elecciones y la próxima vez no pongamos excusas y votemos. El voto es un derecho que tenemos que usar y que puede traer cambios. En el 2008, va a hacer un año que tenemos que votar en las primarias y en las elecciones. No podemos pensar que otro/as van a votar y que van a haber suficientes votos para el candidato que uno quiere que gane. En vez, haz tiempo de tu diario vivir y va a votar.

Algunas veces pensamos que no sabemos por quién vamos a votar. En vez de decir esto,



From left to right: Wilfred Labiosa, Council Felix Arroyo, and Diego Sanchez. Picture by Eric Hess.

edúcate. Sigue trabajando para educarte sobre temas importantes en la política estatal y local. Es importante que nos eduquemos leyendo información en el portal de Oiste, en los periódicos o en las organizaciones como la Coalición de Somos Latin@s LGBT de Massachussets. Vota en el 2008 ya que estarás votando por temas como la emigración, la guerra, la economía y por nuestro futuro. Tu voto cuenta, así que úsalo.

Este año transcurrido ha sido uno muy importante para la comunidad GLBT Latina ya que la organización nacional para nuestra comunidad llamada Unid@s se esta fortaleciendo. También localmente ya celebramos cuatro años de la celebración de Orgullo Latino. En el 2008 estaremos celebrando nuestro quinto aniversario así que prepárense para celebrar y para aprender.

(To read the rest of this article, please visit [www.therainbowtimesnews.com](http://www.therainbowtimesnews.com))

## Time for celebration, what we can do as an ethnic group, and gratitude to our leaders

By: Wilfred Labiosa\*

The past year has been one of many opportunities for our Latino and GLBT communities. Some of these opportunities have been utilized well, but others have gone unnoticed or no importance has been given to them. All of these opportunities do not have any precedence; we must take advantage of these opportunities by uniting ourselves more in the 2008. It is important that we celebrate that we have a man of color as a governor in Massachussets; that we have legislators that supports us; but while we celebrate, it is important that we think of ways to get more opportunities to be together in order to become a stronger force with ideals, dreams, and fraternity and to celebrate our liberties.

We have utilized well some of the political opportunities in 2007 yet others we haven't. In the last constitutional convention, we were present and the legislators realized it and voted against a constitutional amendment that

would have diminished the legalization of gay marriages and our movement. In other politics, the transgender community received support from legislators to put forward an important legislation towards the trans-movement that would provide rights based on gender expression and trans-rights.

Also in 2007 we did not use our right to vote. We lost one of our most important allies in the Boston City Council, Felix Arroyo. Many did not go to vote; this past year was the year with less Latino votes in all local elections. It is astonishing that in 2007 we lost one of our important political Latino voices in our city. Now we have to wait until the next elections. I hope that we learned from these elections and that next time we do not make excuses and instead go to vote. The right to vote is a right that we must use. In 2008, is going to be an important year for politics were we must vote in the primaries and general elections. We cannot think that others are going to vote and that there will be sufficient votes for the one that we want to win.

Instead we must make a commitment to take a moment of our lives and vote.

Sometimes we think that we lack the knowledge to vote for the right reasons but instead we must recognize this and educate ourselves on the topics and candidates. Oiste continues working on educating us on the important subjects and policies in local city and state politics. It is important that we are educated reading information in the website of Oiste, in newspapers or from organizations as Somos Latin@s LGBT Coalition. The elections in 2008 are of importance as we will be voting for immigration rights, for the war, the economy and our future. Your vote counts so use it!

This past year has been one very important for our Latino GLBT community as the national organization called Unid@s fortifies itself. Also locally, we have celebrated for the fourth year Latino Pride. In 2008, we will be celebrating our fifth year anniversary so prepare yourself to celebrate while educating yourself on important topics. This is a pioneer event as it is the incubator for new and positive ideas for our community. Let us celebrate as well that this column just completed two years of publication and that our (your) organization, Somos Latin@s LGBT, has been recognized locally and nationally as the only organization for and by our community and that it organizes activities for our community on a monthly basis.

Also in 2007, we continued celebrating pag-

eants with our transgender Latino beauties in the states of Rhode Island, Massachussets, and Connecticut. Also we participated in two national contests giving recognition to our local talents nationally. In 2008, many more positive things will be forthcoming for our drag queens and our transgender movement, so educate yourself on these matters and help your trans-brothers and sisters.

It is necessary to celebrate in the three states with greater number of Latino GLBT inhabitants that there are leaders who have a common denominator: to work by our culture and our rights as a Latino GLBT community. These leaders and members of the community speak, are united in the ideals of and for equality, and advocate/work for us. Thanks to Jarett Barrios, Osvaldo Mondejar, Officer Javier Pagan, Diego Sanchez, Luis Urizand, Marco Torres, Grisel M. Ocasio, Charito, Vanessa Love, Orlando Colon, Manuel Sorto, Local Lamothé, Tisha, you, me and all of us who have continued to work for the advancement of the Latino GLBT community in 2007. In advance, thanks for the work that is coming ahead and that will be completed in 2008.

\* Wilfred Labiosa is a local and national activist. Edited by Carmen Oquendo. To contact them: [latinopride08@gmail.com](mailto:latinopride08@gmail.com)

## Queer Cinema You Can't Miss!

### Bob and Jack's 52-Year Adventure (GAY)

Genre: Documentary; Rating: Not rated  
Distribution: Limited Release  
Director: Stu Maddux; Release Date: 00/00/00  
Synopsis: A documentary about the 52-year relationship between two men who met in the Army, fell in love, left their wives, and moved to the Pacific Northwest to spend the rest of their lives together.

### Cruel and Unusual (TRANS)

Genre: Documentary; Rating: Not yet rated  
Director: Janet Baus, Dan Hunt, Reid Williams  
Release Date: 00/00/00; Notes: Premiered at 2006 South by Southwest Film Festival  
Synopsis: This documentary looks at transgender prisoners who are jailed according to the sex they were born, not the sex with which they identify.

### Gypo (Lesbian)

Genre: Drama; Rating: Not yet rated  
Distribution: Limited Release; Director: Jan Dunn  
Distributor: Lions Gate Films  
Starring: Pauline McLynn, Chloe Sirene, Paul McGann, Rula Lenska; Release Date: 00/00/00  
Synopsis: Helen (McLynn) and Paul (McGann) have been married for 25 years. Helen is looking

for change, but Paul is stuck in his ways. When they take in Tasha, a Romany Czech refugee (Sirene), new life is breathed into their house and a relationship develops between the two women.

### The Believers (TRANS)

Genre: Documentary; Rating: Not yet rated  
Distribution: Limited Release  
Director: Todd Holland; Release Date: TBA  
Notes: Recipient of the Frameline 30 Audience Award for Best Documentary  
Synopsis: This feature documentary tells the personal stories behind the Transcendence Gospel Choir, the world's first transgender gospel choir.

### Boys Life (Gay)

Genre: Comedy, Drama; Rating: Not rated  
Distribution: Limited Release  
Director: Various; Starring: Various  
Distributor: Strand Releasing; Notes: The five different compilations were released in 1995, 1997, 2000, 2003, and 2006. Synopsis: The "Boys Life" films are a series of compilations of gay-themed short films. Among the more notable shorts the series has included are Lane Janger's "Just One Time," Eytan Fox's "After" (aka Time Out) and Peggy Rajski's academy award winning "Trevor."

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# It's still elementary: Talking about gay issues in schools

By: Debra Chasnoff/TRT Special

**W**hen we released our film, *It's Elementary—Talking About Gay Issues in*

*Schools*, a decade ago, the teachers featured in the documentary were breaking new ground by finding ways to talk to their elementary and middle school students about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

The educators we found were rarities. Most teachers had never considered having such conversations, and those that did lacked the necessary support and skills. Today, educators across the country are increasingly aware that such omissions are professionally irresponsible. That's progress. But for this progress to continue, it will take the support and advocacy of not only LGBT parents who have children who are directly affected by what happens in the classroom, but the entire LGBT community and all of our allies.

During the 1990's, schools typically limited discussions of homosexuality to health class lessons and focused on preventing the spread of HIV or suicide. Today, as more and more elementary schoolteachers include LGBT people within their curricula, the context of such discussions is changing from disease and depression to culture and history. Youth are now receiving information about LGBT people through discussions about families, media personalities and historical leaders, rather



DEBRA CHASNOFF

than only through frightening statistics about disease and death.

This evolution is directly related to a positive shift in attitudes toward LGBT people, the rapid growth of families headed by same-sex parents, and the expansion of a stronger and vibrant high school age LGBT population and their friends. In many states, legislative and school board policies now mandate teaching about diversity and addressing bullying, with a specific focus on preventing anti-LGBT harassment. Curriculum guides now exist to help teachers of all grade levels have conversations about LGBT people and issues in age-appropriate ways.

Nevertheless, motivated educators need the encouragement and backing of local citizens supportive of LGBT-inclusive education in order to be able act on their commitment. Because, despite the steady growth of the safe

schools movement, small but highly vocal minorities of homophobic activists continue to pressure educators in numerous areas across the country to backtrack on their progress and to abandon their LGBT-inclusive curricula.

In April, for example, a journalism teacher in Indiana was fired after allowing one of her students to write an article asking her peers to stop anti-LGBT harassment. In August, members of a conservative church in New Jersey hijacked school-board meetings and successfully pressured a local school district into removing its LGBT-inclusive family diversity lessons. That same month the Philadelphia School District was forced to omit

'gay and lesbian history month' from this year's school calendar, following outrage from conservative parents.

In all of these situations, the vocal minority of the religious right flooded school offices with letters and phone calls. As importantly, their relentless attacks went largely unanswered by local LGBT community members and allies. Lacking necessary visible support from constituents in their own school districts, school administrators' good intentions were dwarfed by the pressure to cave into homophobic activists. These incidents reflect more than coincidence. They are part of a concerted effort on the part of the religious right to turn back the crucial progress we have

made. Today, as we re-issue *It's Elementary* for a new generation of educators, we call upon the LGBT community to help us realize our vision of schools as caring communities for all youth and families, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

In the face of increased right-wing resistance, LGBT people, parents, and allies must be vocal about their support for LGBT-inclusive curricula. LGBT parents can write their school boards, attend PTA meetings, and influence their school district by advocating for their own children's best interests. The wider LGBT community and its leaders must also recognize the efforts of LGBT-headed families in the school system, and be vigilant in providing support for the resistance they face. Whether or not you have children, you can lobby for inclusive curricula and support school districts that proactively address anti-LGBT bias. Because reaching youth with anti-bias education that includes our communities is not optional for cultural change.

It's elementary.

*\* Debra Chasnoff is the director of It's Elementary—Talking about Gay Issues in School, which will be re-released on DVD in December along with the companion documentary, It's STILL Elementary. She is the executive director of GroundSpark, www.groundspark.org.*

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## QPolitics

# 2008 Dem. and Rep. presidential candidates' positions

By: Calvin Woodward/AP Writer

WASHINGTON (AP)—The stands of these 2008 presidential candidates on a selection of issues:

**Democrats:** New York Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, former North Carolina Sen. John Edwards, Illinois Sen. Barack Obama and New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson.

