

The Rainbow Times

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

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FREE!

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Opinions

Dad's story: In loving memory

By: Nicole Lashomb*TRT Editor-in-Chief

[This issue of The Rainbow Times is dedicated to the memory of Joseph E. Lashomb, my father, who recently lost his courageous battle to cancer, but whose spirit continues to guide and inspire my life.]

Life is too short; at times it is expected and sometimes, unexpected. Regardless of the nature or anticipation of the inevitable, the death of a loved one, the anguish that it causes is not something one can ever truly prepare for or embrace when that final moment comes. Recently, I found myself in that very predicament.

My father, whom I adored, lost his courageous, noble and valiant battle to perhaps one of the cruelest culprits of all—cancer. When he was diagnosed as having Stage 4 lung cancer this past January, realistically, I knew the odds and what he was up against in this fight. Although he insistently stated that he would “beat” this incurable and devastating disease, I knew it would take a miracle for him to conquer it. We all prayed for that miracle but as we stood in solidarity with him, the spiraling

effect of his terminal illness left us all feeling defeated.

Once he lost his brave battle, I began to ponder that perhaps we indeed had witnessed several miracles, such as the miracle of his life with an undying spirit and immeasurable love for us all. No matter how difficult the road became, he did not grumble. No matter how much pain he was in, he absorbed it with grace. No matter how tired he was, he wanted to stay awake, for it was more important for him to talk and share with others than to rest his ailed body.

Throughout the past several years, before his cancer diagnosis, my father evolved into an enlightened man who understood complex concepts at a profound level. One day in his living room we discussed my sexuality and my marriage to the woman I adore. To be truthful, I didn't know much about his experiences with the gay community, other than myself. He began describing friendships that he had had with members of the gay community, members that he had worked with and other friendships he had developed through the years.

See Dad on Page 13

C'mon Out – Just Ask! Advice column

By: Tetty Gorfine*

I have a daughter 16 from a marriage to my husband. My husband and I are divorced and I came out 3 years ago. Six months ago I fell in love with a woman. I haven't told my daughter yet. We have been very close and not telling her is putting a strain on me now. I know I must tell her but I'm afraid of her reaction. Do you have any advice for me?

Worried, Jess



TETTY GORFINE

time, a person's love for their parent wins out and that significant person will accept and come to terms with who they are.

Tell your daughter that you have been feeling strain in your relationship because you've had to keep something important from her. Tell her that you are telling her this because honesty and being close to her is so important to you. Tell her that she has been and will always be special to you.

Reach out to your friends Jess and get support. The more support and encouragement we have in these types of situations the stronger we feel.

The best to you and your daughter Jess.

Tetty

Dr. Tetty:

I am a 22 year old gay man and I want to find a boyfriend. When I meet other guys they either ignore me or come on to me. I want to just get to know them and find one special one. I see my friends go out and find someone for casual sex but I don't want to. Do you think I am a weirdo for wanting to wait to find my special one? Should I be like my friends?

Thank you for your time, Roger

Dear Roger:

You can only be you!! This is such a simple statement but one in which nearly all people struggle. I know, I have heard several of my

See C'mon Out on Page 27

The Controversial Couch

Lie back and listen. Then get up and do something

By: Suzan Ambrose*TRT Columnist



place to live gay-ppily ever after, so sod off!"

God hates fags.

At least that's what the Pastor Fred Phelps and his wacky cult-like followers from the Westboro Baptist Church in Kansas will tell you. This 'man of God' is best known for his sickening protests at veteran's funerals since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the sodomy laws. This makes the United States gay-friendly and accepting, according to Phelps.

Huh. I wish someone had mentioned this to me and my parental units way back when. It could have saved me years of therapy if I just could have told them: "Hey! America is the

Fred Phelps and his 'church,' made up of his many, many, many sons and daughters, grandchildren and a few trucks, continues to protest at soldier's funerals, regardless of the anguish it causes those in mourning. These people hold up signs with messages of hate and loathing, yelling angry, despicable words at the family members. What a loving, spiritual kind of guy; only trying to get more people to see just how much God hates ... well, almost everyone, according to Phelps' website. But most especially: the gay community. That's me and you and a dog named Boo.

If none of this makes sense to you, you aren't the only one failing to see the logic in that argument. The good news is, most people don't agree with hate mongering. Even if some folks aren't completely gay accepting in our world, they have the sense to know that what this pastor is saying is pretty far from the Christianity Jesus is known for preaching.

Why are some people so filled with hate for the gay community? What is it that needs to be heard, or fulfilled, within them?

See Couch on Page 10

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Loved The Rainbow Times' coverage of Uncensored! Nice job!

Howard N. Schenectady, NY

Dear Editor,

Rue McClanahan's latest move is great. I couldn't get enough of the Golden Girls then and love it more now that she's continuing to work with the gay community. Rue rocks and it was so sad to lose Estelle Getty.

Nataly E., Williamstown, MA

Dear Editor,

Who is Jackie or Jack Kennedy. We love his columns here in Hartford! He sounds sexy and hopefully he's a guy 'cause I'm dying to meet him! Care to let him know about me?

Michael G, Hartford, CT

Dear Editor,

The Aug., 2008 edition story from Rev. Irene Monroe was a hit! Of course men are afraid of the "F" word. She's right, it happens in the LGBTQ community, in the straight community and everywhere we go. Women are always treated like second class citizens. No wonder why our butch lesbians are going for sex operations. They want the male privilege that we don't have in this "fair" society. I'd like to have Jackie Kennedy or Suzan Ambrose write about it. In the meantime, kudos to Rev. Irene!

Tamara J., Northampton, MA

Dear Editor,

Suzan Ambrose's August column about the "pussy cats" was awesome. I don't think that we should choose pets or kids. The heterosexuals don't, so why should we? She's right to say that no one should define us, queers. We don't need marriage, we need rights. We don't need kids if we don't want them, or do what has been taught to us so that mom and dad are happy. We just need to be ourselves, because we're not interested in the norms of society, but in the reality that we face today as a group who lacks the privileges that mainstream does. So, why even bother?

Mellisa H., Easthampton, MA

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Local youth group preps for National Conference

By: Nicole M. Young

On August 14, *Food for Thought Books* (Amherst, MA) hosted a fundraiser in efforts to send local youth and adult community organizers to Critical Resistance 10, a national conference on prison abolition in California happening in late September.

One of the groups that will be attending the conference representing the Pioneer Valley is *Out Now*. *Out Now*, a GLBTQA youth-focused organization based in Springfield, has sent representatives to the conference for the past several years and is looking forward to attending this year.

"We've been participating in the prison abolition movement for some time now," said Holly Richardson, co-director of *Out Now*. "We want to make people aware of the impact that the Prison Industrial Complex has on our youth and others in the community. We go to the conference to educate ourselves and then educate others."

Chino Rios, a community organizer and *Out Now* participant, is geared up, ready and excited to attend this year's conference.

"We must continue to stand up for what we

believe on a constant basis," said Chino. "If it says 'critical resistance,' I'm there!"

A grassroots, volunteer-based organization, Critical Resistance was created to dissolve the *Prison Industrial Complex* (PIC). PIC refers to interest groups that see an opportunity in overcrowding prisons. Organizations such as prison guard unions, construction companies, and surveillance technology vendors tend to be more invested in monetary gain rather than reducing crime rates and rehabilitating incarcerated people. In 1998, the organization held its first conference, bringing national attention to the *Prison Industrial Complex*. With activist Angela Davis as one of its founders, Critical Resistance now has chapters across the country and has successfully prevented the construction of several prisons in California.

While prison conditions are not ideal, members of the queer community who are currently incarcerated face even harsher treatment. According to Richardson, inmates who identify as transsexual, transgender or genderqueer face crueler circumstances.

"The prison system is not equipped to care



"Members of QuEST following a performance at Food for Thought Books."

for them," Richardson stated. "Queer people fear for their lives because of stigmas and stereotypes, which could lead to medical neglect. They are also not protected from violent acts committed against them because of who they are."

QuEST (*Q*ueer *E*mpowerment *thru* *S*olidarity and *T*ruth), a program of *Out Now*, is specifically geared toward addressing issues impacting GLBTQ-identified youth and the Prison Industrial Complex. *QuEST*

participants performed during the recent fundraiser, speaking out on the inequitable treatment of queer youth and adults in the prison system. Posters designed by local youth reflecting on the issue were also on display during the event. Throughout the year, these posters will be exhibited throughout Springfield and other cities in Pioneer Valley.

Youth from *Out Now* continue to remain active locally, nationally and internationally. Rios just returned from the Democratic National Convention in Denver and several participants attended the International Harm Reduction Conference in Barcelona, Spain last May.

Out Now is still seeking donations for the conference. If you'd like to contribute, please contact Chino at (413) 351-5436 or mail checks to *Out Now*, 1695 Main St., 2nd Floor, Springfield, MA 01103.

For more information on *Out Now*, visit the group's website: www.outnowspringfield.org. For more information on Critical Resistance, visit www.criticalresistance.org.

New WORLD Theater

Fall 2008

sash & trim

Written by Djola Branner and
Directed Laurie Carlos.

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In 'The Name of God'

Faith, Family, and God: "Perspective"

By: Paul P. Jesep*

Mention religion and many members of the GLBT and searching community become anxious. The word can evoke negative emotions. Understandably, it is identified with hate, bigotry, and rejection. Sadly, these negative emotions can be associated with faith and belief in a higher authority. This new column is an attempt to put God, faith, religion, and spirituality in a proper and ecumenical perspective.

Over the centuries religion, a manmade vehicle intended to enhance an individual's faith journey, evolved into an exclusionary club usually operated by men that maintained power by playing on fears. Although there is a certain majesty and beauty to religious ceremony, corporate faith has become mired in the insecurity of persons needing to be in spiritual control of others.

Science has long documented what many in the GLBT and searching community already knew—being gay is a natural part of a diverse universe. Yet the denial of science coupled with a handful of misquoted and misunderstood biblical passages has given those in religious authority the hubris and perverted morality to condemn and persecute persons made differently by the Creator. One of the tragedies, in addition to the spiritual, physical, and emotional abuse caused to members of the community, is to drive people away from God and faith. Although there can be overlap between God, faith, and religion, they are very distinct. In fact, religion need not be part of the equation.

It is the misuse of religion that causes harm. Not the Maker of All Good. It is religious "leaders" that exude a sanctimonious hypocrisy. Not the Creator. Historically, men and women have distorted religion to project

their fears and superstitions. The consequence is frequently to shape an abused individual's relationship with God and understanding of faith.

Religion was once used to justify slavery. Yet Martin Luther King Jr. successfully applied religion to fight social injustice. Dorothy Day used it to fight poverty and homelessness. Religion also is still a tool to persecute the GLBT and searching community. Yet Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa uses it to show to the community that "God loves you just as you are."

According to the Nobel Peace Prize winner, "homophobia equals apartheid." South Africa is the only nation in the world, thanks in part to the Archbishop, to guarantee equal rights for gays and lesbians in its constitution.

He says that "the totality of our love makes each of us grow to become increasingly god-like and compassionate. If this is so for the

heterosexual, what earthly reason have we to say that is not the case with the homosexual." This man demonstrates through ministry that faith and religion are an expression of God's sacred gift of hope, justice, and unconditional love.

Faith, whether Jewish, Muslim, Wiccan, Buddhist, Christian, or however one comes to know and embrace it, can strengthen a person and the family he or she has made with another child of God. It can be an anchor in bad times and a blessing during times of celebration. It can bless and strengthen the holy, intimate union of two men or two women in the fullness of God and creation.

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

sash & trim paints a tribute onto an Autobiographic Canvas

By: Nicole M. Young

New WORLD Theater, in collaboration with the *UMass Department of Theater*, begins its 2008 Season with a workshop presentation of sash & trim, Djola Branner's newest work. This presentation is *New WORLD Theater's* fourth Community Spirit Showcase. Each year, *New WORLD Theater's* season begins with a performance featuring a local artist. Past performance have included poet Magdalena Gomez with Raúl Salinas and Fred Ho, acclaimed musician Terry Jenoure, and playwright and spoken word artist Lenelle Moise.

Branner pays tribute to his dad with this five-character play that takes the audience back to Branner's teenage and young adult years. Using real and imagined events, sash & trim reconstructs a man's broken promises, troubled romances, and thwarted ambition—a father's dreams of success as a singer-songwriter sharply contrasted with the relationships that crumble around him.

Branner calls this story "poignant and ironic in the face of failed dreams "It is a story



DJOLA BRANNER

that many can relate to," Branner states. sash & trim addresses father-son relationships between black men in particular and examines the legacy of our fathers. To Branner, it is important to "know what to leave behind." Through this artistic account, Branner pays homage to the life, legacy, and lessons left behind by his own father.

A play about "splits," Branner explores Hank and Sadie's divorce, the life of a young man's anguish due to this split, and Hank's two talents—writing music and painting houses. "Hank is torn between passion and obligation," says Branner, hence the detail to music, art and relationships in this play. Branner uses lyrics from songs written by his father: recollections of a fabricated reality.

Co-founder of the critically acclaimed performance group Pomo Afro Homos, Branner

has toured nationally and internationally with *Fierce Love* and *Dark Fruit*. He has created the original works *The House that Crack Built* and *Mighty Real: A Tribute to Sylvester*, and contributed to the anthologies *Voices Rising* (G. Winston James and Other Countries, editors), *Colored Contradictions* (Robert Alexander and Harry Elam, editors) and *Staging Gay Lives* (John M. Clum, editor). As an educator, he has taught dance, acting and dramatic writing at Macalester College, *University of Minnesota* and the *American Musical and Dramatic Academy*. Currently, Branner is an Assistant Professor of Theater at Hampshire College.

sash & trim will be directed by seminal theater artist Laurie Carlos. Frequent collaborators, Branner looks forward to working with Carlos on the development of sash & trim. According to Branner, Carlos' work is similar to his in structure and style—making this partnership essential to the future of this piece. "Laurie is known for nonlinear work, the use of language and music," says Branner. Carlos will be an active participant in adding those

elements to sash & trim.

An Obie and Bessie Award-winning actress and choreographer, Carlos is recognized as an original player in the New York avant garde performance scene. She is best known as the first woman to perform "The Lady in Blue" in Ntozake Shange's foundational choreopoem, for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf. A collaborating founder of Urban Bush Women, Carlos performed with Jessica Hagedorn and Robbie McCauley as *Thought Music* in the 1980s. A gifted writer, Carlos' plays include *White Chocolate*, *The Cooking Show* and *Organdy Falsetto*.

During the two-week artist residency, students from local colleges and universities will get an opportunity to work directly with Branner and Carlos. Directing, dramaturgy and technical students will participate in a series of workshops and guest lectures and work on the sash & trim production team.

See sash & trim on Page 8

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Sweetwood works with LGBT community to ensure inclusiveness

Retirement community offers welcoming atmosphere, luxury living

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

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

Supporting residents as individuals, as well as their families, is part of *Sweetwood's* mission. Since 1987, the retirement community has allowed seniors independent, worry-free living, paired with active, thriving personal lives.



Located just a few miles from *Williams College* and the *Clark Art Institute*,

ancees, outdoor activities, education and more. Residents audit classes at *Williams*

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

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

Sweetwood provides one-of-a-kind access to world-class museums, perform-

College free of charge and attend outdoor concerts, lectures, and performances of

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

"Whoever you are, whatever you enjoy, we're here to support it," said Amuso.

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

Sweetwood living, says Amuso, is all about freedom.

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

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

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Queer Movie Review

Bed Buddies: An interview with the stars of 'Another Gay Sequel'

By: Mikey Rox*

Just call 'em the Fag Four. Andy, Nico, Jarod and Griff—who came off age (quite literally—and all over the place) in director Todd Stephens' *Another Gay Movie*—return to select theaters this month to serve up an extra helping of crude-and-campy pie in *Another Gay Sequel: Gays Gone Wild*.

In a recent interview, the actors behind the queer quartet—Jake Mosser (Andy), Jonah Blechman (Nico), Jimmy Clabots (Jarod), and Aaron Michael Davies—reflect on filming the follow-up by trading quips about who has the biggest "ego," pondering the vanity of porn mogul and AGS guest star Michael Lucas, discussing their own four-way love affair, offering advice on overcoming nagging insecurities, and revealing the reason they can't eat cinnamon-apple oatmeal ever again.