**Republicans:** Former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, Arizona Sen. John McCain, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, and former Tennessee Sen. Fred Thompson.

**GAY MARRIAGE:** Support same-sex marriage?

**DEMOCRATS** support recognition of same-sex civil unions short of marriage:

Clinton: Would let states decide whether to recognize same-sex marriage. Opposes constitutional amendment against it.

Edwards: No. Opposes constitutional amendment against it.

Obama: Would let states decide. Opposes constitutional amendment against it.

Richardson: No, but has supported recognition of same-sex civil unions.

## REPUBLICANS:

Giuliani: No, but says he sees no need to amend Constitution to ban it. Has supported domestic partnership benefits for gay couples.

Huckabee: No. Amend Constitution to ban it.

McCain: Would let states regulate it.

Opposes constitutional amendment to ban it.

Romney: No. Amend Constitution to ban it.

Also opposes same-sex civil unions.

Thompson: No, but stops short of supporting a constitutional amendment that would outlaw it. Favors federal action to protect states that prohibit gay marriage from having to honor same-sex marriage allowed in another state.

## HEALTH INSURANCE:

### DEMOCRATS:

Clinton: Mandatory universal coverage in first term. Tax credits for working families to make insurance more affordable—ensuring premiums do not exceed a percentage of income. Business would be required to offer insurance to employees or pay into a pool for people without it. Expand Medicare and federal employees' health insurance plan to cover those without adequate workplace insurance. Raise taxes on wealthier families to help pay estimated cost of \$110 billion a year. Also, raise taxes on a portion of "very generous" plans covering people making more than \$250,000.

Edwards: Mandatory universal coverage in first term by expanding system of federal health insurance and family tax credits, and by imposing requirements on employers, insurance companies and individuals. Increase taxes on wealthier families to pay for program's cost of up to \$120 billion a year.

Obama: Mandatory coverage for children. Aim for universal coverage by requiring

employers to share costs of insuring workers and by offering coverage similar to that in plan for federal employees. Says package would cost up to \$65 billion a year after unspecified savings from making system more efficient. Raise taxes on wealthier families to pay the cost.

Richardson: Tax breaks for businesses and for people who pay for their own coverage. Lower the eligibility age for Medicare to 55 and expand programs for poor and children. Package could cost up to \$110 billion a year. Claims savings from expanded spending on preventive care would help achieve mandatory universal coverage without tax increases.

## REPUBLICANS:

Giuliani: Income tax deduction of \$7,500 per taxpayer to defray insurance costs. Tax credit for poorer workers to supplement Medicaid and employer contributions as part of "market-driven" expansion of affordable coverage. Expanded use of health savings accounts. No mandate for universal coverage.

Huckabee: Favors market solutions, state innovation. "We don't need universal health care mandated by federal edict or funding through ever-higher taxes." Spend more on prevention and research.

McCain: \$2,500 refundable tax credit for individuals, \$5,000 for families, to make health insurance more affordable. No mandate for universal coverage. In gaining the tax credit, workers could not deduct the portion of their workplace health insurance paid by their employers.

Romney: Incentives for states to expand

affordable coverage. As governor, he signed health care law aimed at ensuring universal coverage through a mix of subsidies, sliding scale premiums and penalties for those who do not get insurance.

Thompson: "Market-driven" expansion of affordable coverage, but no mandate.

## TAXES:

**DEMOCRATS** would let some of Bush's tax cuts expire in 2010 as scheduled, in effect raising taxes on wealthier people to help pay for programs. Additionally:

Clinton: Tax proposals focused on universal health care plan, including tax credits to make insurance more affordable. Also, would tax a portion of health insurance benefits provided to workers making more than \$250,000. Maintain estate tax on the richest tier. Increased tax breaks for college. \$1 billion paid family leave program to be financed by eliminating some tax shelters.

Edwards: For middle and low-income people, set up tax-free savings accounts and have government match the first \$500 in savings, expand earned-income and child and dependent care tax credits, and exempt the first \$250 of investment income from capital gains taxes. Tax cuts to cost \$25 billion a year. Raise rate on capital gains tax to 28 percent from 15 percent for those making over \$250,000.

Obama: About \$80 billion in tax breaks mainly for low-income workers and the elderly, including tax credit worth up to \$500 a person to offset payroll taxes and elimination of

*See Campaign on Page 20*

## Federal Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act

WASHINGTON—The Human Rights Campaign lauds Senators Joseph Lieberman and Gordon Smith and Representatives Tammy Baldwin, Henry Waxman, Tom Davis, and Chris Shays, along with 19 additional Senate cosponsors and 35 additional House cosponsors, for their support of the

Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act, which was introduced today. This bill would provide benefits for same-sex domestic partners of federal civilian employees on the same basis as spousal benefits. These benefits would include participation in applicable retirement programs, life and health insurance benefits, and family and medical leave.

"This legislation would allow the federal government to keep pace with other top employers," said Human Rights Campaign president Joe Solmonese. "It is not only a matter of equal pay for equal work, but also the best way to insure that the government has access to the top talent on the same basis as the nation's leading corporations," he added.

The majority of Fortune 500 companies

provide domestic partner benefits to their employees. Many of America's leading companies, including the "Big Three," automakers, defense giant Raytheon, IBM, Microsoft, Shell Oil, Walt Disney, Fannie Mae, Citigroup, Xerox,

**This legislation would allow the federal government to keep pace with other top employers.**

**—HRC President Joe Solmonese.**

Time Warner and United and American Airlines offer these benefits. In addition, 13 states and 201 local governments offer their public employees domestic partnership benefits. Recently Michael Guest, former ambassador to Romania, cited the lack of family benefits as his reason for retiring from the Foreign Service. "The federal government's failure to provide these benefits impairs its ability to compete for the best and the brightest," said Solmonese.

The Human Rights Campaign is America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality. By inspiring and engaging all Americans, HRC strives to end discrimination against GLBT citizens and realize a nation that achieves fundamental fairness and equality for all.



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# The Return of Miss Soul: Angie Stone on homophobic issues

In 2001 Angie Stone was coined "Miss Soul", which is an understatement for the R&B diva with the powerful voice and thought-provoking lyrics. Now, Angie returns with her fourth studio album, appropriately titled *The Art of Love and War*.

Angie's daring attitude and raw talent garnered a huge following in the gay community, especially with the infectious dance remixes of *Wish I Didn't Miss You*. Many of us were shocked by the controversial 2002 rumors claiming Angie made a homophobic comment during a concert in Newark, NJ. Word spread that the soul diva asked only "real strong black brothas" to put their hands in the air, versus "homos".

Although Angie has denied making the comment, she opens up in this interview—expressing her hurt, shock and surprise that the gay community nearly turned on her. Angie also dishes on homophobia in R&B, the new album and more.

**Q: Tell me about the new album *The Art of Love and War*.**

A: The songs are very strong, lyrically and melodically. I won't say your typical Angie Stone album, but I covered a vast variety of subject matters. One being *My People*, which is reminiscent of *Brotha*—I went back to that vibe and another anthem. Also, *Make It Last*, which is about a woman who broke a man's heart for the second time and now it's obvious that it's over.

**Q: When did you know you had a gay following?**

A: I've always known that. In every album, I've always had gay songwriters. *Wish I Didn't Miss You* was written by a gay person, one of my biggest records to date. My assistant is gay, my travel assistant is gay and my best friend is gay. So, I've always known that I've had the support. I find a loyalty in their commitment to me as a person and my message. They don't judge me, they actually give me a lot of support and I'm eternally grateful. I've never had friends like I've had in the gay community, just as loyal as they are. They're the best.

**Q: Why do you think gay audiences, especially gay men, are so attracted to R&B, female soul singers?**

A: They're human beings, at the end of the day we're all human beings. I've had so many gay people come up to me and say, "Oh girl, you were talking about me! I'm going through that same thing." If you are real and deal with the real issues then the realness is



going to touch you, no matter whether you are straight or gay. That's what I think the draw is. It's almost like they have a synergy to pick up the realness in people.

**Q: Do you think an artist could be openly gay in R&B and be successful?**

I would love to answer that question yes, but I'm going to say no because so much of society is dictated in judgmental views. Along with gay people, along with sometimes black, sometimes unattractive—there's this thing that people just can't get with. They are just programmed to think otherwise. I think this whole world is programmed to be judgmental. I'll give you an example—Rahsaan Patterson. The minute they found out that he was gay, it was almost like the whole community turned on him. I just didn't appreciate it. They're forgetting the art form because they are judging him as a person and they are not looking at the gift. I've got a problem with that.

**Q: How do you feel about some people in the gay community who feel those who are closeted in R&B or hip-hop should be ousted?**

A: Well, I'm going to be honest with you. Because gay people are so loyal, so committed to what they believe—I'm going to say this and hope it doesn't cause a repercussion, but if you're going to be that way, you can't be judgmental yourself. The reason why I'm saying that is if a person is not ready to come out of the closet because they have their own fears then allow them that. It's a struggle within him/herself for that individual already, dealing with the fact that they are either going to be accepted or rejected.

**Q: There were those rumors a few years ago about homophobic comments you supposedly made at a concert in New Jersey, which you cleared up in *The Advocate* saying it was completely false. What was your initial, personal reaction when you heard Angie Stone doesn't think gay men are real men?**

A: I took it personally because the song that was out, a gay person had written, which was *Wish I Didn't Miss You*. You have to understand my gay friends that heard that were furious. They were like, "They don't even know her, and 'How can they be so judgmental? I'm with her everyday; she is not against gay people.'" It kind of hurt my feelings because I felt like for the moment, the entire gay community was turning on me and here I was the biggest advocate of integrity saying, "Look, I don't care what people think, you're writing a song for me and that's all it is." [On] every album I've had a gay person [who] has worked on my project with me because I'm not judgmental. I'm not doing it for kudos, but because I strongly believe in looking out for my friends. I had a slew of friends that kept me sane during that time. Was I pissed? I was totally pissed! When I heard they were burning CDs—I'm like, give me a break already! You're going to tell me you're going to take something like this and run with it when you know me as a person? If you don't know anything else about me, just take a few moments and ask around. It wouldn't be hard

to find out who I am. That did it for me because it was like in the twinkle of an eye they were ready to abandon, jump ship and create all this drama over something, in my opinion, they had no real idea of how engrossed I was into that community.

**Q: In closing, anything you would like to say to your gay fans?**

A: Stay focused, stay encouraged—I would encourage you all to listen to my song, *Happy Being Me*. That is a dedication to my gay community because you are in control as an individual of your own life. Don't allow the next man to judge you when God has to judge us all. I love you all. I got your back and let's go all the way to the finish line!

For more information about Angie Stone, visit her website at [www.angiestoneonline.net](http://www.angiestoneonline.net).

The Art of Love and War (Stax) is in stores now.



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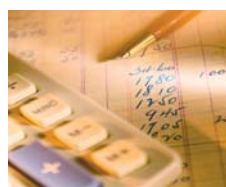


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## Gay Traveling

## Out of Town: Cape Town, South Africa



By: Andrew Collins\*

The undisputed gay capital of the African continent, Cape Town has something of the progressive vibe, stunning coastal scenery, and sunny disposition of similarly appealing seaside cities, such as Sydney, San Francisco, and Vancouver. Part of a peninsular region that juts into the Atlantic Ocean along South Africa's southwestern coast, Cape Town has become increasingly popular with visitors from North America, offering travelers a small but vibrant gay business district and wonderful opportunities for day-tripping along the coast and inland to the lush vineyards and swank country inns of the Winelands regions.

There are some logistical issues to consider when planning a trip to this city, which is about 6,000 miles from London, 8,000 miles from New York City, and 10,000 miles from Los Angeles. It takes up to two days to get here and again to return home, and airfares are quite steep, generally \$1,000 to \$1,500 from North America. The good news is that North American and European currency are relatively strong against South African currency, the Rand, meaning that you'll generally encounter good values in hotels, restaurants, and shops once you're here.

Another thing to keep in mind when traveling such a long distance is that it's prudent to plan a trip of at least 10 days, and ideally 15 days. South Africa is famous not just for Cape Town and the surrounding area, but also for the safari lodges that proliferate in the wildlife-rich Kruger National Park, in the northeast part of the country. Many visitors plan a trip that includes a week or so in greater Cape Town, and another week in Kruger or at a safari camp in a nearby country, such as Botswana, Namibia, or Zimbabwe.

If you're going this route, your best strategy is to book your vacation through a reliable tour operator. Consider the highly regarded and very gay-friendly Premier Tours, which is based in Philadelphia and run by South African native Julian Harrison. Premier offers a wide range of preplanned itineraries to South Africa and several other African nations, but they can also design a custom itinerary for you. Sales Associate Steve Gleba is Premier Tours' LGBT travel specialist and can help design a trip that's geared especially toward staying in gay-friendly or gay-owned accom-



Spectacular views from the bluffs at Cape of Good Hope Nature Preserve, an easy day trip from Cape Town.

modations. Other gay-oriented or gay-friendly tour companies offering trips to South Africa include New York-based Gay 2Africa and Vermont-based Hermes Tours.

No matter how you organize your trip, plan to spend at least half your time in and around Cape Town. Right in the city, there are several attractions of note, including Iziko South African Museum, Iziko South African National Gallery, and Table Mountain, the looming geographical feature that defines the city skyline—you can take an aerial cableway to the top of this 3,500-foot behemoth. It's also worth spending an afternoon strolling around the V&A Waterfront, with its shops and restaurants, Two Oceans Aquarium (an excellent facility with more than 8,000 sea creatures), and the South African Maritime Museum. You can also take the ferry from here to Robben Island, where Nelson Mandela was jailed for 18 years. It's now a UN World Heritage Site and museum (with tours led by former prisoners).

Allow at least one day to make the drive south of the city along the coast, past such ritzy residential neighborhoods as Camps Bay (with its views of the ocean on one side, and the Twelve Apostles mountains on the other) and Clifton, with its lavish seaside and cliff-top homes. Stop in the bustling, if somewhat touristy, fishing village of Hout Bay (where you can take excursion boats out to the massive seal colony on Duiker Island, or to view whales), and continue south through Simonstown to see Boulders National Park, home to 3,000 jackass penguins (named for the braying, donkey-like noises they make). A boardwalk down along the beach affords up-close encounters with these fascinating animals.

Farther south, a spectacular drive leads to the Cape of Good Hope Nature Preserve, which has good hiking, lofty peaks, spectacular beaches, and interesting wildlife. Beware of the baboons here, who sometimes behave aggressively toward people. If you're curious about these clever animals, take a walking tour with Baboon Matters, an animal advocacy organization in

Glencairm (on the road between Cape Town and Cape of Good Hope preserve). These fascinating tours led by experienced guides take you right into a habitat of relatively tame and approachable baboons.

Back in the city of Cape Town, you'll find that much of the gay scene revolves around De Waterkant, a compact district of cobblestone streets on the northeastern edge of downtown, not far from the V&A Waterfront. In this little quadrant you'll find several excellent restaurants and cafes, including atmospheric Anatoli for excellent Turkish cuisine, Andiamo Deli and Restaurant for contemporary Italian fare with attractive patio seating, and Cafe Manhattan, which has live music some nights and is as much a gay bar as a gay restaurant. A more upscale choice on the edge of De Waterkant is the Showroom, a slick, white-on-white space known for some of the most creative modern South African cuisine in the city, plus great people-watching. Stop by Origin for some of the best coffee around—a bohemian atmosphere prevails at this lively cafe.

Cape Town excels when it comes to dining, with other notable options including Fork, a sexy tapas restaurant and lounge, and Jardine, which turns out such dazzlingly innovative fare as confit of roasted guinea fowl with orange-braised endive. In the V&A Waterfront, try gay-friendly Belthazar, a sprawling steakhouse and seafood eatery.

For nightlife, De Waterkant is again your best bet. Head to the Bronx, a cruisy gay's bar; Bar Code, the city's top venue for men in leather and uniform; and the Loft Lounge, a hip spot for hobnobbing and cocktails. For lesbians, there's Lush, a roving Saturday night party that was, as of this writing, taking place at the Junction Cafe—the Lush website has details. Also in de Waterkant you'll find Cape Town's popular gay sauna, the Hothouse, an attractive and rather upscale spot with a restaurant, bars, and spotless cabins and common facilities. Of particular note is a sundeck affording superb views of the city.

Greater Cape Town abounds with gay-friendly inns and B&Bs - there are plenty of worthwhile options in a variety of price ranges. The Metropole is a modern boutique hotel in the heart of downtown, close to the many restaurants and shops along the main

thoroughfare, Long Street. Rooms are comfy and spacious, and some have small balconies overlooking the street. There's an excellent restaurant, Veranda, on the second floor.

Among the city's best guest houses, consider 4 on Varneys, a luxurious six-room inn with a lushly landscaped courtyard and sleek, modern rooms; or the Charles, an intimate new property in the heart of De Waterkant. The 12 rooms and four cottages are done with swank furniture and have deep tubs and separate showers. A top choice for lesbians is Colette's B&B, an affordable and tastefully done two-room inn for women in a suburb just outside of the city center (close to good hiking and wine-tasting).

The Winelands wine country makes for an enjoyable day trip, but if you have time, try to spend a night or two out this way. This verdant, sunny region east of Cape Town is dotted with engaging towns, the most scenic and sophisticated being Franschhoek, Stellenbosch, and Paarl. The area is known for a distinctive red wine called Pinotage, but it also produces excellent Shiraz, Chardonnay, and many other vintages. One winery worth checking out is Fairview, noted not just for its stellar wine but also for its fantastic gourmet cheeses and garden-side restaurant. For a more intimate experience, drop by Muratie Winery, an small vineyard producing first-rate Pinot Noir and Shiraz.

As is often the case in wine regions, the Winelands has plenty of urbane restaurants and gourmet food and cheese shops. Of particular note is Le Quartier Francais, a foodie mecca for its restaurant, which has made more than a few "best in the world" lists; this Relais & Chateaux country inn also boasts stunning rooms with giant soaking tubs and plenty of cushy amenities. Also in Franschhoek, Mont Rochelle Hotel & Mountain Vineyards offers plush accommodations and excellent food, and nearby Cabriere ranks among the town's top wineries. If you're on a bit of a budget, try Franschhoek's gay-owned Maison Chablis, a warmly furnished seven-room country house with a pool and serene, landscaped grounds.

Stellenbosch, a historic university town with numerous 18th-century buildings done in the region's enchanting "Cape Dutch" style, also has a number of excellent restaurants, plus great shopping. Consider staying at the charming D'Ouwe Werf 1802, South Africa's oldest inn - it also has a fine restaurant. Another good choice is gay-friendly Villa Exner, a bit south of Stellenbosch along the region's scenic "Garden Route." This posh country estate has spacious rooms with flat-screen TVs and DVD players, a large outdoor pool, and a restaurant serving acclaimed country fare. At this property, you're close to the three elements that make this part of the world so special: prolific vineyards, turquoise seas, and emerald mountains. (To see the Complete Black book, see TRT's website).

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



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# Straight people for LGBT equality and rights

In the New Year, make a resolution that counts with PFLAG's work on GLBT rights

**S**traight for Equality is an outreach and education project that empowers straight people in supporting and advocating for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) people. Straight for Equality reaches out to straight allies who may not have realized how their own contribution can make a significant difference. It also seeks allies who understand the importance of this goal but may be hesitant to get involved. This project will boost these allies' confidence by providing them with the tools, knowledge, skills and opportunities to take the next step. There are many ways to be a straight ally and everyone's contributions, whether large or small, private or public, can help achieve this goal.

The project will accomplish its objectives by:

- Creating a forum for fair-minded straight people to discuss and resolve the concerns and barriers they face in becoming or growing as effective allies of the GLBT community;
- Providing specific recommendations to help transform people's attitudes and perceptions of GLBT individuals and the GLBT community;
- Assisting other GLBT allies in encouraging friends, family members, coworkers, and community members to embrace this goal and effect real and lasting change.

Straight for Equality is the next logical step for Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) as we expand our work for GLBT equality. As part of PFLAG's mission of support, education and advocacy, this new project will embrace an increasing number of straight people who are ready to lend their invaluable voices and perspectives to bring the straight and GLBT communities together, straight for equality.

## THE STRAIGHT FOR EQUALITY PLEDGE

As a straight ally committed to supporting and advocating for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) people, I will:

### Come out.

I will acknowledge and work on any uncertainties I may have in "coming out" as a straight ally, and, as I grow in confidence, I'll increasingly let my family, friends, and colleagues know that I support equality for GLBT people.

### Speak up.

Whenever I have an opportunity, I'll say something supportive of GLBT people, whether I'm responding to a homophobic joke or remark, commenting positively about a current event, or making the case for equality in a discussion.

### Join in.

I will review the many recommended actions provided through Straight for Equality that will help me create change in big and small ways and incorporate those



with which I am comfortable into my growth as a straight ally to help move equality forward.

To sign the petition visit: [www.straightforequality.org/](http://www.straightforequality.org/)

## TEN THINGS TO DO AS A STRAIGHT ALLY

There are literally hundreds of ways that you can show support as a straight ally—from the way that you respond in conversations to what companies you support to which legislators you elect.

Be sure to come back on October 11 to learn more with the first official publication from Straight for Equality!

- Become informed about the realities, challenges and issues affecting the lives of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) people's lives through websites, books, documentaries, and educational materials.

- Be open about having GLBT friends, family or acquaintances that you value, respect, and are grateful to have in your life. When you talk about them, don't omit the fact that they are GLBT.

- Speak up when you hear derogatory slurs or jokes and don't use them yourself.

- Ask if you are unsure how a GLBT friend, family member or acquaintance would like their significant other to be referred to or introduced, rather than avoiding acknowledgment of the relationship.

- Help your kids learn about and appreciate all different kinds of families. Be mindful of the day-to-day messages that they are receiving about GLBT people and issues in school, from friends, and on TV and talk about what they encounter with them.

- Quit or don't join organizations that overtly discriminate. Let them know why you are leaving or not joining in the first place.

- Support GLBT-owned and GLBT-friendly businesses.

- Encourage and support company poli-

cies and programs that promote a positive work environment for GLBT employees at your workplace. If your company has a GLBT network group, join and encourage them to include straight allies so more people can be openly supportive of their work.