Besides, of course, always having a mouth full of something else.

MIKEY ROX: Before we get into the grit and grime of *Another Gay Sequel: Gays Gone Wild*, do you know what I had to do to land an interview with all four of you?!

JIMMY: No, I don't know what you had to do to get this interview, but if it involves turning off the lights in the barn and playing "Who's in My Mouth?" then I wouldn't be surprised.

MR: Ha! Thanks for assuming I'm some kind of self-promotional fornicator. Let's get down to business. What every man watching this movie will want to know is who's really gay and who isn't?

JONAH: I'm queer—that's for sure!

JIMMY: I'm not gay, but I might consider it if Cheyenne Jackson became single. I saw him in "Xanadu" in New York recently, and he was sublime.

AARON: Well come now, good sir! We must leave some things up to the audience's imagination. They get to see us all engage in homoerotic sexual acts, whether or not we're really gay. Is that not enough?

MR: Yes, I suppose it is. What made you guys take on such a charmingly raunchy role?

JIMMY: I wanted to play Jarod because I knew after reading the script that the conflict at the heart of the Jarod/Griff monogamy problem was nurtured inside this gay utopian environment where sexuality was never labored in gender specificity—it was only questioned in terms of "how much do I or can I really love my significant other if I'm sharing their specialness with others?" I think that's an issue everyone can relate to, gay or straight.

JONAH: I'm a seriously trained actor who has issues with boundaries—so why not!

AARON: Anyone who has experienced a New York winter would have done the same damn thing. That aside, I have always wanted to do a



Griff (Aaron Michael Davies), Jarod (Jimmy Clabots), Andy (Jake Moser) and Nico (Jonah Blechman) get crabby.

Photo courtesy of Christopher Stephens.

campy, fun, beachy-type movie, and Todd [Stephens'] script was just that — with a little romance and zombie action thrown in.

MR: AGS is full of guest stars, from transgender icon Amanda Lepore and "American Idol" alum Jim Verraros to gossip gangster Perez Hilton and drag queen RuPaul. But the one that interests me most is porn mogul Michael Lucas. He hasn't been a fan of mine since he read a scathing op-ed I wrote about him a few years ago. Did any of you have a chance to get to know him? Is he happier these days?

JONAH: I respect the hell out of Michael. He is a real example of an immigrant living the American dream. I salute him as a businessman, and he was nothing but respectful to me. **JIMMY:** Michael was a bit vain on set, but he had his charming moments. And every time I walked by his room at the hotel, it reeked of masculinity. That's when he asked me if I'd ever considered porn. I told him Brent Corrigan already had first dibs if I ever "turned."

AARON: He was just lovely. [coughs] No, really. I mean it.

MR: With all the raging hormones on set, there was bound to be some behind-the-scenes action happening. Come clean—who got it on?

JIMMY: I had a girlfriend during production; we talked dirty on the phone a few times.

JONAH: I only got to fool around with Gunnar, who isn't even in the credits.

AARON: I think there was a wonderful torrid love affair involving all of us! I met some great people and made some great friends. Honestly, I don't think there was really all that much hooking up going on. I mean, I've heard a few tales, but I'm not one to kiss and tell. I'm also not one to gossip—per the requests of my co-stars.

MR: With a movie like this, there's really no

time to play coy with your cast mates. Have you all seen each other naked, and how do you preserve a professional relationship when you know what everyone's packin'?

JIMMY: We've seen each other emotionally naked, yes. But I'm hung like a field mouse in a snowstorm, and everyone laughed the first time I whipped it out.

JAKE: You know, I don't think I've seen the other guys' junk. We all wore socks when we filmed the nude scenes — though I heard Aaron is the big winner on that one. But I don't have any proof.

AARON: Mine is totally the biggest! God made some mistakes when he made the size of my body, but he made up for it in the reproductive region!

MR: The premise of this follow-up finds the four friends traveling to Ft. Lauderdale for spring break expressly to engage in activities that involve alcohol and naked men. Anybody have a spring break story akin to the sequel to share?

JONAH: I was an Orthodox Jew during those years.

AARON: Sadly, I never got to go on a fabulous spring break until I went to Ft. Lauderdale. I'm from a white trash family in Iowa.

JAKE: I don't have any spring break stories, unfortunately. I never went anywhere for spring break. I could never afford it in high school, and in college I was always in a play. Oh, except my freshman year. That year I was pledging. So that spring break I just went home and hid for a week.

MR: Jonah, you reprise your role as Nico in this sequel, a character that struggles with love because he's too feminine for others' tastes. How much of Nico's dilemma have you had to deal with in your dating career? How have you

handled those situations?

JONAH: Thanks for asking. I don't think he struggles with love because he's too feminine for others, although he is off the Richter that way. I experience and can relate to his struggles with love because of how he feels ... as an alien of sorts. I relate to Nico's queerness as a freak more than with his femininity, and bit more of the act for me. I do have to say, I feel more comfortable in my masculinity now because of what I had to embrace for Nico's femininity. As far as how I have handled those situations—hopefully, like Nico, with no shame, accepting and loving that I am what I am.

AARON: Jonah's a hot piece! Any guy who would turn him down is definitely an evil hetero.

MR: Maybe it's just me, Jonah, but I get a very Charles Nelson Reilly-esque vibe from Nico. Is that deliberate?

JONAH: Quite. That's Todd's direction. I just do what he tells me.

AARON: He reminds me of a combination of *Samantha Jones*, *Snagglepuss*, and *Tinker Bell*.

MR: Jimmy, Jimmy, Jimmy. What can I say — you're a beautiful man. How do you cope with the reality that after this movie releases you'll be the fleeting sexual fantasy of a good number of gay men?

AARON: Sweet God, I can just hear his head swelling right now...

JIMMY: Thank you. I'm very gay friendly. Some of my closest friends are gay. They've helped me through some really tough times, essentially loving me until I found how to love myself, and to them—they know who they are—I owe my life. That said, I feel blessed to be the fantasy of gay men, and hope I don't disappoint, performance-wise, in their imaginations.

MR: So it sounds like the possibility of AGS: Part III is very likely. Can any of you confirm or deny? Will you be a part of it?

JONAH: I'm one of the freakin' exec producers on this ride, so how can I not be a part of it?!

AARON: If this is as successful as we all hope it will be then I'm definitely down to take a trip to another galaxy.

JIMMY: Part three is in the works. You'll have to wait and see.

Another Gay Sequel, *Gays Gone Wild* can be seen on Sept. 12 in Philadelphia, PA at the Landmark Ritz Bourse; on Sept. 19 in Washington, DC at the Landmark E Street; on Sept. 19 in Boston, MA at the Landmark Kendall Square & on Sept. 19, in Detroit, MI at the Landmark Maple Art.

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




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Out! For Reel Film Series presents "The World Unseen," lesbian film by women

New to Western Massachusetts this Fall, and much needed by the LGBTQ community, is the *Out! For Reel Film Series*. With the tagline, "Showing the Best in Lesbian and GBTQ Films," *Out! For Reel*'s mission is to screen films that have won awards and earned positive reviews at LGBTQ film festivals around the world.

For its premiere event, *Out! For Reel Film Series* was given the honor by film distributor, *Regent Releasing*, to screen the internationally award-winning film, *The World Unseen* on Saturday, September 27 at 7:30 p.m. at *The Academy of Music* in Northampton. This will be the only screening of this film in western Massachusetts.

Described as the "future of lesbian cinema" by the London Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, *The World Unseen* is a moving and passionate love story set in the early '50s in



apartheid South Africa, where the love between two women dares to bloom. Beautifully filmed, *The World Unseen* is brimming with stunning South African landscapes, sultry, soul-lifting jazz tunes, and the palpable energy of two women falling unexpectedly in love. Both sensual and political, filled with courage and hope, this cross-over film will captivate both romantics and social justice activists of all orientations.

Out! For Reel Film Series has received strong and enthusiastic support throughout Western Massachusetts. Sponsors are eager to support this much needed film series. *The Rainbow Times* is the main media sponsor, and other major sponsors include *The Women's Times* and *Web-Tactics*.

For more information about the *Out! For Reel Film Series*, *The World Unseen*, & about upcoming films, visit: www.OutForReel.org.

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Obituaries

Joseph E. Lashomb

OGDENSBURG, NY—Joseph E. Lashomb, 53, of Ogdensburg NY, died at 1:25 a.m. on Sunday August 17th at his home, following a courageous battle with cancer.

Born on Sept. 18, 1954, in Ogdensburg, and son of G. Edward and Phyllis Miller Lashomb, he graduated in 1972 from *Ogdensburg Free Academy* and received an electrical certificate from *Northwest Technical Center*. Mr. Lashomb was an electrician maintenance mechanic at *St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center* from 1979 until his death. During his career he also owned a contracting/electrical business, *Lashomb Electric*.

His first marriage to Orinda (Rindy) O'Marah Lashomb ended in divorce in 1992, and together, they had four children.

He married Kathy Kiah Taylor on Oct. 16, 2004, at *St. Mary's Cathedral* with the Rev. Terry R. LaValley officiating.

Mr. Lashomb enjoyed playing guitar and banjo, singing, boating, motorcycling, his dog Gizmo, carpentry and fixing things. He enjoyed helping others and visiting friends. He also enjoyed spending time with his children and family doing various activities such as barbecuing and playing sports like basketball, tennis, and baseball/softball.

Surviving are his wife, Kathy Lashomb, his



father and stepmother, G. Edward and Betty Farley Lashomb, Ogdensburg; three daughters and in-laws, Maureen Bova and her husband David, Ogdensburg; Nicole Lashomb and her wife, Grisel Martinez Ocasio, Springfield, Mass.; Kimberly Flack and her husband David, Ogdensburg; and a son, Christopher J. Lashomb, Ogdensburg. Also surviving are his stepson, Troy Taylor, Ogdensburg; two stepdaughters and spouse, Billi Jo Lapiene and husband Kenneth, Ogdensburg, and Kathleen Taylor, Plattsburgh; three sisters and their husbands Celina and Vernon "Sam" Burns, Ogdensburg, Mary and Mark Wademan, Syracuse, and Lucy and Sergio Guevara,

North Carolina; two brothers and their wives, Edward and Mary "Louie" Lashomb, Watertown, and Peter and Tina Lashomb, Ogdensburg; 4 grandchildren, Morgann & Mikaela Bova, and Caleb & Hannah Flack, all of Ogdensburg; 6 step-grandchildren, Alec Taylor of Lowville, Keegan Taylor, Taylor & Kristopher Bunch, and Tanner & Landry Lapiene, all of Ogdensburg; several aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews & cousins.

Mr. Lashomb was cherished and loved by his family and fulfilled a special role in each of their lives. He will be terribly missed, but never forgotten.

Mr. Lashomb was predeceased by his mother, Phyllis, in 1998, also due to cancer.

A prayer service was held at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, August 20th at *Fox-McLellan Funeral Home*, followed by a funeral Mass at 10 a.m. at *St. Mary's Cathedral* with Father LaValley officiating.

Interment was at *Foxwood Memorial Park*. Donations on Mr. Lashomb's behalf may be made to *St. Joseph's Foundation, Catholic Charities, St. Mary's Cathedral Campaign Fund, Richard E. Winter Cancer Treatment Center or Hospice and Palliative Care of St. Lawrence Valley*.

Condolences may be made at www.foxmclellanfuneralhome.com.



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sash & trim from Page 4

A rare opportunity, students will have direct contact with these artists, a significant contribution to their educational growth. "Training and experience in experimental theater forms are important to our students," said Priscilla Page, dramaturg for sash & trim. According to Page, the theater department and *New WORLD Theater* have complimentary missions on theater education and the training of theater practitioners. "We are looking forward to collaborating on this invaluable theater experience."

This is the second collaboration between the *UMass Department of Theater and New WORLD Theater* in the past three years. Facilitating this relationship, Page works for both organizations. She is a professor in the theater department at UMass and the Program Curator for *New WORLD Theater*. Page is assisting with script development, research, casting, and coordinating and supporting the rehearsal process.

sash & trim will be performed at the Curtain Theater, located in the *UMass Department of*

Theater, Wednesday, September 24 through Friday, September 26. All performances will be at 8 PM. Ticket prices are \$15 general admission; \$8 for low-income patrons and senior citizens; and, \$5 for students with valid I.D. For tickets, call the Fine Arts Center Box Office at (413) 545-2511.

Based at *UMass Fine Arts Center*, *New WORLD Theater* presents and produces theatrical works by artists of color. With a focus on new and contemporary plays, *New WORLD Theater* also supports artist development through the *Multicultural Theater Practicum*, the Summer Internship Program, the youth initiative Project 2050, and the New Works for a New WORLD Summer Playlab.

For more information on *New WORLD Theater*, call 413-545-1972 or visit their website at www.newworldtheater.org.

There will also be a reading of *The Pork Chop Wars*, a new performance-novel by Laurie Carlos, on Monday, September 15 at 6:30 PM in the *Curtain Theater*. This event is free and open to the public.

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Queertations: Say what?!

By: Rex Wockner

"Here is the hard truth—if you are looking for a life partner the numbers are not in your favor. If you take the total number of gay men in your city, subtract the number you are not sexually compatible with, minus the ones who have deal-breaking habits, minus the guys who you have nothing in common with, minus the pathological closet cases who play straight while playing around online, minus the ones who just plain annoy you -- the universe of potential mates is remarkably limited. This harsh reality is true for gay men in large cities and especially for rural gay men who can't find a hunk in Podunk."

—Syndicated columnist **Wayne Besen**, Aug. 12.

"What can I say? I'm the luckiest girl in the world. She's officially off the market. No one else gets her. And now she'll cook and clean for me."

—**Ellen DeGeneres**, who married actress Portia de Rossi on Aug. 16, to *People* magazine, Aug. 19.

"I believe that marriage is the union between a man and a woman. Now, for me, as a Christian ... it's also a sacred union. God's in the mix. ... I would not (support a constitutional amendment with that definition) because historically ... we have not defined marriage in our Constitution. It's been a matter of state law that has been our tradition. Let's break it down. The reason that people think there needs to be a constitutional amendment, some people believe, is because of the concern that about same-sex marriage. I am not somebody who promotes same-sex marriage but I do believe in civil unions. I do believe that we should not—that for gay partners to want to visit each other in the hospital, for the state to say: 'You know what? That's all right' I don't think in any way inhibits my core beliefs about what marriage are (sic). I think my faith is strong enough and my marriage is strong enough that I can afford those civil rights to others even if I have a different perspective or a different view."

—**Barack Obama**, speaking at *Saddleback Church* in Lake Forest, Calif., Aug. 16.

"I don't think about being an icon really. The gay fans have always been very loyal; they are a really great audience and have always been there for me."

—Singer **Olivia Newton-John** to *AfterElton.com*, Aug. 13.

"I think these last 10 years have seen just a huge shift in the psyche of this country as regards gay people. I think AIDS had a lot to do with it. So many families who really believed they'd 'never met one' were suddenly confronted with their sons becoming ill, and friends of sons. I think that brought a lot of it into the open. Certainly groups like ACT UP (and) Larry Kramer brought a lot of it into the open. But I think there also has just been a willingness on the parts of people like myself, people like Melissa Etheridge or Elton (John), to stand up and be counted that has hopefully lent some bravery to people who are not in (the public eye)."

—Out singer **Janis Ian** to *Time* magazine, Aug. 7.

Queer Justice: Effect of MA law on gay movement

By: Attorney Jennifer L. Dexter*

I am wondering, if the legislature is successful in repealing the law that Governor Romney invoked in order to preclude people from other states to marry in Massachusetts, what effect will that have on the gay rights movement?

—Mable, Southbridge, MA



Atty. Jennifer Dexter

Dear Mable:

The law to which you refer is Massachusetts General Laws chapter 207 section 11 which prohibits marriage licenses to be issued if that marriage would be void in that couples home state.

Should this law be repealed, and gay couples from any state be allowed to marry, theoretically, that marriage should be recognized in that couples home state. Unfortunately we do not live in a theoretical world.

Article IV of the United States Constitution states, "Full Faith and Credit shall be given in each State to the public Acts, Records, and judicial Proceedings of every other State. And the Congress may by general Laws prescribe the Manner in which such Acts, Records and Proceedings shall be proved, and the Effect thereof." For purposes of your questions, this means that any marriage in the Commonwealth should be recognized everywhere.