- Write letters to the editor of your newspaper to comment as a straight ally on why you support respectful and equal treatment for GLBT people.

- Call, write, e-mail, or visit public policy makers and let them know that as a straight person who votes, you support laws that extend equal rights and protections to GLBT people.

## Colton from Page

**MK:** What do you hope to accomplish with your debut disc?

**CF:** I hope to reach as many people as I can with my music, and put myself on the map in a way that affords me the luxury of living comfortably off of my art. Anything beyond that would be icing on the cake.

**MK:** I'm not trying to jinx you in any way because I certainly admire your determination and the hurdles you'll metaphorically have to jump as you try to make a name for yourself in the music industry, but what will you do if this project doesn't work out as well as you hope? Will you try again? Will you return to adult films?

**CF:** Quite honestly, I'm trying diligently not

## The Night Owl

The best LGBTQ Clubs in our Gayborhoods! Check 'em out!

<b>Central &amp; Western, MA</b>	168 York Street New Haven, CT
<b>Blu</b>	105 Water Street Worcester, MA
<b>Club Car</b>	64 Water Street Worcester, MA
<b>DIVA'S</b>	492 Pleasant St. Northampton, MA
<b>Hob Knob</b>	234 Chestnut Street Springfield, MA
<b>The Pub</b>	382 Dwight Street Springfield, MA
<b>MB</b>	40 Grafton Street Worcester, MA
<b>Sin City</b>	350 Worthington Street Springfield, MA
<b>Connecticut</b>	
<b>Triangles</b>	66 Sugar Hollow Road Danbury, Connecticut
<b>Chez Est</b>	458 Wethersfield Ave. Hartford, CT
<b>Polo Club</b>	678 Maple Avenue Hartford, CT
<b>168 York Street Cafe</b>	
<b>Bar</b>	254 Crown Street New Haven, CT
<b>Gotham Citi Cafe</b>	Church & Crown Streets New Haven, CT
<b>Partners Cafe</b>	365 Crown Street New Haven, CT
<b>New York Clubs</b>	
<b>Water Works Pub</b>	76 Central Ave. Albany, NY
<b>Club Phoenix</b>	348 Central Ave., Albany, NY 12206
<b>Joey's Bar</b>	664 2nd Ave., Troy, NY 518-237-4846
<b>Oh Bar</b>	304 Lark Street, Albany, NY (518) 463-9004
<b>Fuze Box Bar</b>	112 Central Avenue, Albany, NY (518) 432-4472
<b>Clinton St. Pub</b>	159 Clinton St., Schenectady, NY 12305 518-377-8555

to get ahead of myself here. Now that's not to say that I haven't thought about the future and the possibilities. I have, of course. I just don't want to get stuck there and distracted. My being present now and attentive to the business that I currently have on my plate will put me in a much better place with my career on down the line. If I was consumed with and caught up in my fears about the future, I would be missing out on all the good things that are happening now.

**MK:** What's the one thing that you want people to know about that they don't?

**CF:** I'm actually straight. I just did the gay thing for my career. [laughs]

\* Michael A. Knipp is a freelance writer and founder of Line/Byline Communications. He can be reached at [michael.knipp@gmail.com](mailto:michael.knipp@gmail.com).



**GLMA's mission is to ensure equality in healthcare for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals and healthcare providers.**

GLMA and the Human Rights Campaign have launched a new nationwide survey of the healthcare industry that will provide a quality indicator for healthcare related to LGBT people and will identify existing policies that may be used as models for other healthcare organizations. The first report provides aggregate statistics from the survey to create the baseline for future progress. For more information, [www.glma.org](http://www.glma.org).

[www.glma.org/](http://www.glma.org/)

## LGBT Announcements

## TRT PRIDE Calendar from MA, NY, CT &amp; VT!

(MA) **UNITY** is a Transgender support group which meets at 7 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of each month at Baystate Hospital, 3300 Main Street in Springfield, Ma.; and on the 4th Thursday at the Blue Moon Coffee Roaster located at 715 Summer Avenue, Springfield, MA. FMI: Deja 860-604-6343 or Keri 413-364-1749.

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

(MA) **EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION (EC)** is NOW available without a prescription at all Tapestry Health Services sites. (413) 586-2539.

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

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

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

(VT) **MEN'S SUPPORT GROUP**; Any male 18 or older; an opportunity for men to share their experiences, thoughts, and feelings about life's journey. Support group not a therapy group. Free. Every Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Brattleboro, VT. FMI: 802-258-3914.

(MA) **JOIN EMAIL GROUP FOR LGBT PARENTS** in the Pioneer Valley area at [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lgbt\\_parents\\_pioneer\\_valley/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lgbt_parents_pioneer_valley/) for exchanging information, chatting about our families, and organizing get-togethers and play-dates.

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

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

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

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

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

(NY) **Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Men Support Group**; Mondays; 7 p.m.; Support group for GBT men to talk about coming out, sex, religion, dating, relationships, and other issues affecting men in the GBT Community; CDGLCC @ 332 Hudson Avenue in Albany. FMI: Q Diamond at (518) 462-6138 or [qdiamond@cdglcc.org](mailto:qdiamond@cdglcc.org).

(NY) **Lesbian and Bisexual Women's Support Group**; every other Tuesday; 7 p.m.; Designed for multi-cultural lesbian and bisexual women who are questioning their sexuality, recovering

from newly ended relationships, struggling with depression or just women needing the support of their peers. Meet at CDGLCC at 332 Hudson Avenue in Albany. FMI: Q Diamond at (518) 462-6138.

(NY) **Youth Group**; Friday nights; 7 p.m.; 332 Hudson Ave. in Albany; Group offers peer support to LGBT& questioning individuals ages 13-19. A supportive environment for LGBTQ youth and their straight allies to discuss issues of coming out, family, school, work, and relationships among their peers. Another group meets in **Saratoga Springs** at 624 Broadway every other Wednesday, a group in Hudson at 742 Warren St. every other Wednesday, and a group in Schoharie County that meets twice per month. FMI: Q Diamond (518) 462-6138.

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

LGBTQ TEA DANCE AT DANCE NORTHAMPTON. Second Sunday of every month; 6:30 PM; \$8 (includes lesson at 3:00) FMI: [www.dancenorthampton.com](http://www.dancenorthampton.com).

(NY) **Out Dancing** (for the LGBTQ community); every Wednesday evening; 7 to 8 p.m.; Saratoga SAVOY, 7 Wells St, Saratoga Springs, NY. FMI call: 518-587-5132. <http://saratogasavoy.homestead.com/files/outdancing.html>

(CT) Every Sunday: **ALL LGBT YOUTH to the Rainbow Room**; at the Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective; from 3-6 p.m.; 1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT; for LGBT youth and allies. The Rainbow Room is a drop-in space for LGBT youth up to 21 years old ... Come hang out at Rainbow Room.

(MA) **TransForming Families** - Transgender Support Group; Parents, partners, children and their transgender loved ones. Topic/discussion/support group meets twice a month; Wednesdays, 7:30 - 9 p.m. in Hadley. FMI: [www.transformingfamilies.org](http://www.transformingfamilies.org) or 413-522-0522

(MA) **Free Breast Cancer Services**; Cooley Dickinson; Women can select therapy services such as acupuncture, aromatherapy, therapeutic touch, healing music, healing touch, Reiki, Reiki, Peggy Huddleston's Prepare for Surgery, Heal Faster™, self-hypnosis/guided imagery and therapeutic massage by CD employees that hold certifications in these therapy techniques. FMI 413-582-2424.

(MA) **EAST COAST FEMALE-TO-MALE GROUP (ECFTMG)**; 2nd Sunday of every month from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. All meetings are held at Bet's house: FMI: 413.584.7616 or email: [betpower@yahoo.com](mailto:betpower@yahoo.com); FTMers or SOFFas who have never come to one of the meetings should call and introduce themselves to Bet before attending. Meetings are open to all masculine-identified, female-born personsour significant others, family, and allies.

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

(NY) **Ask-A-Lawyer Legal Clinic**: Serving the LGBT community Geri Pomerantz, Esq. and Anne Reynolds Copps, Esq.; 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.; FREE legal consultations to the LGBT community on domestic disputes, orders of protection, name changes, wills, family law, discrimination, and

more. will be held by appointment only. FMI: 518.432.4188.

(VT) **GAYME NIGHT: January 5**, 7pm, Menspace, 50 Elliot St., Brattleboro VT. Gayme night is at the Menspace this month. Come join us for snacks and socializing, and lots of laughs.

(MA) **19TH ANNUAL FRIENDS OF THE FINE ARTS CENTER BENEFIT AUCTION ONLINE**: January 7th through Midnight, February 2nd; Auction online in advance of the gala. The auction goes live at 8 a.m. January 7th and closes at midnight February 2nd, the night of the gala. To access the online auction: [www.umassfinearts-center.cmarket.com](http://www.umassfinearts-center.cmarket.com). Price for the Gala event is \$100 p/p and includes a \$25 tax-deductible contribution. FMI: 413.545.3671. For tickets: 413.545.2511 or online at [fineartscenter.com](http://fineartscenter.com).

(VT) **BOWLING: January 7**, 7 p.m., at Brattleboro Bowl, Brattleboro VT. Join bowlers at Brattleboro Bowl on Putney Road. You'll rent your own shoes, and we split the lane costs between all attendees.

(VT) **BEAR NIGHT: January 9**, Doors open at 5 p.m., the Ceilidh House, Westmoreland NH. The Ceilidh House holds BEAR NIGHT every second Wednesday. The Pub is not normally open on Wednesdays, so this is a private gay night. Doors open at 5 p.m., DJ music begins at 7:30 p.m., and the pub will be open until midnight. [www.ceilidh-house.net](http://www.ceilidh-house.net) Not a Men's Program event.

(VT) **CORE GROUP: January 10**, 6pm Potluck, 6:30 p.m. Group Discussion, at the Menspace, 50 Elliot Street, Brattleboro VT. Help guide the Men's Program. Join us for a great potluck and then conversation about the program. Actively seeking new members.

(VT) **BOOK GROUP: January 10**, 7 p.m., at the Menspace, 50 Elliot Street, Brattleboro VT. The book for January is HOTEL DE DREAM, Edmund White's new book. FMI: Curtis, 802-254-2400. (Yes, there are two events on Thursday, January 10, at the Menspace. We have two rooms.)

(NY) **MOVIE NIGHT: January 11**, "The Watermelon Woman;" CDGLCC, 332 Hudson Ave., Albany, NY, 7:00 PM, FREE!

(VT) **BEAR POTLUCK: January 12**, 6:30pm, at the Menspace, 50 Elliot Street, Brattleboro VT. The bears have decided to get together again. Bring a dish to share, whether you're a fancier or a bear.