The mystery will be what effect individual state DOMAs would have on the proceedings here in the Massachusetts? Many states have enacted what is called Defense of Marriage Acts (more or less defining marriage as that between a man and a woman). So, constitutionally, which law wins? That will be the big debate.

Hypothetically speaking: I live in Ohio which has a DOMA. My partner and I come to Massachusetts get married and return to Ohio. We are then denied any and all rights and privileges based on that DOMA but yet in violation of

Article IV of the US Constitution. We file a law suit against the State and who knows after that. Law suits will eventually be filed all over and we will have to wait and see. Ultimately, these cases could end up before the Supreme Court.

This is a very exciting time to live in Massachusetts and to be a part of the gay rights movement.

*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.

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

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AIDS Awareness

AIDS Walk: A chance to make a difference

By: Sasha Fles

At the *Oz Nightclub* in Springfield, MA, 28-year-old Mark Zatyra stood in front of a roomful of people and shared his story of living with HIV. The audience listened in awe. Many in that room were also HIV+ but the thought of publicly sharing their status and their story was unfathomable. Yet they all felt

the power of Mark's courage. The potency of Mark's message that night embodies the essence of the 2008 AIDS Walk with Mark as its chair.

The AIDS Walk on September 20 in Forest Park is everyone's opportunity to stand in solidarity against HIV/AIDS. For all those who are not free to share their status with friends and family, the Walk is their chance to implicitly share it. For all those who know someone who is HIV+, the Walk is their chance to express support. For all those who know someone who has died from HIV/AIDS, the Walk is their chance to honor their lost loved ones. For all those who love someone, anyone, partner, family member, child, or friend, the Walk is their chance to promote effective prevention efforts in order to spare any future infections, to stop this 100% preventable disease.

For the 1,000 walkers and runners expected at the 2008 AIDS Walk, the Walk is their



chance to break through the stigma that still unbelievably exists nearly 30 years into the epidemic. The Walk will send a message loud and clear that everyone living with HIV/AIDS deserves to live with dignity. The Walk will acknowledge what so many want to ignore: that there are people living in Hampden and Hampshire counties who are

HIV+; that this disease continues to spread at alarming rates; that, despite the advances in treatments, this disease is a difficult, chronic condition that affects every aspect of someone's life.

The AIDS Walk gives everyone the chance to do all of this and so much more. The success of the Walk will carry on all of these effects beyond just one day. Benefiting the AIDS Foundation of Western Massachusetts, the Walk will fund concrete efforts to tackle each of the fronts against HIV/AIDS.

Through the amazing sponsorship of local businesses like *Ken's Parking*, the *Platinum Presenting Sponsor* who has redefined the word generous, and the extensive grassroots fundraising efforts by individuals and teams, the Walk is slated to raise \$50,000 for the Foundation's important programs. Please see the full-page ad in this issue, or log onto www.aidsfoundationwm.org for complete details on the Walk.

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12 Central Avenue,
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Couch from Page 2

We certainly have been told, on more than one occasion, how the biggest homophobes are closet-case gays themselves. That certainly seems to be the case in the folks I know personally.

After the death of actor *Heath Ledger*, the Phelps clan was at their beastly best again, protesting at the funeral, because Ledger portrayed a gay man in *Brokeback Mountain*. I can't help pondering if perhaps Phelps fathered so many children having sex exactly like Ledger's character did: *with a woman on her knees because all he could think about was the sex he'd rather be having with a man*. Why would someone devote their lives to this rather extreme and vile public display of hating homosexuals?

Perhaps the answer lies in Fred Phelps' boyhood. And indeed, after rooting into his past, I discovered a possible key to the man's disturbed life. Fred tragically lost his mother at 5 years of age. Work kept his father away from home a lot (missing daddy syndrome) and the

auntie that raised him died as well before he was 21. Fred was all set to go off to West Point Academy when he turned 17, but before that happened, he met John Capron. According to a story in the *Topeka-Capitol Journal*, by Joe Taschier and Steve Fry, "they

... the theory that **homophobia**—fear, anxiety, anger, discomfort and aversion that some people have for gays—is the **result of repressed homosexual urges that the person is either unaware of or denies**.

became close friends. They did everything together, including going to the movies and attending gatherings at the Central United Methodist Church."

The article goes on to say the duo went off to a religious revival together that was instrumental in changing Phelps and Capron forever. The two of them "got religion." And during this time, young Fred Phelps, by his own description, said he "had what I think was an experience of grace. I felt the call."

I wonder what else he felt.

How about the story between the lines? Capron and Phelps, young, hormone-raging teens, find themselves spending a lot of time together. They are the best of friends. And just like the two young men in *Brokeback*, it's just not socially acceptable to be gay. It's not even acceptable to think you might be. So it's not a stretch to conclude, that young Phelps and Capron did what any average teenager would do at that time in history: *deny it*. And Lordie Lord, I gotta find me some Jesus. And I mean quick.

Many of us can remember doing something like that. Just think of *Reverend Ted Haggart*

and *Senator Larry Craig*. Denial is often the first step in the process of realizing one may very well be gay.

A new study that involves measuring arousal rates in a group of men watching erotic videos has just been published. According to the article "*Is Homophobia Associated with Homosexual Arousal?*" by H.E. Adams, Ph.D., Lester Wright, Jr., Ph.D. and Bethany Lohr, *the experiment involved 35 homophobic men and 29 non-homophobic men as measured by the Index of Homophobia scale. All the participants selected for the study described themselves as exclusively heterosexual both in terms of sexual arousal and experience.*

Appearing in the August issue of the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, published by the *American Psychological Association*, this study supports the theory that homophobia—fear, anxiety, anger, discomfort and aversion that some people have for gays—is the result of repressed homosexual urges *that the person is either unaware of or denies*. (To learn more, watch an eye-opening video about this study on TRT's website: www.therainbowtimesnews.com).

So, like many of us have felt in our hearts all along, it's possible (Heck! Likely, even!) that gay bashers, homophobes and people who just love to hate are probably repressing some feelings of their own. Unbeknownst to him, it sounds like ol' Fred may have been bit with the gay bug after all.

But don't worry, Pastor Phelps. God doesn't really hate fags.

* *Suzan Ambrose, when not camping in Vermont or playing with her cats, can be heard on her call-in talk radio program, The Naked Truth, Monday evenings at 8 pm, on 103.3FM, Northampton, MA. Also catch the show streaming on the web at www.valleyfreeradio.org.*

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Q-lebrities

Packard's Belle: Choreographer & star of 'Brooke Knows Best'

By: Mikey Rox*

If it weren't for the Hogan family's catastrophic fall from grace, choreographer-to-the-stars Glenn Douglas Packard wouldn't be playing TV sidekick to wrestling royalty's first daughter, Brooke Hogan, on the VH1 spin-off series *Brooke Knows Best*.

Right. So tell the fame-hanger something he doesn't know.

See, Packard, whose genius has manifested itself in the fluid moves of the *King of Pop* and *Jenny from the Block*, doesn't care how it happened. What matters most is that it did — finally. Because after years of standing idly in the shadows of aging celebrities whose careers benefited from his fresh perspective, Packard is relishing his time in the spotlight — even if the curtain is already half closed.

In a recent interview, Packard sizes up his superlative situation—from maintaining multiple gigs (which includes a Pussycat-esque burlesque act) and moon walking with a mentally ill MJ to dueling with man-divas and his next act as an Oscar winner.

But don't be disappointed. He throws Brooke under the bus, too.

MIKEY ROX: OK, so I did some digging on you, and you might be the busiest guy in entertainment—next to Ryan Seacrest, of course. I mean, you're choreographing huge names, peddling your own fashion line, and

chasing a career as a recording artist, among a full slate of other projects. How do you manage to fit it all in?

GLENN DOUGLAS PACKARD: Wow, I wish I had his career—but I do plan on giving him a run for his money! My management will sometimes have to put me in my place: "Glenn, it's 2 in the morning — go to bed!" But I've worked with some of the biggest artists in the industry, from Al Pacino and Liza Minnelli to Michael Jackson and Jennifer Lopez, and they don't care what time it is when you've got a job to get done. I'll sleep when I'm dead.

MR: You're also working with a group called The Knockouts. From the looks of them, they're poised to be the next Pussycat Dolls. What can we expect?

GDP: A Knockout! When I saw the success of PCD—I had a group like them in New York City way before they hit the scene—and what Robin [Antin] was doing and where she took them, I was like, there's room for two of us. [The Knockouts] are in the studio recording their music, and in rehearsals perfecting their show. If MTV still had Celebrity Death Match, we would have quite the battle!

MR: At 32 years old—and might I say that you don't look a day over 25 — you've accomplished monumental milestones, namely earning an Emmy Award nomination for Michael



Jackson's 30th Anniversary special back in 2001. How'd you get involved with that project, and what was it like to dance it out with the King of Pop?

GDP: I worked my butt off—that's how I got that! [laughs] At that point in my choreography career I was doing the hottest ticket in NYC—Miracle on 34th Street at Madison Square Garden. I had worked with P!nk, Whitney Houston and even Liza on their stage performances, and I earned the respect of many in the industry at the time to have Michael Jackson look at my work and hire me. We choreographed the whole show, and working with Michael was a huge highlight in my career.

MR: You're currently starring alongside burgeoning pop star Brooke Hogan in her new reality show *Brooke Knows Best*. How's that going so far?

GDP: Well, one thing that has happened is that it has brought Brooke, Ashley and I really close to each other. We share a special bond that's a lot different from other friendships — especially when we're dealing with everything that is going on around us. But we're looking out for each other. And being an openly gay role model is something I look forward to.

MR: What can you tell us about Brooke the artist versus Brooke your friend? Because, frankly, we've all watched her publicly try to make it as an artist, but it's been an uphill battle. What gives?

GDP: Right! You'd think she'd be on the top of the charts with the hit show and her name. But it has a lot to do with the industry; she isn't a bad girl—at least not yet. [laughs] But I don't think that's going to happen. She's got a good head on her shoulders, and she's a strong young woman. Brooke Hogan can

sing; her voice is sick! She can perform too. Brooke Bollea, on the other hand, does have a weak side that I see as her friend, and as a human being she can only take so much. It's hard to see her crying and hurting. All I can do is be a friend to her.

MR: Can you squeeze any juice about what's happening within the Hogan clan?

GDP: Just watch the E! True Hollywood Story coming out.

MR: Can't wait! In the meantime, how've you been helping Brooke work through her family problems?

GDP: Focusing on the positive, working on ourselves, our fitness, rehearsing. We're in the studio doing music, going out, having adventures — living life to the fullest. And lots of laughing — that's the best medicine.

MR: All right, now we're back to the basics. Where'd you learn all your dope moves? Did this come to you naturally, or did you pick up bits and pieces along the way?

GDP: Good Question! Really I was this small-town country boy that just had these moves, and at family weddings, growing up, everyone would just be entertained. So I think it came very naturally. One time I was dancing with *Chaka Khan*, and she came up to me and said, "Boy, I don't know where you came from, but you've got to have some black in you somewhere!" [laughs] I trained a lot too, with all styles when I got older. I want to be a well-rounded performer.

MR: Homo to homo, you strike me as the kind of guy who knows how to make things happen for himself. What's next for you? Where do you hope all this leads?

GDP: Well, I really hope to become a successful film director with my Tattooed Angels business partner R3Y GUT3RR3Z. I love filmmaking— nothing liking watching a group of people sitting in a theatre, all emotional, being entertained. And I want to win an Oscar. You know a small town boy can still dream big!

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

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Deep Inside Hollywood: The *L Word*'s Shelley faces a terrifying Day



By: Romeo San Vicente*

Don Roos Goes to the Dogs

You've probably already seen the teasers for *Marley & Me*, featuring Owen Wilson and Jennifer

Aniston chasing an adorable puppy down the beach to the theme from *Chariots of Fire*. So what could possibly be gay about this comedy, based on the best-selling book, about a family that learns valuable life lessons from their dog? Plenty. For one thing, the screenplay is being co-written by Don Roos, the hilarious genius behind such dark, man-on-man-inclusive comedies as *The Opposite of Sex* and *Happy Endings*. Add to that director David Frankel, whose most recent gig pre-*Marley* was guiding Meryl Streep to an umpteenth Oscar nomination in the fabulous *The Devil Wears Prada*. Be on the lookout for witty, queer, yet family-friendly subtext when *Marley* scampers into theaters on Christmas Day.

Guinevere Turner Taps the *Feed*

She's a successful actress and screenwriter, a pioneer among out-of-the-closet movie stars,



OWEN WILSON

Photo by: © New Line Cinema

and one of the sexiest women in Hollywood. So Romeo is always thrilled to hear about a new project involving lesbian dynamo Guinevere Turner. (If you haven't already checked out the recently released "Guinevere

Turner Signature Edition" of her '90s kink-comedy *Preaching to the Perverted*, pick it up.) Turner will next grace the screen in *Feed*, an indie drama about a media-obsessed blogger who shoots a video that winds up on the 5 o'clock news. The leak of the clip puts her and her fellow underground newswies in grave danger. The directorial debut of (female) filmmaker Mel Robertson, *Feed* is expected to beam onto the big screen before the end of 2008.

L Word's Shelley Faces a Terrifying Day

During Rachel Shelley's stint playing ditsy Brit heiress Helena Peabody on *The L Word*, we've seen the character be a spoiled brat, an amorous convict, a compulsive gambler, a Hollywood hotshot, and a doting mom. Shelley gets parental once again in the upcoming horror film *The Day*, but with a completely different spin. The new movie, set on Christmas Day, has vacationing parents fighting to survive when their formerly adorable children suddenly turn on Mums and Daddy. (That'll teach you not to buy everything on their holiday wish list!) *The Day*, co-starring Stephen Campbell Moore (*The History Boys*, *The Bank Job*), is set for release this year in the U.K. and later (meaning

nobody knows when) in the U.S.

Lindsay's Got Labor Pains

Unlike other Hollywood party girls, Lindsay Lohan is a talented actress in everything from *The Parent Trap* to *Mean Girls* to *A Prairie Home Companion*. And now she's taking advantage of the recently developed "glass closet" phenomenon in Hollywood—that means she doesn't speak to the press about it, but is clearly involved with British DJ Samantha Ronson and not shy about demonstrating it. If Lohan is indeed a lesbian now (or "just for now"), it means she's at least as welcome on our team as Anne Heche used to be. And she'll next be seen in *Labor Pains*, a comedy about a woman who has to spend nine months pretending to be pregnant. Also featuring such comedy greats as Cheryl Hines, Janeane Garofalo, and Willie Garson (*Sex and the City*), *Labor Pains* will burst forth into theaters in 2009.

Romeo San Vicente dated a DJ once. You thought there was going to be a joke about 12 inches in there, didn't you? Never assume. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

Dad from Page 2

He explained that he had become good friends with two gay men that he knew through work and that they "had been together for 25 years." He then told me—using the only name he only called me by—"Nic, it's just about love. There is nothing wrong with

legally married in MA), which my wife and I never had, he emphatically stated "of course."

As the weeks and months went on he always introduced me as his "[my] daughter Nicole and her partner or spouse Gricel," to anyone new that I met. To me, this too was a miracle in itself.

Despite the outcome of his illness, I feel

I sat in astonishment as I listened to my devout Catholic father proceed to discuss politics and profess the importance of the gay community having equal protection under the law and the same rights and benefits as heterosexual couples.

that." I sat in astonishment as I listened to my devout Catholic father proceed to discuss politics and profess the importance of the gay community having equal protection under the law and the same rights and benefits as heterosexual couples. When I asked him to walk me down the aisle at my wedding ceremony (knowing that my wife and I were already

blessed and honored to have traveled this road with him. The intimate conversations that we shared I will forever cherish. His courageous spirit, never ceasing to believe in his desire to win this battle, will continue to be a governing force in my life. I am so incredibly proud of him, proud to be his daughter and proud of his legacy that he has left behind.

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Gay Travel

Out of Town: Gay destinations on the rise



By: Andrew Collins*

Gay Destinations on the Rise

Amazing as it may sound today, famously gay-popular places like Austin, Mykonos, Rehoboth, and Prague haven't always had much of a following with the GLBT community. Cities and resort communities change over the years, some becoming more fashionable with gay travelers, and others falling out of favor. In fact, there are big cities, alluring towns, and beautiful resorts all over the world that, while scarcely known to gay travelers at the moment, have the potential to develop into tomorrow's next queer hot spots. Here's a look at a dozen potential "family-friendly" destinations to watch, from formerly conservative cities like Nashville and Indianapolis, which are becoming increasingly progressive, to picturesque vacation spots like Tasmania and Mauritius that have only lately begun capturing the attention of the gay jet set.

Lisbon, Portugal

Relatively affordable compared with many other European nations, and a darling of food and wine connoisseurs, Portugal been generating plenty of buzz of late among sophisticated travelers, and its capital city, Lisbon, is steadily emerging from its somewhat conservative shell as a leading gay and lesbian getaway. The city now produces a guide for gay visitors, and the GLBT community has been credited with helping turn around the once grim Bairro Alto neighborhood, transforming it into one of Europe's most charming gay villages.

Ljubljana, Slovenia

Neighboring Croatia gets more attention with gay travelers, at least among the nations that make up the former Yugoslavia, but romantic, beautifully preserved Slovenia and its capital city of Ljubljana (pronounced lyoo-blyah'-nah) are fast developing a pink fan base. Ljubljana looks and feels much the way Prague did before the latter became inundated with tourists and excessive commercialism. With its medieval castle, narrow streets, and ornate bridges, it's a fine city for a strolling. You'll also find a handful of gay bars and cafes, and, to the delight of cinema buffs, Ljubljana hosts an increasingly prestigious gay and lesbian film festival, which will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2009.

Mauritius and Reunion Island

These small islands off the coast of Africa, about 500 miles east of Madagascar, have lately become favorites with Euro jet-setters. Some say Mauritius has the potential to become another Ibiza or Mykonos, with pulsing gay discos beginning to spring up here and there. This island with a population of about a million and a diverse cultural heritage (with English, French, Indian, and Chinese influences) is renowned for its spectacular white-sand beaches. About 120 miles to the southwest, the French island of Reunion (population 800,000) is a volcanic formation with magnificent mountain peaks rising to more than 10,000 feet and a nascent but fast-growing tourism industry. Together, the islands make for a stunning, remote hideaway, and they're already drawing a number of gay visitors from South Africa, Australia, and Europe.

Mexico City, Mexico

With a metro population of nearly 20 million and one of North America's most exciting cultural and arts scenes, there's no question that vibrant—if in some ways chaotic and unpredictable—Mexico City has plenty of gay and lesbian residents. As a gay vacation destination, however, Mexico's capital metropolis has yet to develop a major following. Its reputation is picking up, though, as more and more visitors return home to spread the word about the trendy dining scene, relatively affordable luxury hotels, cruisy gay nightlife, and huge Gay Pride parade held in late June each year. With its relative low cost and a wealth of direct flights from elsewhere in North America, look for Mexico City to become ever more popular among U.S. and Canadian travelers.

Nashville, Tennessee

Although it's smack in the middle of America's so-called Bible Belt, Nashville has become steadily more gay-friendly in recent years. The city has embraced progressive politics, environmentalism, and the arts with great gusto, and a handful of funky little neighborhoods around town (East Nashville, 12th Avenue South) abound with GLBT-popular coffeehouses, restaurants, and boutiques. For these reasons, plenty of "family" are moving to Nashville these days, in search of a slightly more intimate and better-planned alternative to such gay Southern mega-cities as Atlanta, Houston, and Dallas.



The hip Taikang Lu Arts District—with its galleries, cafes, and courtyards—is just one neighborhood that's become popular with gay and lesbian travelers to Shanghai.

Photo by Andrew Collins

Nova Scotia, Canada

Although it's just the second-smallest of Canada's provinces, Nova Scotia and its historic capital city of Halifax offer plenty to see and do, including a handsomely preserved waterfront, exceptional theater and fine arts venues, and verdant parks and gardens. Elsewhere in the province are such popular draws as Lunenburg, a colonial seaport and shipbuilding center now recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the charming fishing village of Peggy's Cove. Gay-owned and gay-friendly B&Bs abound in the towns already mentioned as well as in such scenic communities as Annapolis Royal and Shelburne.

San Luis Obispo County, California

The legalization of gay marriage is but one reason scenic San Luis Obispo County is one of California's best gay-friendly vacation secrets. This area with a charmed setting along the Pacific has one of the nation's most exciting winemaking scenes (especially around the town of Paso Robles), and the largest community—San Luis Obispo—is a lively university town with dozens of superb restaurants and a fun, friendly gay scene. At the southern end of this county that's midway along the coast between Los Angeles and San Francisco, you'll find a number of gay-friendly resorts between the towns of Avila Beach and Pismo Beach.

Shanghai, China

The so-called "Paris of the East", with a population of more than 13 million and a breathtaking skyline of countless postmodern skyscrapers, Shanghai is rapidly becoming Asia's must-see destination for cutting-edge shopping, fashion, and the arts. Attitudes toward gay people are slowly but surely changing for the better—just in the past

decade, the city has seen the opening of several gay bars, along with an extremely popular and attractive gay entertainment-hotel complex. As thousands of ex-pats from all over the world continue to visit and relocate to this exciting, dynamic city, the gay scene will surely explode over the next few years.

Tasmania, Australia

This rugged island state off the southeast coast of the Australian mainland used to have a somewhat conservative reputation, but the tides have turned in recent years. Many gays and lesbians have moved to this laid-back, stunningly beautiful land, known for its natural beauty (don't miss Cradle Mountain or the Freycinet Coast). The island's tourism office produces an extensive guide for GLBT travelers, and you'll find a number of "family"-owned accommodations around this island that's roughly the size of West Virginia and has a population of about a half-million.

Torremolinos, Spain

Spain already has its share of stunning gay vacation areas (Ibiza, Sitges), and in the sunny Andalusian region, yet another has lately begun to emerge: the picturesque beach town of Torremolinos. Numerous hip restaurants and bars have opened, especially in the La Nogalera neighborhood, and the town also has about a dozen resort hotels catering heavily to the GLBT crowd. Spain's fabled Costa del Sol has long had a popular following with northern Europeans, and Torremolinos looks poised to develop into one of the continent's top gay vacation hubs.

* 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.



My head hurts: A lesson on Transgender sexuality

By: Deja Nicole Greenlaw

I recently spent a weekend at a friend's lakeside cottage. There were eight of us there that weekend. One couple was comprised of a Transgender female (a person born physically male) and a Transgender male, (a person born physically female); another couple was a Transgender female and a genetic female; a third couple was a Transgender female and a genetic male; and lastly there was two Transgender females, one who prefers men and the other prefers women. Confused? Need a scorecard to tell who's who? Welcome to the Transgender World! And it gets even more confusing! Please read on!

So at the cottage there were six Transgender and two non-Transgender people present. As you can see we all have somewhat different preferences when it comes to partnering and it's hard to put a label on who we are in those respects. Think about it! For instance, as a Transgender female if I prefer women would



DEJA NICOLE GREENLAW

that make me Lesbian or would that make me straight? And if I prefer men, would that make me Straight or would that make me gay? But, if I preferred a Transgender male what would that make me? How about if I preferred another

Transgender female such as myself? And what would it make all my different partners in all those scenarios? It does get confusing and it does make one think. In the end, however, does it really matter at all? Oh, you might have a "plumbing" preference but really what attracts us to each other is each other's spirit. I guess you might say we Trans peeps might go a little beyond, Straight, Gay, Lesbian and even Bisexual definitions.

So whoever we are and whoever we prefer is wide open and it may change as the years pass. For instance, I was once considered a

heterosexual male who loved a female, but as a male-to-female Transgender I am now considered a female. If I now have a relationship with another female, I would be a Lesbian. But, if I have a relationship with a man then one could say that I am a heterosexual woman. I know this might take time and be tough to follow, especially all you folks who are not that familiar with Trans peeps, but it

should matter.

Yes, falling in love is a tough business. Why should there be gender rules? It's hard enough for anyone, mind you, to get any relationship going so why not try to make it a little easier?

So you get a glimpse of the Transgender thought and you think that we might be deep at times. But then a Cross dresser earnestly introduces to me the idea of a person being a

Yes, falling in love is a tough business. Why should there be gender rules? It's hard enough for anyone, mind you, to get any relationship going so why not try to make it a little easier?

Transgender refugee faces murder charge in Idaho

TWIN FALLS, Idaho (AP)—A transgender Iranian refugee accused of fatally shooting a male roommate, also a refugee from Iran, has been charged with first-degree murder in southern Idaho.

Majid Kolestani, 42, was charged recently in 5th District Court.

Police allege that Kolestani, who was born a man but portrays herself as a woman, shot and killed Ehsan Velayati Kababian, 29, on Monday.

Police said Kababian was in a parked vehicle when Kolestani banged on the window, and then shot Kababian when he opened the driver's door. The vehicle then crashed into a house; Kababian was dead when authorities arrived.

After the shooting, police said Kolestani ran to a nearby house and shot herself in the head, and was taken into custody a short time later.

Police in Twin Falls declined to discuss the

extent of Kolestani's injuries, but she was hospitalized in Boise. After being released from the hospital, police said she was taken into custody and held overnight in the Ada County Jail, then transported to Twin Falls.

The Times-News reported that she appeared in court on Friday in a wheelchair, in handcuffs, with a red mark on one cheek and a small patch of hair shaved off the top of her head. She spoke through an interpreter. She was held without bail in the Twin Falls County Jail.

Ron Black, director of the College of Southern Idaho Refugee Center, said Kolestani assimilated into the Twin Falls area through the center. He said Kababian came through the program as well, but separately from Kolestani.

"It's sad," Black said.

Court records said Kolestani has been in the U.S. since January.

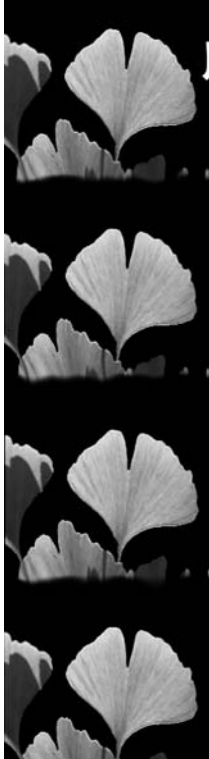
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Hamlet, 10/08/08



Lura, 10/09/08



Ailey II, 10/23/08



Carmen, 10/28/08



Sweet Honey in the Rock, 11/01/08

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Fri, October 3, 8 PM

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ANAT COHEN QUARTET

Fri, November 7, 8 PM

Israeli clarinet and sax sensation Anat Cohen plays a fiery and sophisticated blend of jazz, Brazilian choro, Argentine tango, a variety of Afro-Cuban styles, and even a bit of klezmer.

EVERY SHARPE TRIO

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SHAKESPEARE & COMPANY, HAMLET

Wed, October 8, 7:30 PM | Concert Hall

Shakespeare's timeless tale vividly charts the course of real and feigned madness-from overwhelming grief to seething rage and explores themes of treachery, revenge, incest, and moral corruption.

Pre-performance lecture by Professor Arthur Kinney 6:45 - 7:15 in the University Gallery

Reserved Seating: \$40, \$30, \$15 | Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

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LURA

Thurs, October 9, 7:30 PM | Bowker Auditorium

Lura brings a streetwise, urban sensuality to her sound that embraces French afro-pop, Brazilian rhythms, and earthy, traditional music.

Reserved Seating: \$30, \$15 | Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

Sponsored by the Rainbow Times, 93.9 The River, WGBY TV57 and the UMass Office for Student Affairs and Campus Life. Co-presented with the Cape Verdean Student Association.

AILEY II

Thurs, October 23, 10 AM, | Concert Hall

Ailey II is universally renowned for merging the spirit and energy of the country's best young dance talent with the passion and creative vision of Alvin Ailey.

General Seating: \$8

Sponsored by the Daily Hampshire Gazette, co-

sponsored by the Sankofa project.

TEATRO LIRICO D'EUROPA, CARMEN

Tues, October 28, 7:30 PM, Concert Hall

Bizet's indelible portrait of the willful gypsy woman conveyed through a forceful, beguiling, and unforgettable score. Sung in French with English supertitles.

Pre-performance lecture by Alan Schneider 6:45 - 7:15 PM in Lobby

Reserved Seating: \$40, \$30, \$15 | Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

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"We'll set your heart on fire with the passion of Carmen." Join us for Lobster in Phyllo Tulips w/Shrimp, Scallops & Sherry or the vegetarian option, Spinach & Roast Garlic Ravioli w/caramelized grape tomato cream. Prix Fix at the University Club & Restaurant for \$25. Seating begins at 5pm.



Paul Taylor Dance Company, 11/13/08



Soweto Gospel Choir, 12/01/08



Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, 02/04/09



Thomas Kubelek, 2/13/09



Forever Tango, 3/27/09



National Acrobats of China, 4/19/09

SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK**Sat, November 1, 8 PM | Concert Hall**

This powerful a cappella ensemble seamlessly blends lyrics, spirited movement, and stirring narrative. Since its founding in 1973, Sweet Honey in the Rock has performed around the world, raising their voices in hope, love, justice, peace, and resistance. Interpreted in American Sign Language.

Reserved Seating: \$35, \$30, \$15 | Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

Sponsored by the Hampshire Hospitality Group, The Rainbow Times and 93.9 The River

The Arts Give Back

Please bring a new or gently used suit or professional item of clothing (all sizes welcome) or accessory that will be donated to Dress for Success, a local organization dedicated to promoting the economic independence of disadvantaged women. Visit their web site at www.dressforsuccess.org.

PAUL TAYLOR DANCE COMPANY**Thurs, November 13, 7:30 PM | Concert Hall**

This magnificent troupe is known for its emotional

depth, dazzling physicality, social reverence, humor, superb musicality, and a rare sense of beauty.

Pre-performance lecture by Paul Taylor Dance Company's General Manager, John Tomlinson and Rehearsal Director, Bettie de Jong 6:45 - 7:30 PM in the Lobby.

Reserved Seating: \$40, \$30, \$15 | Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

Sponsored by Silverscape Designs, Cooley Dickinson Hospital and 93.9 The River

Global Gourmet

Please join us for a dinner of sophisticated tastes and textures featuring Seared Sea Scallops with Asiago Vegetable Risotto or the vegetarian option of Creamy Asiago Vegetable Risotto. Prix Fix at the University Club for \$25. Seating begins at 5pm.

The Arts Give Back

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, please bring a non-perishable food item to donate to the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts. To find out more visit www.foodbankwma.org.



Trinity Irish Dance,
3/27/08

**TOMÁS KUBÍNEK****Fri, February 13, 7 PM | Concert Hall**

Part vaudeville, part improv, and completely magical, this artist of international renown leaves his audiences with a comically altered view of life's creative possibilities.

Reserved Seating: \$30, \$25, \$15 | Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

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Family Fun Pre-Show Party

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

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

The reigning ambassador of Portuguese fado, Mariza has been seducing audiences globally with her awesome singing, charismatic stage presence, and powerful blend of traditional and contemporary songs.

Reserved Seating: \$35, \$30, \$15; Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

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

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

LUIS BRAVO'S FOREVER TANGO**Fri, February 27, 8 PM, Concert Hall**

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

Reserved Seating: \$40, \$30, \$15; Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

Sponsored by Fathers & Sons, Bank of America, WGBY TV57, El Sol Latino, La Prensa and WEIB 106.3FM

Global Gourmet

Join us for the national dish of Argentina, Beef. Choice includes Grilled Argentinean Spiced

Delmonico Steak or vegetarian option, Polenta Cakes with Grilled Vegetables and Balsamic glaze. Prix Fix at the University Club for \$25. Seating begins at 5pm.

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

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

Reserved Seating: \$35, \$25, \$15 | Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

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

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

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

Reserved Seating: \$30, \$15; Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

The Cantus performance is support in part for the Vidda Foundation. The University of Massachusetts Amherst Fine Arts Center is a 2008-09 recipient of a CMA Residency Partnership Program Grant. Funding has been provided by the Chamber Music America Residency Endowment Fund.

TRINITY IRISH DANCE**Fri, March 27, 8 PM, Concert Hall**

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

Reserved Seating: \$40, \$30, \$15 | Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

Sponsored by Coca Cola, Peoples Bank and 93.9 The River

The Arts Give Back

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

Global Gourmet

You will be Irish before you get to the performance

SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR**Wed, December 3, 7:30 PM, Concert Hall**

This glorious 25-member choir performs an inspirational blend of tribal, traditional, and popular African gospel music in eight different languages.