(MA) **TRANSCEND: A SUPPORT GROUP FOR THE TRANS COMMUNITY; January 13**, 7-8:30 p.m.; South Congregational Church, 110 South Street, Pittsfield, MA; Transcend is an informal place for trans people to come together and share their experience. BSCC will provide facilitators and light refreshments. Confidential, free and open to any trans person who wishes to come. FMI: BSCC Infoline: 413-822-7268

(MA) **COMING OUT TRANS TO PEOPLE CLOSE TO US**; January 13; 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. How has coming out as transgender, transsexual, or gender queer or starting your transition process (however you define that) affected people close to you? Come share your experiences and resources or tools that may have helped you in coming out trans. FMI: 413.584.7616 or email: [betpower@yahoo.com](mailto:betpower@yahoo.com)

(NY) **PRIDE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING: January 15**, CDGLCC, 332 Hudson Ave., Albany, NY 6:00 p.m. FMI: [capitalpride@cdglcc.org](mailto:capitalpride@cdglcc.org) or just come to the next meeting if you are interested in helping to make Capital Pride 2008 bigger and better than ever!

(VT) **SPIRITUALITY: January 18**, 7pm, the Menspace, 50 Elliot Street, Brattleboro VT. Open discussion of men's spirituality/practice. This month we'll read and discuss a chapter of EAT,

PRAY, LOVE.

(NY) **PROGRESSIONS CONCERT SERIES: January 19**, CDGLCC, 332 Hudson Ave., Albany, NY, 8:00 p.m. Doors 7:30 p.m., \$10/\$8 students - All ages! FMI: Carrie at 518.462.6138, x.11.

(VT) **WINTER PARTY POTLUCK: January 19**, 2 p.m. outdoor fun; 5 p.m. dinner. Thom Chiofalo's in Rowe, MA. Bring a dish to share and join the winter fun, with plenty of lovely land to snowshoe and x-country ski, and a roaring fire in the fire place. (Bring your own snowshoes, skis and poles) Not a Men's Program sponsored event. FMI: [eflash@sover.net](mailto:eflash@sover.net) for directions.

(VT) **TRANSGENDER SUPPORT: January 20**, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Meeting in Brattleboro the third Sunday of every month. Open to anyone whose identity or expression doesn't fit neatly into the gender binary, including transpeople of all sexual orientations/ identities. Not a Men's Program event. FMI: Benjamin Robin: [robin@benjamin-robin.net](mailto:robin@benjamin-robin.net)

(VT) **CONNECTIONS MAILING FUN: January 22**, 6 p.m. at the APSV office, 67 Main Street, 4th Floor, Brattleboro. Fold, stuff, seal, stamp, laugh. Pizza provided! Directions at the top of the next column.

(VT) **COMEDY IMPROV: January 25**, 7 p.m., Michael Gigante's, 31 Frog Hill, Brattleboro, VT. Back by popular demand! Improv is easier than you think... it's all in the prompts. Everyone can do it. With your hosts Michael Gigante and Brandon Peterson, come join in the silliness. Both hosts are skilled, trained improv instigators conductors, and make this event comfortable and hilarious for all.

(NY) **MELISSA FERRICK WITH SPECIAL GUEST CHRIS PUREKA THE LINDA: January 26**, WAMC's Performing Arts Studio, 339 Central Ave, Albany, NY. \$23. Call 518.465.5233 to order tickets. This Event is supported by: The New York State Music Fund, established by the New York State Attorney General at Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors; and by the Capital District Gay and Lesbian Community Council.

(VT) **LEATHER GUY POTLUCK: January 26**, 6:30pm, Menspace, 50 Elliot Street, Brattleboro, VT. If you're into or interested in Leather/BDSM, come meet with guys who share that interest. Bring a dish to share and come with ideas about how and where this group might continue to get together.

(VT) **LET'S TALK "HEALTH & WELLBEING": January 30**, 7-8:30 p.m.; Menspace, 50 Elliot Street, Brattleboro VT.

(NY) **MOVIE NIGHT: February 8**, "Get On the Bus," CDGLCC, 332 Hudson Ave., Albany, NY. 7:00 p.m., FREE!

(MA) **BENEFIT EVENT FEATURING THE ILLUSTRIOUS KATE BORNSTEIN**; Feb. 8 2008; 7 p.m.; Weinstein Auditorium at Smith College; Tickets: \$3/Smith College students, \$5/ students, \$10/general public. Benefit for Bet Power, founder and facilitator of the East Coast Female to Male Group. FMI: [alexcielo@comcast.net](mailto:alexcielo@comcast.net)

(NY) **GAY BINGO: Feb 9**, 7:30 p.m.; Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill, 100 Capital Boulevard; Rocky Hill, CT; \$20; Over \$500 in cash and prizes; 6:30-7:30 p.m. Cocktail Hour; Cash Bar/Concessions.

(MA) **GLBT INSPIRATIONAL SEMINARS: February 16**, Inspirational seminars honoring our community. Join us on February 16th for our one day "reclaiming your connection" seminar in Sherborn, MA. FMI: Sue Call 978-257-8003 or e-mail [saeshagene@gmail.com](mailto:saeshagene@gmail.com)

MORE CALENDAR OF EVENTS ON PAGE 17

Submit your non-profit calendar event/s\* to [calendar@therainbowtimesmass.com](mailto:calendar@therainbowtimesmass.com) or [calendar@therainbowtimesnews.com](mailto:calendar@therainbowtimesnews.com)

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



## Planning underway for New England's first Transgender Pride March & Rally

NORTHAMPTON, MA—Transgender people and their allies from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Maine, and eastern New York state have announced plans to hold the first New England Transgender Pride March and Rally. The event will take place on Saturday, June 7, 2008, in Northampton, Massachusetts.

The rally will assemble at 11:00 a.m. at the Bridge Street School. Marchers will step off at noon and proceed down Main Street for a rally at 1:00 p.m. at Veterans Field.

"We feel a march and rally are necessary because transgender people are often misunderstood and denied basic civil rights in much of society," states Bet Power, a member of the Transgender Pride steering committee. Power noted that Massachusetts and Connecticut do not have laws that prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations based on an individual's gender identity or expression. In part, the rally will call attention to gender rights bills making their way through the two state legislatures.

"We hope that the march and rally will help educate others about the lives and experiences of transgender people and the need for protective legislation," added Robyn Laferriere, another steering committee member. According to the mission statement, the organizers "seek to educate and build awareness of the movement against gender-based discrimination" and "promote self-acceptance and acceptance of our whole identities and lives." It states, "We gather to celebrate and affirm our individuality, diversity, and strength."

Hundreds of transgender people and supporters from throughout New England and beyond are expected to attend the event. One of the rally speakers will be Leslie Feinberg, a pioneering transgender activist and the author of a number of influential books, including *Stone Butch Blues*, *Transgender Warriors*, and *Drag King Dreams*. Other speakers and entertainers will be announced in the next few months.

### More Jan. & Feb. Calendar of Events from page 16

(MA) January 2: BSCC POTLUCK DINNER; 7:00 p.m.; Unitarian-Universalist Church; 175 Wendell Avenue, Pittsfield, MA. Open to the GLBTQI community and friends. Bring a main dish, salad, veggie or dessert to share. Beverages provided. PLEASE NOTE: We now have a sign-up sheet for volunteers to help set up, host (welcome newcomers), serve and clean up after the potluck.

(MA) January 13: "TRANSCEND" MEETING; 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.; South Congregational Church, Pittsfield, MA. Monthly support/social group meeting for the Trans community. Sponsored by BSCC. FMI call the Infoline: 413-822-7268 (new number!).

(MA) January 19: HIKE/CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING, SNOWSHOE TREK; Meet at noon at the Allendale Parking Lot, Pittsfield, MA for carpooling to the Dorothy Wright Sanctuary in Peru.

All are welcome.

(MA) February 5: BSCC POTLUCK DINNER; 7:00 p.m.; Unitarian-Universalist Church; 175 Wendell Avenue, Pittsfield, MA. Open to the GLBTQI community and friends. Bring a main dish, salad, veggie or dessert to share. Beverages provided. Again, volunteers are needed to set up, host, serve and clean up. See Jan. 2 for details.

(MA) February 10: "TRANSCEND" MEETING; 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.; South Congregational Church, Pittsfield, MA. Monthly support/social group meeting for the Trans community. Sponsored by BSCC. FMI call the Infoline: 413-822-7268 (new number!).

(MA) February 23: HIKE. Noon; Meet at back of Price Chopper parking lot in Lee and car pool to hike in Monterey. Dress for the weather and conditions. All are welcome.



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Advertising/Email Design  
Leave Message- 860-216-1351

Looking for LOVE? Turn to the PERSONALS on page 23

### CT Neighborhood Organizations

**AIDS Testing:** www.guardianhealth.org

**Gay Father's Group:** (203) 938-2881Hartford  
**Community Center:** (860) 724-5542CT Freedom to **Mary Coalition:** (203) 791-9553Love Makes a **Family:** www.inf-ct.org (860) 525-7777Married **Lesbian Support Group:** tricolor@aol.com (203) 430-9227

**Married Men's Bisexual Support Group of Hartford:** (860)264-5605Metropolitan Community **Church of New Haven:** (203) 397-2312New Haven **Gay & Lesbian Center:** www.nhglcc.org (203) 387-2252

**PFLAG Danbury:** www.pflag.org; (203) 797-4743Connecticut's Kids: (203) 256-8414

**Senior Lesbians Happily at Play (SLAPHAPS):** Kathy (203) 929-8113

**True Colors CT:** www.ourtruecolors.org; (888) 565-5551National

**Runaway Switchboard:** (773) 880-9860Connecticut **Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF):** 135 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105 - 860-247.6090 **Info. and Referral program:** (800) 479-2949 or Greater Hartford 524-0601 - Statewide women's rights organization working to end discrimination and hate crimes; provides free legal information and referral to the LGBT community.

**XX Club (Twenty Club):** Rev. Cannon Jones - 45 Church Street Hartford, CT 06141-0387 - (860)646-8651 - Provides knowledgeable info., and ongoing peer support to transsexuals. 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month, 2-5 p.m.  
**connecticut View (ctView):** A Transgender social and support club, for the TV, TG, TS, CD, both male and female. Monthly meeting in New Haven as well as e-membership, and more. A no dues club, with all the frills; www.transgender.org/ctv/

Meet new friends in CT, have a great time, see page 24

THE HARTFORD GAY AND LESBIAN HEALTH COLLECTIVE PRESENTS



**Saturday, February 9, 2008 • 7:30pm**

Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill • 100 Capital Boulevard • Rocky Hill, CT  
Admission: \$20.00



**Cocktail Hour:** 6:30 - 7:30pm  
Cash Bar & Concessions (available all evening)

**HGLHC**  
Hartford Gay & Lesbian  
Health Collective  
Be well. Be yourself.

Seating is limited to 250 people. Reservations required to guarantee a seat.  
Tables reserved for parties of 10 or more only.  
Call HGLHC at 860-278-4163 to reserve your seat.

**Over \$500 in cash and prizes!**

All proceeds benefit The Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective.  
For more information or directions call 860-278-4163 or visit www.hglhc.org

## ORReviews

# Struggles continue: From the closet to the courts

By: Marcia M. Gallo, Ph.D./TRT Special

Activist, educator, writer, public relations professional—former Daughters of Bilitis leader Ruth Simpson has packed a lot of living into the last four decades, and she gives us the benefit of her experiences and insights in *From the Closet to the Courts*, 30th Anniversary Edition (Take RootMedia 2007).