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

Reserved Seating: \$35, \$30, \$15 | Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

Sponsored by Hasbro and WEIB 106.3FM

The Arts Give Back

In the spirit of season, please bring a new, unwrapped toy, game, winter clothing item or non-perishable food item to donate to families through the Amherst and Northampton Survival Centers. Visit www.thesc.org and www.people.umass.edu/support/osc/ for a list of needed items.

HUBBARD STREET DANCE CHICAGO**Weds, February 4, 7:30 PM | Concert Hall**

Recognized worldwide for its exuberant, athletic, and eclectic approach to dance, Hubbard Street

Dance Chicago has been an innovative force in contemporary dance for over three decades.

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

Reserved Seating: \$40, \$30, \$15 | Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15
Sponsored by Florence Savings Bank, Prudential Savicki Real Estate, and 93.9 The River

NEW ORLEANS' OWN HOT 8 BRASS BAND**Fri, February 6, 8 PM | Bowker Auditorium**

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

Sponsored by WEIB 106.3FM

Reserved Seating: \$25, \$15 | Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

The Arts Give Back

For our furry friends, please bring an item from the Dakin Humane Society's wish list. Visit www.dakinshelter.org for a list of needs.

if you try our traditional Irish Roast Stuffed Leg of Lamb with a Guinness Stout, of course. Or the vegetarian option of Grilled Vegetable Ravioli with our Irish Chef's family sauce. Prix Fix at the University Club for \$25. Seating begins at 5pm.

I MUSICI DE MONTRÉAL**Sun, April 5, 3 PM, Concert Hall**

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

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

Reserved Seating: \$35, \$30, \$15; Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

NATIONAL PHILHARMONIC OF RUSSIA**Sun, April 19, 7 PM, Concert Hall**

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

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

Reserved Seating: \$45, \$35, \$15; Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$15

Global Gourmet

The University Club & Restaurant will enchant you with our pre-show dinner of Grilled Sockeye Salmon w/Stolichnaya Vodka, Tomato and Cream Reduction or the vegetarian Artichoke, Potato and Leek Gratin. Prix Fix at the University Club for \$25. Seating begins at 5pm.

TOUMANI DIABATÉ SYMMETRIC ORCHESTRA**Thurs, April 23, 7:30 PM, Concert Hall**

Described as the "Jimi Hendrix of the kora," Toumani Diabaté is an ardent experimentalist, enriching his intimate sound with the Symmetric Orchestra's powerful pan-African grooves.

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

Sponsored by 93.9 The River

Reserved Seating: \$30, \$25, \$15 | Five College/GCC

students and youth 17 and under, \$15

The Arts Give Back

Please bring your old, extra, or unwanted cell phones. Even if they aren't working anymore, they can help women and children in need through the New England Learning Center for Women in Transition. To find out more, visit www.nelcwt.org.

Earth Day Celebration

Join us at the Campus Pond (or, in case of inclement weather, on the Concert Hall plaza) on Wednesday, April 22 for an Earth Day Community Celebration with a drum circle with members of the Toumani Diabaté Symmetric Orchestra. There will be food and other fun activities. Come one, come all, bring your drums-it's free! Festivities begin at 5 PM; drum circle begins at 6 PM.

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER**Weds, May 13, 7:30 PM, Concert Hall**

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

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

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

Reserved Seating: \$50, \$40, \$20 | Five College/GCC students and youth 17 and under, \$20

Special Event, No Discounts**Global Gourmet**

Let your passions fly - join us for a pre-concert dinner of Sole en Papillote with Scallops, Shrimp and Herb Stuffing and Israeli Cous Cous or the vegetarian option of Cannelloni w/Ricotta, Parmesan and Mint. Prix Fix at the University Club for \$25. Seating begins at 5pm.

For Tickets or a fully illustrated brochure call 545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS. To download an order form and learn more about us and the artists, visit us at www.fineartscenter.com/centerseries. En Espanol, www.fineartscenter.com/center-series/espanol.

for tickets call 545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS | online at fineartscenter.com

TRT Calendar

ONGOING EVENTS/SUPPORT GROUPS

(MA) **LGBT Afternoon Tea Dances**; Every 3rd Sunday of the month; 3-7 pm. Dance, Drink, Dialogue! The Union Station, 125A Pleasant Street. \$8 admission, \$5 w/student ID. FMI: www.nohopridepromos.com

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

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

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

(MA) **DISCUSSION GROUP FOR LESBIANS 40+** meets every Wednesday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Stonewall Center at UMass. This is a warm and welcoming group of intelligent women. Information email to: JBGreenlee@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; Support group not a therapy group. Free. Every Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Brattleboro, VT. FMI: 802-258-3914.

(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/LGBAffirming; mixed chorus; St. Andrew's, Episcopal Church, 10 No. Main St., Albany, 12203; FMI: 435-4636.

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

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

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

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

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

(NY) **OUT DANCING** (for the LGBTQ community); every Wednesday evening; 7 to 8 p.m.; Saratoga SAVOY, 7 Wells St, Saratoga Springs, NY. For more information: 518-587-5132, <http://saratogasavoy.homestead.com/files/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. 21 & younger.

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

(MA) **EAST COAST FEMALE-TO-MALE GROOM**

(ECFTMG); 2nd Sunday of every month from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. FMI: 413.584.7616 or email: betpower@yahoo.com.

(VT) **TRANS SUPPORT**; 3rd 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@benjamin-robin.net

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

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

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

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

W. MASSACHUSETTS

Sept. 7-18; **FEMINART** All Women's Art Exhibition; Sponsoring Organization: *Berkshire Women for Women Worldwide*; Welles Gallery, Lenox Library, 18 Main Street, Lenox, MA; FMI: Judy Nardacci, 413-698-3878 or 413-243-2382. Cocktail party on Sep. 7 is open to the public at a cost of \$35 per person; \$20 of that charge is a tax-deductible contribution to Berkshire Women for Women Worldwide for the support of UNIFEM programs for the world's poorest women.

Sept. 8 or Sept. 9; Volunteer Night; 7:00pm; Join the staff of the Academy of Music for a special volunteer appreciation & training event. Munchies and good cheer provided. FMI: 413-584-9032 ext. 104

Sept. 13; **5th Annual Berkshire County AIDS Walk & Rally**; First St. Common, Pittsfield. Registration starts at 9 a.m. with a 10 a.m. walk to Park Square for the rally then we walk back to the Common. Entertainment, massages and food will be available. Funds raised remain to assist Berkshire County residents affected by HIV/AIDS. FMI: Pat, 413-442-1506

Sept. 15; Gaudino Dialogue: Former Baseball Commissioner Fay Vincent '60; 8 p.m., MainStage, '62 Center, Williams College; "Failing to Succeed" is the first of four live, unscripted, one-on-one interviews with Williams College alumni about their failures, triumphs, and creativity. Free, but tickets are required. FMI: 597-2425, Tues-Sat, 1-5 pm. Tickets will also be available at the theatre one hour prior to the event. Sponsored by the Gaudino Fund.

Sept. 20; Western Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Contra Dancers; 4-10pm; Montague Grange; 34 Main St. Montague, MA 01351; FMI: (413) 367-9380\$7-10, \$ w/student ID.

Sept. 20; *Out in the Park*; *Six Flags Great Adventure*, Springfield, MA. Kids 2 & under, Free. FMI: www.sixflags.com/newengland.

Sept. 21; *Indigo Girls at the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center*; 7:00 PM; Great Barrington, MA. Tickets on sale to the General Public on Tuesday, July 1st. All Tickets: \$45.

Sept. 21; **LGBT Afternoon Tea Dances**; After the 21st, every 3rd Sunday of the month; 3-7 pm. Dance, Drink, Dialogue! The Union Station, 125A Pleasant Street. \$8 admission; \$5 w/student ID. FMI: www.nohopridepromos.com

Sept. 24-26; *New World Theater* presents Sash & Trim; Curtain Theater, 8 pm; Djola Branner, co-founder of the critically acclaimed Pomo Afro Homos, weaves personal narrative and performance to create a collage of theater, dance, and music in this new work. Tickets: \$15-general public; \$8 seniors/ low

income; \$ 5-students. FMI: FAC Box Office 413-545-2511 or www.newworldtheater.org.

Sept. 27; *OutForReel Film Series*; Western Mass Premiere of *The World Unseen*, a sensual & compelling lesbian love story, on Sept 27 at 7:30 pm at *The Academy of Music in Northampton*. \$10 in advance & for students with current ID; \$12 at the door; For tickets go to Pride & Joy in Northampton FMI: OutForReelFilms@charter.net

Oct. 10-13; *Paradise City Arts Festival*; Sat. & Sun. 10am-6pm; Columbus Day 10am-4pm. Three County Fairgrounds, Old Ferry Road and Route 9, Northampton, MA 01060; \$12 adult; \$8 seniors/students; under 12 free; FMI: 800 511-9725 or info@paradisecityarts.com

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

Oct. 31; **LGBT Halloween Costume Ball**; 8 pm; at The Union Station, Northampton, MA. Prizes for the best costumes! FMI: www.nohopridepromos.com

CAPITAL DISTRICT OF NY

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

Sept. 5; 'The Eye of the Ego'; A Photographic Exhibition by Alan Bennett Ilgan; Presented by the Romaine Brooks Gallery, 332 Hudson Ave., Albany, NY 12210; 5-9PM. FMI: www.alanilgan.com

Sept. 6; *Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead*, 2pm; Ever wonder what happened to your beloved Peanut(s) characters? Well The Local Actors Guild of Saratoga knows; join them as they present Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead. The Saratoga Arts Center; 320 Broadway, Saratoga Springs. FREE for all 13-18 year old LGBTQ youth! (And you thought being an LGBTQ teenager would never pay off!) Must contact Q at qdiamond@cdglcc.org to sign up (by August 29th).

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

Sept. 14; *The Wedding March*; Pedestrian Bridge at the Corning Preserve, Albany, NY; 11 am; Albany will become the third site in the nation for a special marriage equality "moment." The Wedding March 2008 is the fifth year that the Brooklyn Bridge in NYC and the second year that the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco will be sites for The Wedding March: the wonderful rainbow demonstration of solidarity and determination sponsored by Marriage Equality NY. March across the Pedestrian Bridge that connects the Hudson River's Corning Preserve to downtown Albany (crossing over Rte 787). FMI: Matt and Travis at proudnew@gmail.com

Sept. 20; Motorcycle Ride; Riding from Schenectady to Cooperstown; 10 am; FMI: Connie Schmitz at 518-366-3808.

Sept. 28; AIDS Walk; 1pm; Washington Park; FMI: www.aidscouncil.org/.

Oct. 4-5; CDGLCC's LGBTQ History Month Book Sale; All proceeds will benefit the CDGLCC library. Accepting book donations until Wednesday, Oct. 1st. Please contact qdiamond@cdglcc.org or call (518) 462-6138.

Oct. 12-14th; 4th National Conference on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Aging "It's About Time: LGBT Aging in a Changing World;" New York Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge, 333 Adams Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201. FMI: www.sageusa.org

N. CONNECTICUT

Sept. 4; 5:30-8:30PM; The Pond House Café 1555 Asylum Ave, West Hartford. Hors d'oeuvres, Pasta

Bar & Cash Bar; Admission: \$30 pre-paid/\$35 at the door. Vote for your favorite talent act online at ctaid-scoalition.org for a minimum \$5 donation. Finalists will perform live at *Connecticut AIDS Resource Coalition's*, CARC, annual Summer Camp event on September 4th.

Sept. 8; *New Heaven Gay & Lesbian Community Center's* Rainbow Support Group; 5-8:30 p.m.; 50 Fitch St, New Haven, CT. FMI: www.nhglcc.org

Sept. 11; Women & Families Open Hours; New Heaven Gay & Lesbian Community Center; 12 pm - 8pm; 50 Fitch St, New Haven, CT. FMI: www.nhglcc.org

Sept. 12; *BUSTED! AGAIN FASHION SHOW*; 8 pm; Tommy's Restaurant; 825 Saybrook Rd., Middletown, CT 06457; \$10 at the door (Pay what you can, no one turned away for lack of funds); 21+ BUSTED! A fashion show by and for the trans and gender non-conforming community, its allies and friends. Free Food, Cash Bar, Strut Your Stuff; FMI: diana@transadvocacy.com or call (860) 983-8139

Sept. 15; GLANCE; GLANCE offers those 18-28 a safe, fun environment to meet people and to have some fun. Some nights include: games nights, discussion nights, and movie nights. A trip to a local diner usually follows; 8-11 pm at the New Heaven Gay & Lesbian Community Center; 50 Fitch St, New Haven, CT. FMI: www.nhglcc.org

Sept. 17-21; *CT AIDS Bike Tour*; Ride some of the most incredibly scenic routes in the State: from Hartford, to Litchfield, then Danbury, onto Stamford, by way of Bridgeport, and then New Haven, New London and Willimantic, ending up back in Hartford. Ride every day one or more. Join in at any point along the way. Ride to support programs that assist and support thousands of Connecticut residents who live with HIV/AIDS. FMI: www.ctaidsbiketour.org

Sept. 17; Join Love Makes a Family for a community organizing meeting! 7-8pm; Now is a critical time to be a part of the movement for Marriage Equality in CT. Come join the LMAF Field team for an exciting discussion of: The status of the statewide campaign for marriage equality; The positions of local legislators; Upcoming Events and actions in the area. At the New Heaven Gay & Lesbian Community Center; 50 Fitch St, New Haven, CT. FMI: www.nhglcc.org

Sept. 21; *CT SOFFA* group is a group for significant others, family, friends & allies of Transgendered, Transsexual and Gender Variant people (SOFFAs). 2-4 pm; Trans people who are also SOFFAs are welcome. MUST RSVP. FMI: Kristal Barnes by E-mail at u2kristal@gmail.com or call (860)878-5256. At: New Heaven Gay & Lesbian Community Center; 50 Fitch St, New Haven, CT.

Nov. 8; *One Big Event: A benefit for the Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective*; 6:00 p.m. to Midnight; Hilton Hartford Hotel; Hartford, CT. Featuring: Emcee Michael Wilson, Entertainer Varla Jean Merman, and Honorary Host Mayor Eddie Perez. Musical entertainment provided by the Shaded Soul Band. Cocktails, Silent Auction, Dinner, Entertainment, and Dancing. Formal Attire Encouraged.

S. VERMONT

Sept. 7; MEN'S PROGRAM BBQ; 11am - 3pm; Burrington Pavilion at Townshend Dam, Townshend, VT. FMI: 802-254-2400.

Sept. 11; BOOK CLUB; 7pm, at the Menspace. Book is Christopher Isherwood's *THE WORLD IN AN EVENING*. FMI: Curtis, 802-254-2400.

Sept. 17; "CONNECTING" GROUP; 7 - 8:30pm, Menspace. RSVP. These evenings are always interesting and different, as the mix of men is always changing. Join the conversation. Pre-registration is REQUIRED, space is limited. FMI: Howie at 802-254-4444 or email him at men@sover.net.

Sept. 19; SPIRITUALITY; 7pm; the Menspace; Open discussion, no set theme, popcorn style. FMI: 802-254-2400.

Sept. 24; WRITING GROUP; 7-8:30pm, Menspace. Meet monthly. FMI: 802-254-2400.

Sept. 26; GAYME NIGHT; 7pm, Howie's place in Chesterfield, NH. FMI: Howie - 603-256-6995.

One Big Event: Supporting CT's only LGBT health organization

The Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective's 6th One Big Event (OBE) will take place on Saturday, November 8, 2008 at the *Hilton Hartford Hotel* from 6:00 p.m. to midnight. It promises to be a great time: cool crowd, fine food, awesome auction, elegant entertainment and music to make you move. And we're celebrating our 25th anniversary! So mark your calendar NOW!

Last year over 400 people attended and demand for tickets is expected to be high. It's a great night out and it helps to support the important work of one of Connecticut's only lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender health organization.

"We are especially excited about this year's *One Big Event* as it marks a milestone in our



agency's history," said Board President, John McGarvey. "It is rare for a city the size of Hartford to have a medical facility devoted to the LGBT community. And I do not use the term "devoted" lightly. Our staff and volunteers are truly dedicated to their mission."

Plans are already underway to celebrate the

25 years of activism, outreach, education and healthcare to the greater Hartford community. OBE is the kickoff to a year of celebratory events for the agency.