First published in 1977 by The Viking Press, Simpson's updated first-person account of "The Lesbian Transition" from the late 1960s through the 1970s is bracketed and embraced by commentary showing its continuing relevance. Heralded both by past path-breaking lesbian and feminist leaders Ti-Grace Atkinson, Bella Abzug and Kate

and she is unsparing in her criticism of any person or institution whom she believes holds any of us "minorities" — sexual nonconformists, women, people of color, immigrants, civil rights and peace activists—back.

"How do we fight the battles we must wage against the burgeoning tide of right-wing nuttiness, the apathy and seeming disinterest of political moderates, and the un-invigorated

strategies changed over time from its inception as a small secret club in San Francisco in 1955 to its growth as a national lesbian rights organization with more than a dozen chapters throughout the U.S. by the late 1960s. DOB New York, founded by legendary gay rights activist Barbara Gittings along with Marion Glass in 1958, usually was one of the most action-oriented of DOB's local groups during

As a homosexual I am obligated to my own people; as a woman I am responsible to feminist principles; as a human being I am dedicated to the basic right of human dignity.

—Ruth Simpson, Author, *From the Closet to the Courts*

## Gay Best Sellers\*

1. A Very Serious Person
2. East Side Story
3. Boy Crush
4. Naked Boys Singing!
5. Surveillance 24/7
6. Bam Bam & Celeste
7. Rock Haven
8. Outing Riley
9. The Bubble
10. Boys Love

\* By wolfevideo.com

complacency of way too many 'others?' she asks. Her response, in part, is central to our LGBT movement, now as in the past: "... what works best is never accepting others' negative image of you and rather, with pride and minority smarts, show people what a good person you are." But that's not all. Simpson has never been one to rely solely on individual personal responses to institutional and political issues.

As leader of the New York Daughters of Bilitis (DOB), she helped mobilize the homophile-era women's social and educational network during the fiery days of lesbian and gay militancy in the early 1970s. Although DOB always saw its mission as inclusive of social change, its tactics and

its two decades of lesbian organizing; under Simpson's leadership, however, DOB New York became part of the upsurge of street actions, protests, and media confrontations that followed the queer Stonewall Inn anti-police riots in Greenwich Village in June, 1969.

Her book—a primer on lesbianism, emphasizing the many myths masquerading as homophobic "facts" that surround female same-sex love—came at a time when women who loved other women—or thought they might—had very few reliable, reaffirming sources of information available to them. Lesbian activists' first-person accounts were rarer still; founding Daughters Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon had written *Lesbian/Woman* in 1972, and New York DOB leader Kay (Tobin) Lahusen edited *The Gay Crusaders* with Randy Wicker the same year. Both of these works wove personal "coming-out" stories and tales of early gay movement organizing into a narrative of lesbian and gay—and, for Martin and Lyon, feminist liberation.

Five years later, despite the huge increase by 1977 in lesbian publications, books like *From the Closet to the Courts* were still unique. In addition to telling her own story, Simpson was courageous in publishing a scathing critique of societal bigotry against gay people and women that extended to racial and ethnic minorities. She also did not hesitate to expose government interference—from name-and-badge-number accounts of harassment on the part of the New York Police Department to disruptive techniques that were traced to the highest levels of the F.B.I. and other federal agencies. Her political sensibility is that of a lifelong activist with a worldview expanded by decades of struggles with the powers-that-be: "(W)hen DOB began to transform from a social gathering place into a politically active organization, it became the target of intensified harassment, especially when it organized activity in conjunction with other groups," she observes; she then applies this essential lesson to progressive political activism in general.

"As a homosexual I am obligated to my own people; as a woman I am responsible to feminist principles; as a human being I am dedicated to the basic right of human dignity," she began her book in 1977. In 2007, she concludes, "(A)s was true more than thirty years ago, achieving dignity and justice is still up to us. So let's do it." I can only hope that, for decades more, Ruth Simpson will be fighting the good fight—on as many fronts as necessary—and spurring us all onward.

\* Marcia M. Gallo, Ph.D. is the author of *Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement* (Carroll and Graf, 2006), and an Assistant Professor of History, Lehman College, Bronx NY.



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## First openly gay president of Black Journalists group dies

NEW YORK (AP)—Thomas Morgan III, the first openly gay president of the National Association of Black Journalists and a long-time newsman at The New York Times, has died. He was 56.

The Brooklyn resident died early Monday morning, possibly of a heart attack, while visiting the family of his partner, Thomas Ciano, in Southampton, Mass., Ciano said Wednesday.

"He was a man of many different qualities and talents," Ciano said. "He cared a lot about educating young journalists and the prevention of AIDS. Working to house and care for homeless people. Pottery. Gardening. Politics. Those were his passions."

Morgan was NABJ's president from 1989 to 1991. Even though he won the election handily, it was somewhat heated, according to a 2004 profile of Morgan on the NABJ's Web site.

"It was painful," Morgan recalled. "I strug-

gled with how to represent NABJ without embarrassing the organization but while also being true to myself. I was elected as a black journalist, not a gay one."

After graduating from the University of Missouri and completing his service with the U.S. Air Force in 1975, Morgan worked at The Miami Herald and The Washington Post.

He then joined the Times, where he rose to assistant metro editor and also received a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard University in 1989.

He retired from the newspaper in 1994, "largely to concentrate on his personal fight against AIDS," according to the profile.

"Tom was a man of passion and compassion," NABJ President Barbara Ciara said on her organization's Web site. "He had the ability to walk into a room divided and help those who held opposing viewpoints find common ground. His loss is not only a personal one for me, but a great loss for NABJ."

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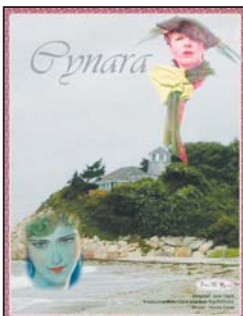
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## Holiday Open House Highlights



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### LESBIAN ROMANCE SEEKS FUNDERS

FilmMcQueen ([www.filmmcqueen.com](http://www.filmmcqueen.com))  
is developing a period lesbian film,  
"Cynara," written by Nicole Conn  
("Claire of the Moon," "Little Man")

People can tend to dislike or fear what they don't know  
or understand. We hope, that by making a traditional love  
story with lesbian characters we can, through identifiable  
images, change straight perceptions of lgbt love.

We are seeking financing for the period romance "Cynara,"  
which we plan to shoot in Woods Hole, MA and budgeted  
at \$3M. We are looking for 20 increments of \$150,000

Contact: Jane Clark, director/producer  
[janec@filmmcqueen.com](mailto:janec@filmmcqueen.com)

Jane recently screened her new short, "The Touch," at NIFF  
You can check out a trailer of that film at  
[www.youtube.com/filmmcqueen](http://www.youtube.com/filmmcqueen) or  
[www.myspace.com/reneeviv](http://www.myspace.com/reneeviv)

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## QueerWood

# Deep Inside Hollywood: New projects under way



By: Romeo San Vicente\*

## Sarah Jessica Parker Thinks Smart

Anyone unfamiliar with the modern phenomenon that is gay male worship of Sarah Jessica Parker need only check out the queer blogs' frenzied chatter about the impending *Sex and the City* movie or the squealing, tear-filled reception the actor received when she popped in unexpectedly as guest judge on Bravo's *Project Runway*. It's safe to say that her comings and goings are must-see media events for lots of gay guys. And her fans will have more reasons to squeal when she stars in another upcoming feature, *Smart People*. Due to premiere at January's Sundance Film Festival, the film stars Dennis Quaid as a widowed professor who finds new love with Parker and reunites with an adopted brother, played by Thomas Haden Church (*Sideways*). Ellen Page (*Juno*) co-stars as Quaid's daughter. Smart Parker fans won't have long to wait for the 2008 release.

## Butler Moves to Chronic Town

Dan Butler was always a welcome sight on episodes of *Frasier*. The gay actor came out



SARAH JESSICA PARKER

professionally back in the 1990's when it was still an iffy career move. That he played it super-straight as "Bulldog" on that show was an even cooler move. Since *Frasier*, the actor's been seen in guest spots on other

shows (*House*, *Monk*), but will renegotiate his image in the dark indie comedy *Chronic Town*. Reported to be a character study (with a title appropriated from an R.E.M. album) about a lonely cab driver in Fairbanks, Alaska, the film features Butler in a supporting role as a character named Blow Job. What this all means, exactly, is anyone's guess, but it certainly can't make a guy's life easy to have that name on his driver's license. The film debuts at Sundance in January with a theatrical release to follow.

## La Bruce Sees Dead People

Look up "iconoclast" in the dictionary and you might just find a photo of bad-boy Canadian director Bruce La Bruce. Coming along at the time of the rise of the so-called "New Queer Cinema" in the early 1990's, La Bruce was considered an outsider even from that movement. His hilarious and deliberately raw, profane films (*Super 8 1/2*, *Hustler White*, *Raspberry Reich*) guaranteed him notoriety and gave film geeks plenty to discuss, but also placed him squarely outside the mainstream. That's a place he seems to revel in as he moves back and forth between art films and gay pornography, often overlapping the two genres. The evidence? His latest project, *Otto: Up With Dead People*, is about a gay zombie roaming the land of the living in search of

love. No word on how explicitly sexual this one will be, but "very" seems a likely possibility.

## Shades of Rex Lee

As Lloyd, Jeremy Piven's assistant on *Entourage*, gay actor Rex Lee has carved out a hilarious niche for himself. His character stuck around and gained a higher profile thanks to Lee's wicked comic timing and popularity with fans. Soon, though, he'll jump from the small to the big screen, appearing in the independent feature *Shades of Ray*. A seriocomic romance, *Shades* stars Chuck main man Zachary Levi as Ray, a mixed-race, American-born son of a Pakistani father and Caucasian mother. As his parents separate and his father moves in with him, Ray must deal with his own romantic and racial issues. Sounds heartfelt and sincere, but Romeo's guessing that Lee's job will be to pop up from time to time with just the right punchline for an awkward moment. As HBO audiences know, he's an expert at that.

\*Romeo San Vicente's own *entourage* is hotter than anything on TV. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

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## Campaign from Page 12

tax-filing requirement for older workers making under \$50,000. A mortgage-interest credit could be used by lower-income homeowners who do not take the mortgage interest deduction because they do not itemize their taxes. Raise corporate taxes and the top rate on capital gains and dividends to pay for the cuts. \_Richardson: Has supported cuts in income and capital gains taxes as governor.

REPUBLICANS would generally extend Bush's tax cuts, which could cost \$2.3 trillion

to keep in place until 2017. Additionally: \_Giuliani: Cut corporate tax rate to 25 percent from 35 percent, eliminate estate tax. Hold the line on marginal tax rates or reduce them, and establish a permanent child tax credit. Index the alternative minimum tax to inflation. Income tax deduction of

\$7,500 per taxpayer to defray health insurance costs. Seek spending caps of 5 percent or more on civilian agencies; slash bureaucracy by rehiring only half the number of employees who retire.

\_McCain: Opposed some of Bush's tax cuts because they were not wedded to spending cuts, but now says the tax cuts should be made permanent. Eliminate alternative minimum tax.

\_Huckabee: Replace system of taxing income and investment with 23 percent national sales tax on goods and services, cushioned for lower-income people and with rebates for essential purchases.

\_Romney: Tax breaks to those earning less than \$200,000, including eliminating capital gains, interest and dividend taxes for most. Estimated cost of \$32 billion a year to be paid in part by cutting growth of federal spending. Eliminate estate tax.

\_Thompson: Let people choose between current system or one with flat rate of 10 percent on first \$50,000 of individual income or \$100,000 of joint income, and 25 percent on income above those amounts. Exempt family of four from tax on first \$39,000 of income, and more than double standard deduction. The simplified option would contain no other tax credits or deductions, and would retain 15 percent tax rate on capital gains. Also, end the estate tax and cut the top corporate tax rate to no more than 27 percent from 35 percent.

## Lesbian Best Sellers\*

1. The Gymnast
2. When Night is Falling
3. She Likes Girls 2
4. Loving Annabelle
5. The L Word: Season 4
6. Mango Kiss
7. Personal Best
8. Desert Hearts 2-Disc
9. For The Bible Tells Me So
10. Sonja

\*By wolvievideo.com

Happy New Year from our TRT family to yours!



## East Coast FTM Group FAQs

In a recent interview with Bet Power, founder of the East Coast FTM Group, he speaks out about what it means to be FTM, the legacy of support groups for the transgender population and the need that such a group fulfills.

### Q. What is ECFTMG?

A. ECFTMG is a free, peer support group since 1992 for the full spectrum of masculine-identified, female-born persons: female-to-male transgender, transsexuals, cross-dressers, gender-queers, dual gendered, gender blended, questioning, and our significant others. We are all-inclusive, safe, confidential, and nonjudgmental. We respect the right of each of us to decide our individual path, whatever that may be. We don't believe that there is any one "right way" to move forward and live happily; rather, our diverse situations can be joined together in united community. It is this community that we build and for this community that we exist.

### Q. Why did you start ECFTMG?

A. Prior to 1983, I had lived for a decade as a stone butch in the lesbian community, all the while knowing I felt like a man inside. In 1983, I received from Louis Graydon Sullivan in the mail his groundbreaking booklet, Information for the Female-to-Male Crossdresser and Transsexual. Lou had sent it to the Sexual Minorities Archives with a note saying that perhaps some visitors to the Archives would like to read the information. I read the booklet in a few hours, then called Lou, and soon flew out to San Francisco to meet him. Lou Sullivan was the first female-to-male transsexual I had ever met. Meeting him told me that I wasn't the only one on the planet. Lou also was the father of the FTM community in the U.S. and eventually internationally, with his formation of his FTM support group in SF in the early 1980s.

Lou and I had a friendship through correspondence and phone calls after that, from 1984 until his death from AIDS in 1991. Before he died, Lou asked me if I would continue his FTM group, something I couldn't do since I had a career in the Boston area and a relationship there, too. Leadership of Lou's FTM group was taken on by Jamison Green and continues to grow to this day as FTM International. But upon Lou's death, I felt alone again, not knowing any other FTMs in my local area. I needed a place where I could regularly meet and talk with guys just like me.

So, in early 1992, I started ECFTMG, and we originally alternated the meeting between Watertown, MA (Boston area) and Northampton, MA. Eventually, meetings continued to be held only in my home (which also



BET POWER

houses the Sexual Minorities Archives) in Northampton, MA. ECFTMG was the very first support group solely for female-to-male transgender [people] on the east coast.

In the past 15 years, ECFTMG has inspired the formation of many other support groups and organizations for FTMs throughout MA, VT, NH, NY, and CT.

### Q. Is ECFTMG therapy and is there a fee to participate?

A. No, it is a confidential peer support group focused around a topic discussion and there is no charge.

### Q. Is ECFTMG open to SOFFAs (significant others, family, friends, and allies of FTMs)?

A. Yes, most meetings – except when specified for FTMs only – are open to SOFFAs. And male to females (MTF's) are welcome to meetings except those for FTM's only.

### Q. Are FTM's under 18 permitted to attend meetings?

A. Yes, if they have a signed permission letter from a parent or legal guardian and should be accompanied by an adult.

### Q. Besides the monthly ECFTMG meetings, is the organization involved in the trans community in other ways?

A. Yes, ECFTMG frequently sponsors or co-sponsors activism and events in the trans community, including the annual Transgender Day of Remembrance and the upcoming New England Transgender Pride March & Rally.

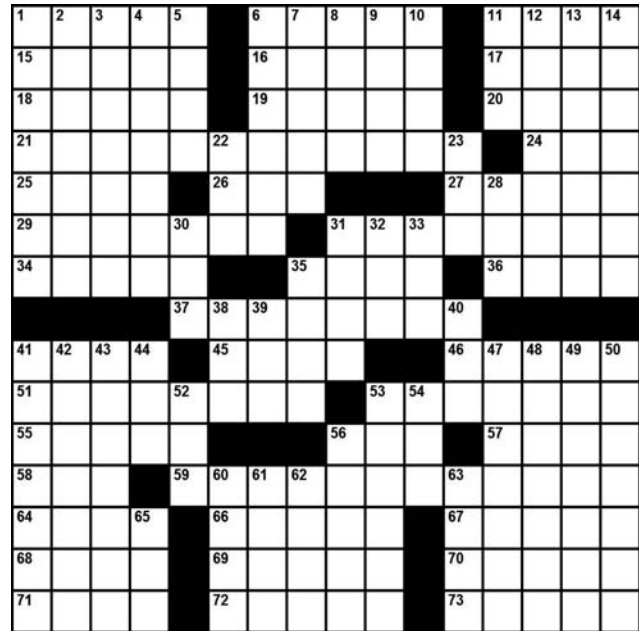
Also, after the support group meets, people who want to continue to talk and network with each other, or form friendships, go out to dinner or make plans to meet.

I also spend a good deal of time sending out news, announcements, and information about events of interest to the trans community through the ECFTMG email listserve. In addition, I frequently answer questions that come to me by email and phone about local area practitioners and resources for transgressors.

We are currently working on building a website for ECFTMG, which will be located at [www.ecftm.org](http://www.ecftm.org) (it is under construction and not yet live). The website will provide information about the monthly ECFTMG meetings, regional events and announcements of interest to the trans community, links to resources, and a New England transgender

See East Coast on p. 22

## Q Puzzle: "The Golden Rule"



### Across

- 1 *Spartacus* and others
- 6 Checks for STDs
- 11 Wine region of Michelangelo's land
- 15 Porn director Chi Chi
- 16 *Veronica's Closet* star
- 17 Ian McKellen and Elton John
- 18 Like an ACT UP protester
- 19 They have tricky tongues
- 20 Sphincter opening?
- 21 With 31-Across, Jane Rule novel
- 24 Gardner of *Show Boat*
- 25 One-time Arthur Ashe rival Nastase
- 26 Expected to come soon
- 27 Moth tail?
- 29 Where they say "Ooh! Long!"
- 31 See 21-Across
- 34 Gaydar, e.g.
- 35 Direction in a James Beard cookbook
- 36 Barrie's Wendy, e.g.
- 37 With 51—Across, Jane Rule novel
- 41 They're good for tricks
- 45 Tin Woodman's concern
- 46 Become husband and husband on the fly
- 51 See 37—Across
- 53 Novelist Peter
- 55 King in *Jesus Christ Superstar*
- 56 Some sex-toy batteries
- 57 Lie alongside
- 58 Non-Judy Garland
- 59 Jane Rule novel
- 64 Eater of forbidden fruit, and others
- 66 Your place or mine
- 67 Language that may be vulgar
- 68 New Age composer John
- 69 Bert's longtime companion
- 70 One who often screws actors
- 71 Ziegfeld Follies costume designer
- 72 Gay rodeo target
- 73 Come together

### Down

- 1 What a pair of drawers does
- 2 One who has come out
- 3 Tongue of Tehran
- 4 Circumcision performers, e.g.
- 5 One who looks into crystal balls
- 6 Powder for bottoms
- 7 Top
- 8 Side at Hamburger Mary's
- 9 Hatcher of *Desperate Housewives*
- 10 Part of DOS (abbr.)
- 11 Nutty \_\_\_ fruitcake
- 12 Singing Nancy
- 13 Commits a foul a la Sue Wicks
- 14 Word after Virgin
- 22 *Much* \_\_\_ *About Nothing*
- 23 Cut
- 28 ISP invested in PlanetOut Partners
- 30 Ref. for Lytton Strachey
- 31 Legal matter
- 32 Single, to Glenn Burke
- 33 "Can't Get It Out of My Head" rock gp.
- 35 Rupert Everett's *The Next \_\_\_ Thing*
- 38 Bill written by Alice Paul
- 39 Kerouac's *Big* \_\_\_
- 40 Butch's mate
- 41 Button or Bean
- 42 *The Wapshot Chronicle* author
- 43 Most like a Kevin Williamson movie
- 44 *The L Word* network
- 47 Greenery
- 48 Uranus, to the sun
- 49 Come down hard
- 50 Threesome of England, France, and Russia
- 52 Childcare writer LeShan
- 53 *One of Ours* novelist Willa
- 54 It hangs from your butt
- 56 Clarinet-blower Shaw
- 60 Some escorts want them up front
- 61 Pastry with fruit, perhaps
- 62 Sea eagle
- 63 Cowboy actor Jack
- 65 Cho's *Pink as the Day \_\_\_ Was Born*

Solution of Puzzle on Page 22



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## Queer Voices from NY

## Lesbian Notions: Moving Beyond 2007's Top Stories



By: Libby Post\*

As a member of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists' Association, I got to vote on the top LGBT stories of 2007.

The guys over at CBS News on LOGO asked us our opinions, compiled the info, and then released their findings on December 8 during their "2007 Year in Review" special report.

From a purely news point of view - what got the most play on broadcast, the most column inches in print, the most pixels on blogs - the top 10 stories weren't that surprising. A quick run-down reads like this:

10. Gay Pride violence
9. Susan Stanton fired from her job as city manager of Largo, Fla., after transitioning from a male to a female
8. Elizabeth Edwards breaks with husband John and supports same-sex marriage
7. Jerry Sanders, San Diego's Republican mayor, tearfully comes out in favor of our marriage rights - seems his daughter is a dyke

**Couch from Page 2**

man tows the party line against gays and lesbians. It's frightening to think he could be doing this well, and may go on to clench the nomination.

While running for US Senate in 1992, Huckabee wrote in an Associated Press questionnaire: "I feel homosexuality is an aberrant, unnatural, and sinful lifestyle, and we now know it can pose a dangerous public health risk."

Just being gay poses a public health threat? Oh no, Mr. Huckabee was referring to his more personal feelings about people with AIDS. He said: "If the federal government is truly serious about doing something with the AIDS virus, we need to take steps that would isolate the carriers of this plague."

And, just in case you didn't get the full sentiment expressed in the abovementioned quotes, he goes on to complain about the money being spent on AIDS research as compared to other diseases, like cancer and heart disease. He said, "In light of the extraordinary funds already being given for AIDS research, it does not seem that additional federal spending can be justified. An alternative would be to request that multimillionaire celebrities, such as Elizabeth Taylor, Madonna and others who are pushing for more AIDS funding be encouraged to give out of their own personal treasuries increased amounts for AIDS research."