Michael Wilson, *Hartford Stage's* Artistic Director, will again be the Master of Ceremonies for the evening. The wicked and wonderful *Varla Jean Merman* will provide laughter and song for the evening's entertainment. And Hartford's best dance band, *Shaded Soul*, will close the evening with music that gets even the shyest wallflower out

on the dance floor.

Executive Director Linda Estabrook said, "One Big Event is always a special evening. It is a celebration of not only an organization, but a community and its incredible support of the staff and clients. We are grateful to the people who attend and help to make possible the work we do." This year, the organizing committee has a goal of raising \$75,000 for the agency's programs. It's an ambitious amount but we are confident that we can obtain it.

We are fortunate to have *ING* back as our Biggest Sponsor. Tickets for *One Big Event* are \$100, \$150 and \$200. For more information, contact Coordinator Dan Millett at danm@hglhc.org or at (860)278-4163 x18. For more information and updates, go to our website: www.onebigevent.org.

For more information, see page 22.

One Big Event is a Benefit for the Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective.

"Breaking the Song Barrier:" A concert featuring music by women composers and songwriters

Founded in the fall of 1989, with roots in the lesbian community and open to all women, the chorus performs an eclectic repertoire, including standard concert pieces as well as traditional and contemporary music which reflects women's lives.

Members come from varied backgrounds and lifestyles and bring with them varying degrees of musical training. Together, we work for musical excellence, and perform for the pleasure of our audiences and ourselves.

The upcoming concerts will be on Saturday, November 8, at 8:00 p.m. at the Unity Church of Greater Hartford, located at 919 Ellington



Road (Route 30), South Windsor, CT. A second concert will happen on Saturday, November 15, 2008 at

8:00 p.m., at the Unitarian Society of New Haven located at 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, CT.

The Concert ticket prices are: Children under 12 are \$15.00; Seniors (over 65) and advance sale tickets are \$18.00; and at the door tickets are \$20.00. Tickets are available online and at our ticket outlets. For more information, visit Another Octave's site: www.anotheroctave.org/index.html

CT Health plan adds providers, helps HIV

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)—Gov. M. Jodi Rell says 13 community health centers are now signed up as health care providers in the state's Charter Oak Health Care Plan network.

The sites are throughout Connecticut and include Hartford, Middletown, Torrington, Norwich, Willimantic, Bridgeport, Waterbury, Norwalk and New Haven.

The affordable health insurance program, which targets uninsured adults, has been crit-

icized by some lawmakers for its small network of providers.

But Rell says her administration is working to build the network, predicted to eventually cover 19,000 people.

The health centers provide a range of services including primary care, prenatal care, dental services, mental health counseling, HIV care, family planning, homeless support services and substance abuse counseling.

Lesbian Best Sellers*

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

* By wolfevideo.com

Gay Best Sellers*

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

* By wolfevideo.com



If you've ever considered being a Foster Parent ... NOW is the time to do it.

Connecticut's children need you more than ever.

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

More Connecticut Events on Pages 20-23

LGBT Politics 2008

Obama, McCain on the issues, in depth

By: The Associated Press

A look at where Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain stand on a selection of issues as the national party conventions affirm their presidential nominations and launch the fall campaign before the Nov. 4 election:

ABORTION

McCain: Opposes abortion rights. Has voted for abortion restrictions permissible under Roe v. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court ruling that legalized the procedure. Now says he would seek to overturn that guarantee of abortion rights while being open to a running mate who supports abortion rights. Would not seek constitutional amendment to ban abortion.

Obama: Favors abortion rights.

AFGHANISTAN

McCain: Favors unspecified boost in U.S. forces.

Obama: Would add about 7,000 troops to the U.S. force of 36,000, bringing the reinforcements from Iraq. Has threatened unilateral attack on high-value terrorist targets in Pakistan as they become exposed, "if Pakistan cannot or will not act" against them.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

McCain: The co-author of McCain-Feingold campaign finance law, he plans to run his general campaign with public money and within its spending limits. He has urged Obama to do the same. He applied for federal matching funds for primaries but later turned them down so he could spend more than the limits. Federal Election Commission belatedly approved his decision to bypass the primary funds, but rejected McCain's claim that he needed no such approval. McCain accepts campaign contributions from lobbyists.

Obama: The presidential campaign's fundraising champion has brought in \$390 million. He plans to raise private money for his general election, despite his proposal last year to accept public financing and its spending limits if the Republican nominee does, too. Obama refuses to accept money from federal lobbyists and has instructed the Democratic National Committee to do the same for its joint victory fund, an account that

would benefit the nominee. Obama does accept money from state lobbyists and from family members of federal lobbyists.

CUBA

McCain: Ease restrictions on Cuba once U.S. is "confident that the transition to a free and open democracy is being made."

Obama: Ease restrictions on family-related travel and on money Cuban-Americans want to send to their families in Cuba. Open to meeting new Cuban leader Raul Castro without preconditions. Ease trade embargo if Havana "begins opening Cuba to meaningful democratic change."

DEATH PENALTY

McCain: Has supported expansion of the federal death penalty and limits on appeals.

Obama: Supports death penalty for crimes for which the "community is justified in expressing the full measure of its outrage." As Illinois lawmaker, wrote bill mandating videotaping of interrogations and confessions in capital cases and sought other changes in system that had produced wrongful convictions.

EDUCATION

McCain: Favors parental choice of schools, including vouchers for private schools when approved by local officials, and right of parents to choose home schooling. More money for community college education.

Obama: An \$18 billion plan that would encourage, but not mandate, universal pre-kindergarten. Teacher pay raises tied to, although not based solely on, test scores. An overhaul of President George W. Bush's No Child Left Behind law to better measure student progress, make room for non-core subjects like music and art and be less punitive toward failing schools. A tax credit to pay up to \$4,000 of college costs for students who perform 100 hours of community service a year. Obama would pay for his plan by ending corporate tax deductions for CEO pay and delaying NASA's moon and Mars missions.

ENERGY

McCain: Favors increased offshore drilling and federal money to help build 45 nuclear power reactors by 2030. Opposes drilling in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Proposed



suspending the 18-cent a gallon federal gasoline tax but idea got no traction. Global warming plan would increase energy costs.

Obama: Now would consider limited increase in offshore drilling. Opposes drilling in Arctic reserve. Proposes windfall-profits tax on largest oil companies to pay for energy rebate of up to \$1,000. Opposed suspension of the gas tax. Open to tapping the Strategic Petroleum Reserve for short-term relief from high energy costs. Global warming plan would increase energy costs.

GAY MARRIAGE

McCain: Opposes constitutional amendment to ban it. Says same-sex couples should be allowed to enter into legal agreements for insurance and similar benefits, and states should decide about marriage.

Obama: Opposes constitutional amendment to ban it. Supports civil unions, says states should decide about marriage.

GLOBAL WARMING

McCain: Broke with President George W. Bush, also a Republican, on global warming. Led Senate effort to cap greenhouse gas emissions; favors tougher fuel efficiency standards. Favors plan that would see greenhouse gas emissions cut by 60 percent by 2050.

Obama: Ten-year, \$150 billion program to produce "climate friendly" energy supplies that he'd pay for with a carbon auction requiring businesses to bid competitively for the right to pollute and aimed at cutting greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2050. Joined McCain in sponsoring earlier legislation that would set mandatory caps on greenhouse gas emissions. Supports tougher fuel-efficiency standards.

GUN CONTROL

McCain: Voted against ban on assault-type weapons but in favor of requiring background checks at gun shows. Voted to shield gun-makers and dealers from civil suits.

Obama: Voted to leave gun-makers and dealers open to suit. Also, as Illinois state lawmaker, supported ban on all forms of semiautomatic weapons and tighter state restrictions generally on firearms.

HEALTH CARE

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.

Obama: Mandatory coverage for children, no mandate for adults. 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.

HOUSING

McCain: Open to helping homeowners facing foreclosure if they are "legitimate borrowers" and not speculators.

Obama: Tax credit covering 10 percent of annual mortgage-interest payments for "struggling homeowners" scoring system for consumers to compare mortgages, a fund for mortgage-fraud victims, new penalties for mortgage fraud, aid to state and local governments stung by housing crisis, in \$20 billion plan geared to "responsible homeowners."

IMMIGRATION

McCain: Sponsored 2006 bill that would have allowed illegal immigrants to stay in the U.S., work and apply to become legal residents after learning English, paying fines and back taxes and clearing a background check. Now says he would secure the border first. Supports border fence.

Obama: Voted for 2006 bill offering legal status to illegal immigrants subject to conditions, including English proficiency and payment of back taxes and fines. Voted for border fence.

IRAN

McCain: Favors tougher sanctions, opposes direct high-level talks with President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Obama: Initially said he would meet Ahmadinejad without preconditions, now says he's not sure "Ahmadinejad is the right person to meet with right now." But says direct diplomacy with Iranian leaders would give U.S. more credibility to press for tougher international sanctions. Says he would intensify diplomatic pressure on Tehran before Israel feels the need to take unilateral military action against Iranian nuclear facilities.

See Obama, McCain on Page 26

CT Neighborhood Organizations

AIDS Testing: www.guardianhealth.org

Gay Father's Group: (203) 938-2881Hartford
Community Center: (860) 724-5542CT Freedom
Marry Coalition: (203) 791-9553Love Makes a Family:
www.lmf-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 -
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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:
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More Lesbian Voices

Lesbian Notions: Will the "Real" women please stand up?



By: Rev. Irene Monroe*

The Beijing Olympic Games are over, and the United States sent a formidable team. *Time Magazine* listed 100 Olympic athletes to watch out for.

Dara Torres, nine times an Olympic medalist, was one of them. At 41, Torres has been swimming faster than she did in her 20s, revealing a more muscular and toned physique. While the question of steroid use could be asked, questions concerning her gender and sexual orientation should not.

Yet, the Beijing Olympic organizers devised a "gender-determination laboratory" for "suspected" athletes like Torres, to catch "gender frauds"—men masquerading as women. Their experts at Peking Union Medical College Hospital evaluated blood samples to test their genes, hormones, and chromosomes, but, first and foremost, they looked at the athletes' physical appearance. According to these experts, Torres, with her washboard abs, should fail.

And while we know reducing female athletes to their sex chromosomes is absurd, America has a different test to verify the authenticity of its "gender fraud"—cultural

markers of beauty and femininity. On appearance alone, Torres would fail.

The question of women's physiques has always suggested a norm of beauty and femininity that supposedly many female athletes don't meet. And their image as strong women has always created fear about a deluge of lesbians, intersexuals, and transwomen tilting the level playing field away from "real" women.

With the passage of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, prohibiting discrimination based on gender in education programs and activities receiving federal funding, women's participation in high school and collegiate sports grew. But with women's increased participation in sports, the damaging stereotype of the lesbian athlete became prominent as a way to police unfeminine behavior. And many women who chose to participate in sports often went to great lengths to display traditional heterosexual cultural markers through their clothing, hairstyles, and mannerisms.

LGBTQ athletes must constantly monitor how they are being perceived by teammates, coaches, endorsers, and the media in order to avoid suspicion. They are expected to maintain a public silence and decorum so that their identity does not tarnish the rest of the team.

For example, tennis great Martina Navratilova, who is a lesbian, was once pub-

licly taunted for not bringing femininity and beauty to her game. Her muscular physique and supposedly masculine appearance killed not only sponsor endorsements but also attempted to kill her spirit in playing the game.

"As a professional tennis player, when I came out, my focus wasn't on things like losing endorsements or handling the press or even sacrificing personal privacy," Navratilova wrote in the upcoming book *Crisis: 40 Stories Revealing The Personal, Social, and Religious Pain and Trauma of Growing up Gay in America* [September 2008]. "The biggest thing on my mind was being true to myself: I realized that I couldn't go on being a champion on the court if I was leaving half of myself off the court."

But to restore traditional femininity and heterosexuality to American female athletes, Amanda Ray Beard, an Olympic swimmer, posed for the July 2007 issue of *Playboy*. And in June 2008, my home girl from Massachusetts, Alicia Marie Sacramone, along with teammates Shawn Johnson and Nastia Liukin, who were in the Beijing Olympics, became the first female athletes to be signed as CoverGirl spokesmodels.

The question of who's a "real" female and who isn't will persist as long as lesbian-baiting continues to be part and parcel of the world of sports. Even presumptive

Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama's wife, Michelle, told *Good Morning America* co-anchor Robin Roberts that she's "a jock at heart, but likes to look nice"—she's lately become a fashion icon, appearing on *Vanity Fair*'s 2008 "Best Dressed List."

Sports programs are a particular challenge when attempting to make schools, playgrounds, and locker rooms safe for our LGBTQ children. And as long as young women will be stigmatized as lesbian, that stigma will control women's participation.

But sports can also provide innumerable opportunities to teach valuable life lessons and can be a powerful influence in addressing myriad social issues. And eliminating lesbian-baiting can be one of them.

Dara Torres, a heterosexual and a mother of 2-year-old, inspires generations of female swimmers, and by extension, all females interested in sports. Her age signals to us middle-aged women, like myself, that we still got game. And her body inspires a whole lot of us couch potatoes to get moving.

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

Lesbian activist Del Martin dies at 87, "the fight for our rights is not over"

By: Lisa Leff/AP

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Pioneering U.S. lesbian rights activist Del Martin, who married her longtime partner in June on the first day that California's same-sex couples gained that right, died Wednesday. She was 87.

Kate Kendell, executive director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, said Martin died at a hospital, two weeks after a broken arm exacerbated existing health problems.

Her wife, Phyllis Lyon, was with her.

"Ever since I met Del 55 years ago, I could never imagine a day would come when she

wouldn't be by my side," Lyon, 83, said in a statement.

"Ever since I met Del 55 years ago, I could never imagine a day would come when she wouldn't be by my side," Lyon, 83, said in a statement.

"I also never imagined there would be a day that we would actually be able to get mar-

ried," she added. "I am devastated, but I take some solace in knowing we were able to

enjoy the ultimate rite of love and commitment before she passed."

U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, of San Francisco, said Del and Phyllis were instrumental in getting gay marriage legalized.

"We would not have marriage equality in California if it weren't for Del and Phyllis. They fought and triumphed in many battles," Pelosi said. "Through it all, their love and commitment to each other was an inspiration to all who knew them."

Martin and Lyon were married at City Hall on June 16. Mayor Gavin Newsom, who officiated the wedding, singled them out to be the first gay couple to legally exchange vows in the city, in recognition of their long relationship and their status as gay-rights pioneers.

"The greatest way we can honor the life work of Del Martin, is to continue to fight and never give up, until we have achieved equality for all," Newsom said Wednesday.

Martin and Lyon were among the two dozen couples who were plaintiffs in the lawsuits that led the state Supreme Court to overturn California's ban on gay marriage in May.

Along with six other women, they founded a San Francisco social club for lesbians in 1955 called the Daughters of Bilitis after a book of lesbian erotic poetry published in Paris. The group evolved into the nation's first lesbian advocacy organization.

See Del Martin on Page 26

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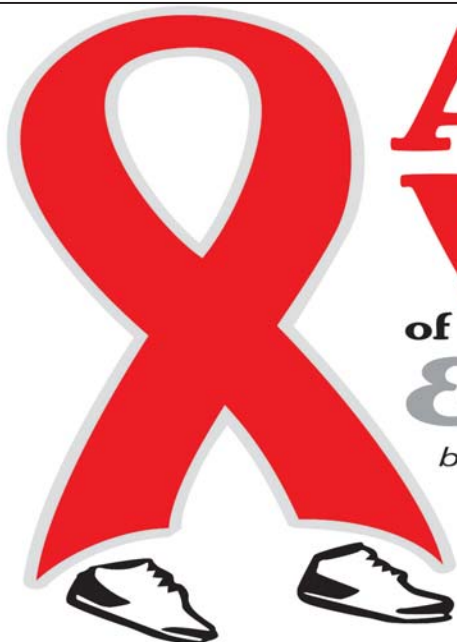
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Street Sense

With Hillary Clinton uniting the Democratic Party most recently, it seems clear she will be offered a position of power within a future Barack Obama administration. What Cabinet or other position would you like to see her in?



Mary Lorenz
Special
Education/Resource
Room Teacher
Florence, MA

"I think she could have the most positive influence on the Supreme Court, so I'd like to see her keep working in the Senate until an opening comes up. And, then on to the Supreme Court, to have an effect for a long time."



Mark Carmien
Owner, Pride and Joy,
Northampton, MA

"I think she would be best as Attorney General, given her legal background, and her clear understanding of the law and the Constitution, the limits there of."



Matt Meers
Theatre manager,
Academy of Music
Northampton, MA

"I think everybody would root for her to be Secretary of State, since she is so well known internationally ... I think Secretary of the Interior would be a good spot for her, to focus on all the problems here at home. Her talent would be wasted overseas."



Heather McCreary
Mother/Teacher's Aide,
Florence, MA

"I think I would most like to see Hillary Clinton take up where she left off with the health care issue; I don't know what cabinet position that would be, but I think that's what she's best suited for. I know she did a lot of good work on that already."

Obama, McCain from Page 20

IRAQ

McCain: Opposes scheduling a troop withdrawal, saying latest strategy is succeeding. Supported decision to go to war, but was early critic of the manner in which administration prosecuted it. Was key backer of the troop increase. Willing to have permanent U.S. peacekeeping forces in Iraq.

Obama: Spoke against war at start, opposed troop increase. Voted against one major military spending bill in May 2007; otherwise voted in favor of money to support the war. Says his plan would complete withdrawal of combat troops in 16 months. Initially had said a timetable for completing withdrawal would be irresponsible without knowing what facts he'd face in office.

SOCIAL SECURITY

McCain: "Nothing's off the table" when it comes to saving Social Security.

Obama: Would raise payroll tax on wealthiest by applying it to portion of income over \$250,000. Now, payroll tax is applied to income up to \$102,000. Rules out raising the retirement age for benefits.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

McCain: Supports relaxing federal restrictions on financing of embryonic stem cell research.

Obama: Supports relaxing federal restrictions on financing of embryonic stem cell research. TAXES

McCain: Pledged not to raise taxes, then equivocated, saying nothing can be ruled out in negotiating compromises to keep Social Security solvent. Twice opposed Bush's tax cuts, at first because he said they were tilted to the wealthiest and again because of the unknown costs of Iraq war. Now says those tax cuts, expiring in 2010, should be perma-

nent. Proposes cutting corporate tax rate to 25 percent. Promises balance budget in first term, says that is unlikely in his first year.

Obama: Raise income taxes on wealthiest and their capital gains and dividends taxes. Raise corporate taxes. \$80 billion in tax breaks mainly for poor workers and elderly, including tripling Earned Income Tax Credit for minimum-wage workers and higher credit for larger families. Eliminate 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.

TRADE

McCain: Free trade advocate.

Obama: Seek to reopen North American Free Trade Agreement to strengthen enforcement of labor and environmental standards. In 2004 Senate campaign, called for "enforcing existing trade agreements," not amending them.

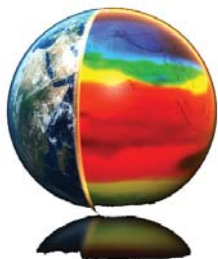
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Another Gay Sequel: Gays Gone Wild (G)

Genre: Comedy
Rating: Not yet rated
Distribution: Limited Release
Director: Todd Stephens
Starring: Jonah Blechman, RuPaul
Release Date: 00/00/00
Synopsis: Characters from Another Gay Movie reunite at a gay resort in Florida.

Religulous (L&G)

Genre: Documentary; Rating: R
Distribution: Wide Release
Director: Larry Charles; Distributor: Lionsgate
Starring: Bill Maher; Release Date: 10/03/08
Synopsis: Progressive news satirist and comic Bill Maher travels the globe to investigate the current state of world religion. Throughout the documentary, he questions many religious leaders as to why they do not welcome gay and lesbian members into their fold.

I Think We Are Alone Now (T)

Genre: Documentary; Rating: Not yet rated
Distribution: Limited Release
Director: Sean Donnelly; Release Date: 00/00/00
Notes: Premiered at 2008 Slamdance Film Festival
Synopsis: Called stalkers by the media, the two individuals profiled in this film would probably describe their shared obsession with 80's pop star Tiffany in far more benign terms. One of the film's subjects, Denver native Kelly McCormick, is intersex.

Cherry Blossoms (L)

Genre: Drama, Romance; Rating: Not yet rated
Distribution: Limited Release
Director: Doris Dorrie
Status: 2008 Berlin International Film Festival
Release Date: 00/00/00
Synopsis: About a middle-aged German couple "discovering love on the brink of death." They have a gay daughter.

Del Martin from Page 24

Martin in 1970 wrote an influential article in the Advocate magazine that criticized what she saw as the gay rights movement's persistent chauvinism. She and Lyon together wrote "Lesbian/Woman," a 1972 book that argued lesbians should be seen for more than their sexuality and simultaneously offered a frank, no-nonsense account of lesbian relationships.

A year later, Martin became the first out lesbian to serve on the board of directors of the National Organization for Women, even

though opponents within the group feared the impact of having a leader that many in the mainstream still viewed as socially deviant.

Martin was born in San Francisco and had a daughter from a four-year marriage to her college sweetheart.

She is survived by Lyon; her daughter, Kendra Mon, and two grandchildren.

Newsom ordered American flags at City Hall and the rainbow flag in the Castro District to be flown at half-staff. Plans for a public memorial are pending.

Jennifer L. Dexter

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OnTheHUNT.com Shoots – You Score

By: Michael A. Knipp*

Good news, Manhunter—now you can have your beef cake and meet him too.

OLB Media—sister company of Online-Buddies, which operates Manhunt—recently launched *OnTheHUNT.com*, an original-content amateur site that features the sexual encounters of real-life Manhunt members, filmed by some of the adult industry's top stars.

"We realized that every day thousands of guys are hooking up on Manhunt, and we thought it would really amazing to capture these hookups as they happen," said Gary Blumenthal, OnTheHUNT.com's webmaster. "We wondered if members would actually be interested in having their private sex lives filmed, so we did a very small banner campaign which lasted less than a week. In that short time, hundreds of guys applied."

Since the recruitment campaign kicked off earlier this year, OnTheHUNT.com has received an estimated 1,500 applications, in fact—some from Manhunt members who are applying together, but most from men wishing to be paired up with an unknown partner.

"We usually start by asking if they have a scene partner in mind," Blumenthal explained about the application process. "Perhaps it's someone they've already met on Manhunt, or somebody they would like to meet. We try to let potential models choose their own scene partners, but if they don't have anyone in mind we pair them up with someone that we feel will be a good match."

Once a match is selected, the two "models" meet at a central location, usually a hotel or a private residence, where cameras are rolling in advance in order to capture the scene from the very beginning – awkward greeting and all.

So far, the company has traveled to 17 states to bring willing Manhunt members together for first-time sessions. Participating individuals—those engaging in "other" scenes—each receive \$1,000.

But Blumenthal says that the big perk is "having a famous adult-film star visit your



home" to tape the tryst.

Among the moonlighting cameramen are adult-film A-listers Collin O'Neal, Caesar, and Jeremy Hall – all of whom are featured in OnTheHUNT.com's debut videos. In addition, Falcon Studios has granted permission for its "lifetime exclusive" Matthew Rush to demonstrate his cinematic skills, marking the first time in Rush's film career that he appears in a non-Falcon property.

"We thought our members might feel more comfortable having their hookups filmed by a star," Blumenthal said.

Though OnTheHUNT.com's content is advertised as "unedited," Blumenthal admits that on average about 5 percent of each video is lost in the editing process, most of which is when the camera is out of frame or set aside.

Nonetheless, the site's videos are longer – each lasting an average of 40 minutes – than its competition's (SeanCody.com and CorbinFisher.com) content, but Blumenthal doesn't consider those sites competition anyway.

"Both SeanCody.com and CorbinFisher.com are niche-specific Web sites focusing on all-American jock-type guys, many of whom are 'gay for pay,'" he said. "Our site is not niche specific, and as far as we know our models are gay and proud. You never know, from week to week, who you'll see on OnTheHunt.com."

Either way, Blumenthal expects that Manhunt members will be pleased with the final product.

"I think the personal connection that members can potentially have with the models is exciting," he said. "The idea of seeing someone in your area, on Manhunt, over and over again ... Maybe you even met them. Now you have the opportunity to see someone, with whom you have a connection, performing in a video. I think that will be a real thrill."

* Michael A. Knipp is an NYC-based freelance writer and the founder of Line/Byline Communications. He can be reached at michael.knipp@gmail.com.

C'mon Out from Page 2

clients complain of the exact same thing. Yes, there can be a lot of pressure within the gay community to have casual sex. And while there is nothing wrong in hooking up and having consensual sex, some gay men confuse sex with intimacy.

And no, you are not a weirdo for wanting what you want. There may be a lot of gay men who chose many sexual partners, but there are many who do not. There is nothing wrong with wanting to wait for the right partner.

Follow your own heart and you will never veer far from your own happiness?

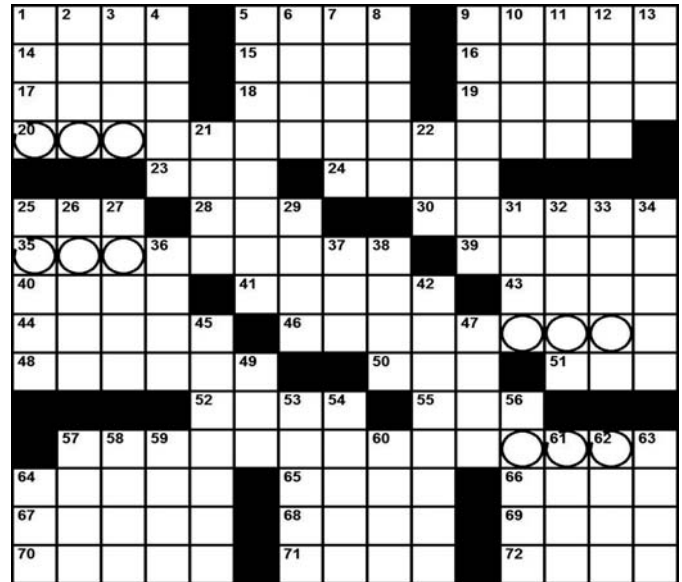
Tetty

C'mon Out! Submit your questions to Tetty Gorfine,

Director of LifeCourse Counseling Center. Simply go to www.lifecourse.net and click on "Ask Us A Question." All questions will be answered on the bulletin board. One or two will be printed next month here in *The Rainbow Times*.

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

Q Puzzle: Elton's John



Across

- 1 Jackson and McKuen, for example
- 5 Big swallow
- 9 *Oh! Calcutta!* group of actors?
- 14 Like phone sex?
- 15 Lucci's Erica in *All My Children*
- 16 Halliwell's lover
- 17 Glinda portrayed in *The Wiz*
- 18 ____ instant (like premature ejaculation)
- 19 Juicy fruit
- 20 What pirates do to get booty?
- 23 "Scram!" in Auden's land, with "off"
- 24 Start of a Tony Orlando title
- 25 Std. of a line through George Michael's land
- 28 R. Mapplethorpe supporter
- 30 One way to come out
- 35 Promiscuous linemen, to Esera Tuaolo?
- 39 Artful move, in *Oliver!*
- 40 Sometime Capote associate Chaplin
- 41 Tires, with "out"
- 43 *Spamalot* writer Eric
- 44 Billie Holiday's "God ____ the Child"
- 46 Photojournalistic mag with porn?
- 48 Walk like a drag queen
- 50 Word before verily, in the King James
- 51 Little black bk. listings
- 52 California Assemblymember Mark
- 55 Gaza Stripper's assn.
- 57 Gay guy into weaving?
- 64 Rent
- 65 Horse that isn't hung
- 66 What a computer may spit out
- 67 Rock Hudson's *Gun Fury*, for one
- 68 Gomer's "anti"
- 69 Katharine's *Butch Cassidy* role
- 70 *SNL*'s Cheri
- 71 Young women who have balls
- 72 Ps on the Parthenon

Down

- 1 Rock's longtime companion
- 2 Milk go-with
- 3 Paul of *Little Miss Sunshine*
- 4 Supporters in the bedroom
- 5 Like beauty
- 6 Fairy godmother's stick
- 7 Ill-suited
- 8 Bottle dwellers, to Aladdin
- 9 Composer Aaron
- 10 Part of San Francisco's BART
- 11 Without a date
- 12 Went lickety-split
- 13 Madonna's pair
- 21 Top drawer
- 22 Bloom of *The Producers*
- 25 Messy little balls
- 26 Big bucks
- 27 The sounds of music
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Queer Voices from NY

A man of God: Standing strong for faith

By: Paul P. Jesep*

V. Gene Robinson, the ninth bishop for the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire, is an internationally recognized spiritual leader who has advanced civil and human rights and transcended religious and cultural boundaries. Despite the mostly negative worldwide reaction to a gay priest being elevated to the episcopacy, Gene Robinson has maintained his dignity, composure, and responded to the hostility, if not hatred, with love, kindness, and extraordinary patience. It is one of the reasons he is a hero to the GLBT and searching community estranged from religion. This gentle, remarkable soul exemplifies a positive faith that blesses the families and individual lives of GLBT and searching community.

"More and more people are making a distinction between religion and faith," he said during an interview at the Diocesan House in Concord. "The vast majority of Americans consider themselves spiritual, but a growing number would not look to the church for help with their spiritual life."

The Kentucky native observed that religious "institutions in general are suspect and viewed with a certain amount of skepticism. Add to that the very negative experiences people have had with organized religion" and it becomes "a huge leap for them to walk back into a church."

Bishop Robinson, who legally joined with his partner Mark of twenty years in a June 7, 2008 civil ceremony, noted that "In the lives of individual people, they would describe the pain suffered at the hands of organized religion have outweighed whatever benefits they thought they were receiving."

He adds, "one of the reasons I believe in the church is that over time it has been self-correcting. God is present in the institution." Episcopalian and United Church of Christ, for example, are among the Christian denominations that are open and affirming in their parishes toward gays and lesbians and who ordain these children of God as priests and pastors. Non-Christian faiths like Wicca, Buddhism, Unitarians, and some branches of

Judaism, among others, also have demonstrated a loving inclusion toward the GLBT and searching community.

Bishop Robinson, who earned an undergraduate degree in American Studies from the University of the South and a Master of Divinity from the General Theological Seminary, thinks that the message of Christ "is almost always a judgment against [the leadership] in institutions. So it's odd for me to be sitting here as the quintessential institutional man. On the one hand, I find in my own life and ministry that I've pledged to guard the unity of the church." On the other hand "I'm mindful that the message I preach is largely anti-institutional."

He said, "One of the things that surprises and disappoints me is that more people involved in the institutional church don't seem to comprehend or acknowledge the anti-institutional words that Jesus spoke."

"The realities of institutional church life," he reflected "are at odds with the life of faith. It shouldn't be a surprise that Jesus took on the institutional leadership of his day. It is important to remember" that the message of Jesus "did not sound like good news" to the religious establishment. "It only sounded like good news to the poor and marginalized" who for the first time were loved unconditionally and without judgment.

It is when corporate religion or the religious establishment "becomes more important than the mission of the church [to love unconditionally] that the institution becomes problematic." The result is "to get bogged down in church politics or institutional survival rather than do the work of ministry." His elevation to bishop rocked the Anglican Communion, a worldwide Protestant affiliation. The Communion is still at risk of coming to an end due to opposition that some members have toward the ordination of gays, lesbians, and heterosexual women. This stems from church politics in Africa and a literal reading of misunderstood biblical passages.

"God is always encouraging us," he said "to get over the 'them' versus 'us' divide." If one



BISHOP V. GENE ROBINSON

Photo by: Geoff Forester

has to err it should be on the side of "people and inclusion, not rules, canons, and structures." He asked rhetorically, "If a church can't risk its life for doing what's right then how can we preach a gospel?" that says we should risk our personal lives for social justice? Jesus told his disciples to especially remember two lessons: love God and one another as he unconditionally loved them.

The Bishop reflected, "If as a representative of the church I tell someone that God doesn't care who they are [gay or straight, rich or poor, weak or strong] then there is a freedom and liberation that comes from it." God loves unconditionally.

The Almighty made the world and "gave up knowing how this world would turn out," he said. "If we really are free, which I believe we are, then God doesn't know" what will happen. "The Creation is that dynamic. It's the ultimate risk God took. Otherwise at best you're a puppet and at worse you're a victim. I don't feel like a victim. God's stays involved" to support us.