Yeah, Liz Taylor and Madonna. Let the gays find their own money. Because it's not like the GLBT community is made up of first-tier Americans, right?

It's this kind of extreme prejudice that should make people like Mike Huckabee, and the party that accepts him, frightening and dangerous. Perhaps we should quarantine people who think like this. Just kidding.

And what I find most disturbing is this

6. The \_Grey's Anatomy\_ drama-rama
5. Gays are nonexistent in Iran, according to the country's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
4. We're declared immoral by Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman General Peter Pace (he's now the former Joint Chief - although he didn't step down because of furor around his remarks)
3. The LOGO presidential forum
2. ENDA drama-rama-rama-rama
1. Larry Craig's toe-tapping

Looking at this list, most are stories that impacted us negatively, not stories that really tell what we as a community are doing to move ahead.

The ENDA catastrophe showed just how fractured our activist community really is. The Human Rights Campaign was painted as a big, bad liar, while 350 or so other LGBT groups banded together to kill legislation that didn't include the transgender community. Various polls have shown we're all over the map on this one - some of us want to wait until the political climate is right for trans inclusion, some say to pass the legislation now.

split in the psyche of America. As a country, we have become more and more fragmented, forgetting the very essence of what America is and has always supposedly been. Liberty and justice for all. All men created equal. Give us your poor, your huddled masses. Freedom from tyranny. A refuge for all those in need.

We are all one people. Immigrants, and those who have descended from immigrants; that would be practically all of us.

We have a responsibility to become politically active, to achieve the goals the Framers of the Constitution set up for us.

If you're interested in a politician who cares about the Constitution, check out RonPaul.com. Yeah he's a republican. And he's not a supporter of gay marriage. But he stands firm on matters that protect us all from fanaticism and fascism.

And ultimately, if we don't have the Constitution, this most precious document, to protect us, we won't be able to discuss any social issues we care about in the future. Gay concerns or not. "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"? Won't matter. Gay marriage? Won't matter. ENDA? Won't matter.

So, if you haven't bothered to study the positions of the people running for President of the United States yet, I say shame on you. We're at war, people - not overseas, not over oil or weapons of mass destruction. America is struggling for its identity and the future depends on us. Every single one of us.

Get involved. Get educated. And then, get out and vote.

\* Suzan Ambrose can be heard on her radio program, *The Naked Truth*, every Monday evening at 8 pm on 103.3 FM, or streaming on the web at [www.valleyfreeradio.org](http://www.valleyfreeradio.org). For more of Suz's thoughts, check out her website at: [www.nakedtruthshow.com](http://www.nakedtruthshow.com)

What all this really said to me was that those 350 groups now need to step up to the plate and educate, educate, educate the public and the politicians on trans issues. Now, if that really happened next year, it would be a top story for 2008.

The LOGO presidential forum gave us just a taste of what is to come. For me, the big story is how early the race started and how fatigued voters may be when we actually get to November 4, 2008. There's no clear radical Christian right candidate. The GOP seems to be in disarray. If we, as a community, keep our priorities straight (no pun intended) and work for whomever the Democratic nominee is, we're bound to elect the next president of the United States.

We did it in 1992 when Bill Clinton came into office. We can do it again in 2008. Now, I'm no Pollyanna. I know the Dems aren't perfect. The failure of the Matthew Shepard Act is indicative of how fragile their majority in both houses really is. So, one of our top stories in 2008 should be the work we did as a community to widen that majority.

Just imagine the stories that will be written when a Democratic president comes into office and our legislation is passed and signed into law.

Larry Craig's toe-tapping has once again painted the community as just a bunch of sex-focused guys who would do it anywhere just to get off. Not the kind of picture I want for our community, and not the kind of picture that reflects the diversity of who we are - and that many of us just want a comfortable life with the person we love.

The Williams Institute at UCLA, the think tank that is helping to write the real story about the LGBT community, has taken a good look at U.S. Census data and found that the

777,000 same-sex couples living together in the United States are really no different from the country's millions of married, straight couples. We're demographically and geographically diverse, just like they are. Other similarities? Both types of couples are actively involved in the economy, have similar economic resources, and are raising children.

When the media start focusing on the reality of our lives rather than focusing on how we're different, the story of who we are will finally be written. But the big story will come when there's no story at all - when we will be considered equal to heterosexuals in all facets of our lives, and when being lesbian or gay is a nonstory.

I don't know about you, but that's the story I'm waiting to read.

\* Libby Post is the founding chair of the Empire State Pride Agenda and a political commentator on public radio, on the Web, and in print media. She can be reached care of this publication or at [LesbianNotions@qsyndicate.com](mailto:LesbianNotions@qsyndicate.com).

**East Coast from p. 21**

calendar of events and organizational meetings.

All of this volunteer work helps to build the transgender community and a transgender rights movement that will hopefully become a strong force for positive change in the near future.

Q. How can someone contact ECFTMG to learn more, come to a meeting, or get involved?

A. They may email me at [betpower@yahoo.com](mailto:betpower@yahoo.com) or call me at 413-584-7616.

\* Bet Power is the Director and Curator of the Sexual Minorities Archives, a national collection of LGBT literature, history, and art since 1974, located in Northampton, MA. He is also the founder of the East Coast FTM Group, monthly peer support for the full spectrum of masculine persons in the transgender community. Bet moved to the Pioneer Valley from Chicago, IL in 1979 after earning a Master of Arts degree in Socio-Cultural Processes. A published writer, Bet has given presentations about transgender issues to groups of faculty, staff, and students at Hampshire College, University of Massachusetts/Amherst, Smith College, Mt. Holyoke College, and the University of Connecticut/Storrs, and has spoken about local LGBT history at the Historic Northampton Museum. Bet is a female-to-male transsexual who has chosen not to medically transition.

**Q Puzzle Solution from P. 21**

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# GLBT Athletics: GLAF supports acceptance for all



By: Dan Woog\*

**T**his fall, Mac Chisaboon fielded an anguished e-mail sent to the Gay & Lesbian Athletics Foundation (www.glaf.org). As founder of the organization, which promotes the visibility and acceptance of GLBT athletes at the professional, amateur, and recreational levels, he was used to queries from closeted players. But this was different.

It came from the father of a gay rower. His 17-year-old son was applying to college, and the man wanted to know how he could help. He was very supportive of his son; he recognized that whether the young man was out to his teammates or not was a personal decision. But he wanted to make sure that wherever his son went, the environment would be safe and he could be himself.

Chisaboon—a rower himself—forwarded the email to GLAF's advisory board. That eclectic group included activists, professors, triathletes, an HIV-positive gymnast, Gay Games organizers, a wrestler, swimmers, an equestrian, tennis players, football players, administrators, extreme sports competitors, skiers, business executives, and even a former Major League umpire. (Full disclosure: It also includes me.)

Advisory board members leaped to respond. A Brown University graduate contacted a former fraternity brother about his alma mater's program. He told the rower's father that Brown was "almost assuredly" welcoming; as far back as the early 1970s, there were gay rowers, even a gay assistant coach. Someone else offered to call college coaches directly. Other respondents passed along names of gay rowers and coaches for the father and son to contact themselves.

To Chisaboon, the quick, insightful replies were "a good example of how we can leverage the great talent, the years of personal

experience, that gay athletes have, in order to help others."

That help was on display when former National Basketball Association player Tim Hardaway spoke derisively of John Amaechi's coming-out. GLAF fired back with a press release. NBA commissioner David Stein's decision to bar Hardaway from participation in All-Star Weekend activities was, GLAF said, "an appropriate 'first step' toward ridding the league of such inexcusable ignorance within its ranks." However, GLAF advised, "the NBA and others should actively speak up against such overt homophobia at every opportunity, whether it occurs in an interview, in the locker room, or on the court."

GLAF continued: "We often look to sports stars as heroes and role models, particularly when they have overcome substantial barriers to their success. GLAF hopes that today's youth can see beyond Hardaway's hateful rhetoric and instead make sport a better meritocracy where we all can play according to one's ability, regardless of other factors. This, after all, is the very thing we love about sport."

Chisaboon notes that "sports has huge ramifications on how people - including youths - see the world. If GLAF can utilize our knowledge base, we can help become a mechanism of social change."

It's taken eight years for Chisaboon to develop that mechanism. In 1999, as an MBA candidate at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he joined students from Harvard and Boston Universities to form the Boston Bay Blades, a gay and lesbian rowing group. As the Blades met GLBT squash players, tennis players, flag football players, and bowlers, they formed PrideSports Boston, an umbrella group.

Around that time, a panel discussion at Harvard on the topic of gay sports drew a packed house. Chisaboon and others decided to build on the energy created by organizing a New England-wide group. Their board soon mushroomed beyond the region. By 2003, when they hosted their first conference at MIT, GLAF had become a national organiza-



MAC CHISABOON

tion. A second event was held a year later. In the summer of 2006, GLAF sponsored panels at the Outgames in Montreal and at Chicago's Gay Games.

GLAF also ran a train-the-trainer session at

a conference on counseling athletes, at Springfield College.

That's a lot of work for a group run entirely by volunteers. GLAF has no directors, no staff, and no fund-raising. "We're strictly an educational organization," Chisaboon says. "It's all about giving athletes an opportunity to network and connect with each other."

Recently, a basketball player e-mailed Chisaboon. She wanted a job in the gay sports world. He told her that no such position is available yet - but one might be in the future, and it could be with GLAF. "She has the mindset and experience to help take us to the next level," Chisaboon says.

A real estate developer and broker and former consultant to the Young Presidents' Organization, Chisaboon knows his way around a company boardroom. "Corporations are open to sponsorship," he insists. "They know the importance of aligning themselves with something like this." Something, that is, that reaches not only GLBT athletes, but folks like the father of a 17-year-old rower who wants to be sure that, in college, his gay son can be himself.

\* 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](http://www.danwoog.com). He can be reached care of this publication or at [OutField@qsyndicate.com](mailto:OutField@qsyndicate.com).

## PERSONALS

### 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 [dolphin-stargazer@yahoo.com](mailto:dolphin-stargazer@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](mailto:Treesyster@aol.com)

**Hey, just checking it out** - I am new to boston and looking to meet some friends who like to have fun!

Maybe more. Contact: Ashley at [natwonder@gmail.com](mailto:natwonder@gmail.com)

### Men 4 Men

GWM, 37, seeks companionship in the Northampton area. Contact: Martin at 413-527-1533.

**Hey, 18 yo looking** for a man in Western MA, for romantic relationship... under 20 ONLY. Thanks. Contact: Josh at [PrynceShybo@gmail.com](mailto:PrynceShybo@gmail.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](mailto:honour_huston@hotmail.com) or call

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**Did you know that ...** According to Lambda Legal, the New York State Department of Civil Service (DCS) will respect out-of-state marriages of same-sex couples for the purposes of extending spousal insurance benefits to current and retired state and local government employees. All New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) Participating Agencies and Employers, including local government agencies and public authorities around the state, must provide benefits to same-sex spouses of employees who were validly married in places like Canada or Massachusetts

FMI: [www.lambdalegal.org/our-work/states/new-york.html](http://www.lambdalegal.org/our-work/states/new-york.html)

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