The bishop implies that because creation's primary ingredient is love that all will be well. God offered the choice and freedom for each individual to love, to be loved, and respond to fear, hate, and ignorance with love. The depth of each person's creation is defined by how he or she responds to the actions of others in a sometimes cold, complicated world.

God has often been described in the context of the Latin word "omni" meaning all encom-

passing. God is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. Bishop Robinson, however, prefers to call the Creator something not often, if ever, heard: "omni-vulnerable."

According to him, "The act of creation and creating a free humankind is the ultimate act of vulnerability" by God. In one sense, it is an ultimate act of love and trust. "Both the Hebrew and Christian scriptures are a testament to how often and how consistently and doggedly God is making God's self vulnerable. He adds, "with disastrous results" as sometimes shown by how humankind abuses itself and thus the Maker of All Good.

The Creator is manifested to cultures and individuals in many different ways. Because of the personal nature of embracing a higher authority no faith can be considered better than another. According to Bishop Robinson, "For me, Jesus is the fullest and is the perfect revelation of God. It is God's most dramatic and most singular event to reveal God's self" he said.

He added, "What a small notion of God to say that God could not be revealed in a myriad of ways."

"To write off Moses and the prophets and Mohammed and Buddha and other people each of whom clearly had an enormous connection to the divine, is ludicrous," according to Bishop Robinson. One loving God who is manifested in many, beautiful ways.

"I came to the Episcopal Church largely because the denomination I grew up in believed whole heartedly that most of the world was doomed to hell because they didn't believe in Jesus," he said. "Simply, that didn't square with my notion of a loving God."

"I've learned," he reflected, "that to love God is to let God love me. Part of loving God is to make the opportunity for it. This is what allows me [or you] to go on. I am constantly reminded of God's love for me." Bishop Robinson knows that persons in positions of religious authority may not be true to their creation as created by an infinitely loving Creator. Yet it should never stop the individual from being true to God and self.

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




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New Yorkers will march in Albany to support marriage equality

Marchers will call upon the NY state Senate to pass the marriage bill

Now that California and Massachusetts have granted equal marriage rights for gays and lesbians, pressure is building for marriage equality in NYS. Last year, the New York State Assembly voted in favor of a marriage equality bill but the State Senate has thus far failed to vote on the measure. Governor Paterson is on record as a firm supporter of civil marriage for gays and lesbians. A growing majority of New Yorkers agree.

The 2008 Wedding March is designed to be a visible statement of the efforts of the Governor and those of every person and group fighting for marriage equality across New York. We are proud of the distance we have come but determined to continue on for our families, our loved ones, our friends; until

all New Yorkers are treated as equals under the marriage laws.

This year the Wedding March comes to Albany, NY. It will assemble at 10:30 p.m. on the Hudson River Way Pedestrian Bridge at downtown's Broadway (at Pine St.) and march to the Corning Preserve on the Hudson River.

Ron Zacchi, Co-Executive Director for Marriage Equality, NY (MENY), believes that "it's time for the State Senate to do the right thing and vote to make New York the



third state in the country to grant equal marriage rights for all its citizens. We must raise our collective voices in support of this most basic of civil

discrimination ends.

Matt Lloyd and Travis Arnold, coordinators of the Albany Wedding March, remind their allies of the words of Dr. Martin Luther King in 1967, 'In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.'

Founded in 1998, Marriage Equality NY is the oldest organization in the state of New York to advocate for full equal marriage for same-sex couples. A "grassroots, 501(c)(3) non-for-profit organization, MENY and its dedicated volunteers are devoted to ending discrimination in civil marriage through education, awareness and media campaigns, political actions, and coalition building. <http://www.marriageequalityny.org>

rights!"

Cathy Marino-Thomas, MENY's Executive Director says: "New York has historically been in the forefront of providing all its citizens equal access to the rights and protections afforded by the state. The Wedding March serves as a reminder, from state to state and nationally, that this important civil rights issue will only be rectified when the legalized


Attention: Parents of gender-variant children in the greater Albany area & surrounding areas

Are you the parent of a transgender or gender-variant child and live in the greater Albany or surrounding area?

We ourselves are parents of a 7-year old transboy. We are looking to form support groups for young children who do not conform to typical gender expectations, as well as for their parents and siblings. We envision meeting once a month at the Capital District Gay and Lesbian Community Council (CDGLCC) in Albany.

We would like to know what kind of support children and parents need and we are open to suggestions as to how to help meet these needs.

Please contact us via e-mail: dimabrsk@wmconnect.com or contact Q Diamond, Program Director at CDGLCC at qdiamond@cdglcc.org or (518) 462-6138.



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LGBT News Briefs from Around the Country

Thousands register as part of largest LGBT voter education registration in NY

NEW YORK, NY—The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Community Center is proud to announce its voter registration, education, and mobilization project, Promote the Vote, is registering people to vote this year through the distribution of over 3000 information boxes and via its website, www.gaycenter.org. Since 1996, Promote the Vote has registered more than 70,000 voters, collected 40,000 pledges, and reached over 1,000,000 voters via phone banks and direct mail nationwide. More ...

This year the project aims to register more than 2,000 LGBT voters in New York City and 20,000 voters nationally through a number of initiatives such as its distribution of Point of Purchase stands (free-standing boxes to distribute voter registration cards and materials), local outreach and candidate forums. More than 3200 boxes have already been distributed locally in the New York metro area and nationally to local LGBT community centers across the country. The project will also supply 20 LGBT centers with training and technical support to aid in the expansion of their own voter registration and mobilization efforts.

"Participation in the election process is key to advancing equality for LGBT people," said Richard Burns, Executive Director of the Center. "There are many segments of our community who are still not registered and our goal is to increase and diversify the LGBT voting segment during this historic election cycle," Burns continued. "We have a presidential election of great importance to our community as well as scores of state and local elections that will decide the next steps in our march towards equality, the Center is committed to making sure as many voices as possible in our community are part of the election process," Burn concluded.

Statistics compiled by The New York Times based on exit interviews at polling stations in the 2004 presidential election showed that 4% of respondents reported that they were lesbian, gay, or bisexual ("Transgender was not offered as a response category"). George W. Bush's margin of victory in 2004 was just 3% over John Kerry. Strongly pro-Democrat, with

77% supporting Kerry, the LGBT vote was the second most solid pro-Democratic grouping, after African Americans (88%). Still, nearly one in four (23%) LGB voters in 2004 cast their ballot for the Republican presidential candidate.

A nonpartisan, grassroots outreach project, Promote the Vote works to create a visible LGBT voting constituency, which is civically engaged. The PTV project builds upon and broadens our local and regional record of targeting the most underrepresented and marginalized segments the LGBT community for voter education, registration and mobilization including: Low-income LGBT people, sex workers, first generation LGBT people from immigrant communities, the homeless, Rural LGBT people, LGBT elders, and currently or formerly imprisoned LGBT people.

To for more information on the Promote the Vote project or to register to vote visit www.gaycenter.org

Become a Promote the Vote volunteer and help impact the lives of LGBT people in the United States! For more information contact Ricardo Martinez, Public Policy Associate, at 212-620-7310 or via email at: PromoteTheVote@gaycenter.org

IMPORTANT DATES: Primary Election in NY is September 9, 2008; General Election is November 4, 2008. **INFORMATION ON VOTING IN NY STATE:** October 10, 2008: Last Day to Register for the General Election

Ore. tribe approves same-sex marriages

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—The Coquille Indian Tribe, based on the southern Oregon coast, recently adopted a law recognizing same-sex marriage, and its first such wedding is set for next spring.

Oregon voters amended the state constitution in 2004 to prohibit gay marriage. But as a federally recognized sovereign nation, the tribe is not bound by the Oregon Constitution.

Native Americans are "sensitive to discrimination of any kind," said Ken Tanner, chief of the Coquilles.

"For our tribe, we want people to walk in the shoes of other people and learn to respect differences. Through that, we think we build a stronger community," he told The Oregonian newspaper.

The Coquilles are believed to be the first tribe to legalize same-sex marriage. Three

years ago, a lesbian couple in Oklahoma tested a loophole in the Cherokee Nation's law that defined marriage as between two people enrolled in the tribe. The tribe's clerk denied the couple's marriage certificate, prompting a lawsuit, and the Cherokee Supreme Court eventually sided with the couple. But they never submitted the marriage certificate to the county clerk, which would have taken the issue outside the tribe. The tribal council later adopted a law banning same-sex marriage.

Becky Flynn, regional director of Basic Rights Oregon, a gay rights advocacy group, said Wednesday the impact of the Coquille law is likely to be minimal beyond the couple and the tribe.

The federal government has the legal right to deny recognition to same-sex marriages under the Federal Defense of Marriage Act passed by Congress in 1996. The tribe concluded that the act may bar the Coquilles from conferring federal benefits or money on same-sex spouses, said Melissa Cribbins, assistant tribal attorney.

The first couple to get married under the new law is expected to be Jeni and Kitzen Branting, whose maiden name is Doyle and who legally adopted Jeni's last name three years ago. Kitzen is a member of the tribe; Jeni is not.

In an interview with The Register-Guard newspaper, Kitzen Branting, 25, said she doesn't expect anything beyond tribal rights for her partner.

"For me, the important thing wasn't about rights or the benefits," she said. I just wanted the tribe to say 'Yes, we recognize that you are just as important as any other tribe member, and we will treat you and your spouse as we treat all tribal members.'"

The couple is planning a May wedding at the tribe's plankhouse, a common gathering place for the Coquilles. They're inviting between 100 and 150 people.

Fired transsexual city manager finalizes divorce

CLEARWATER, Fla. (AP)—The former Largo city manager who was fired after her plans to have a sex change became public has finalized a divorce from her wife of 18 years.

Court documents show that Susan Stanton, formerly known as Steven, must pay her ex-wife, Donna, \$4,756 a month in alimony, plus another \$799 in child support for their 15-year-old son. A judge signed off on the divorce settlement on Aug. 6.

Stanton has not found a new job since being fired by the Largo City Commission in early 2007. The support payments will come from Stanton's retirement fund.

Stanton's ex-wife also will receive 50 percent of any money Stanton receives from movies or books about her life.

Mexico City approves name changes for transsexuals

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Mexico City's legislature has passed a law making it easier for transsexuals and transgender people to legally change their names and obtain revised birth certificates that reflect their gender identification.

Current law already lets people change their names based on gender identification. But because of the lack of specific rules, the process can take years to wind through the courts.

The new law formalizes the procedure for name changes and lets people to ask a judge for new birth certificates.

It passed 37-17 Friday and now goes to the mayor to be signed into law.

Mexico City's leftist government has recently legalized abortion during the first 12 weeks and allowed same-sex civil unions.

Gay pride advocacy group sues Birmingham mayor

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP)—A gay advocacy organization has filed a federal lawsuit against Birmingham Mayor Larry Langford for refusing to allow city workers to hang Gay Pride Week banners.

The suit said Langford's actions violated the constitutional rights of Central Alabama Pride Inc., which sponsored the 20th annual Gay Pride Week in Birmingham in June.

The suit said the city has hung flags or banners in support of many diverse events in Birmingham, including City Stages music festival and the Magic City Classic football game.

Langford said Wednesday that the city hangs banners for events it sponsors. He said he hasn't discriminated against anyone and called the suit a frivolous publicity stunt.

A.G. OKs question to reinstate gay-marriage ban

BOSTON (AP)—Attorney General Martha Coakley has given the go-ahead to a group that wants to overturn the Legislature's repeal of a law barring marriages in Massachusetts by out-of-state same-sex couples.

Coakley said Monday the group's proposed ballot question meets the necessary technical requirements, but added she does not necessarily support the measure.

Supporters led by the group MassResistance now must gather 33,000 signatures by the end of October to appear on the November 2010 ballot.

They are seeking to reinstate a 1913 law making it illegal for couples to get married in Massachusetts if their unions would be illegal in their home states.

The House and Senate voted in late June to repeal the law. Gov. Deval Patrick signed the repeal.

Q Puzzle Solution from P. 27

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The Outfield: The CRUX of Gay Climbing



By: Dan Woog*

For many gay people, the process of discovering one's sexuality, then coming out to family, friends, and colleagues, is like climbing an enormous wall. A route to the top exists, but getting there requires plenty of planning. The path takes many twists and turns, and occasionally there are slips.

The metaphor is particularly apt for Meghan McDonald. The 25-year-old started rock climbing a dozen years ago, at a gym in her hometown of Nashville, Tennessee. The first time she scaled a vertical wall, she was hooked.

"It's an amazing feeling - so empowering and simple," she says. "You start at the bottom, and reach the top. It's such a challenge, but at the end it's so rewarding."

In climbing, McDonald notes, "you never know what to expect, or what you'll get into. It's a really dynamic environment. It's the same as being an LGBT person: Before you come out, you don't know what people will think. Our lives are a challenge, just like climbing is."

Like being gay, rock climbing is not always what it seems. "Strength is not the number one factor," McDonald says. "It's more important to be flexible, and have good balance."

Creativity counts, too. "When you're standing at the bottom of a wall or a mountain, you have to look up and analyze the most efficient route. You can muscle your way up if you want, but that's not the best way."

Two years after her first ascent, McDonald began working at a local climbing gym. She went on to Fordham University in New York, and played soccer there. But whenever her

coach allowed her to, she climbed.

Not long ago, she and her partner, Danielle Jablonski, spent nearly three months on the road. They visited 24 states, and climbed in all of them.

Right now, the focus of McDonald and Jablonski's lives is CRUX, a gay climbing club founded by the two women. ("Crux" is a climbing term; it refers to the toughest part of a route.)

CRUX boasts a core group of 20 to 25 members. They travel all over the United States, climbing and competing. Their home gym is the Rock Club in New Rochelle, N.Y., while the closest outdoor spot is the Shawangunk Mountains in Ulster County.

Why a gay climbing club? "LGBT climbers are out there, but they're not visible," McDonald reports. "We think that whatever you do, it's important to surround yourself with like-minded people."

She draws a parallel with a women's climbing group. "There's a similar feeling of acceptance, a welcoming environment. Starting a new sport can be really intimidating. You're not sure what to expect. It's good to have a community you can rely on."

CRUX accepts everyone, from newcomers to experts. (Straight people are welcome, too.) For many gays and lesbians who have never tested themselves physically, the club can be a life-changing experience.

"We just had an event where a guy had never climbed before in his life," McDonald says. "He had never been an athlete, and he'd never hung out with gay people. He was nervous all day, but he took the plunge. Everyone really welcomed him in, and he made it to the top. He felt so good, and was so thankful. He e-mailed everyone afterward, and said he couldn't wait to hang out with us again."

Competitions take place in indoor gyms,



Partners Danielle Jablonski and Meghan McDonald.

under the sponsorship of the national organization USA Climbing. Competitive climbing follows a predetermined route, and climbers can use only a limited number of holds. Climbers who fall are disqualified. Both the Gay Games and Outgames have featured competitive climbing. CRUX looks forward to entering teams in future competitions.

But competition is only one aspect of climbing. "Danielle and I love the sport because it's accessible, fun, very social, and a

great workout," McDonald says. "It's like biking. Anyone can do it, at any level."

CRUX's major challenge now is to increase membership. The club is contacting gay sports groups, including the New York umbrella organization Out of Bounds. They're posting information on Facebook and other websites. And they rely on word of mouth. "People who are looking for gay activities just find us," McDonald says.

Her goal is to create a core of LGBT people who climb, meet new people, socialize, train, get in shape, and compete together. McDonald calls the club "a great opportunity to make LGBT climbers more visible in the climbing community and beyond. And it's a way to use climbing as a tool to empower LGBT people."

Once you've climbed a wall, the rest of life is easy. And that's true whether the wall is physically imposing, like a climbing gym or a mountain, or if it exists only in your mind.

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

Q Classifieds

PERSONALS

Trans

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

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

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SWBIF looking for friendship and possibly more in Springfield/Noho area. Very new to scene and testing the waters. Great sense of humor and kind heart. College educated and intelligent. Contact Ashley at honour_huston@hotmail.com or call 413.883.0396.

NEW! Looking for someone who loves to have a good time. I value honesty, directness and living in the moment. I love sports, music, dancing, the outdoors, art, photography and motorcycles. No drama, playing games or high-maintenance types. Love life and all that it has to offer, taking the good with the bad. Email: Judy at thndrcat@gmail.com or call 413-218-0880.

Women 4 women

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

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

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