

news notes

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Carolinas

Queen city plans pride event

CHARLOTTE — The Queen City will host its first annual Pride celebration to promote the visibility of the GLBT community. The first Charlotte Pride celebration will be held on Saturday, May 5, 2001 at Marshall Park in Uptown Charlotte. The celebration will include performers, speakers, vendors and possibly an art exhibition. Charlotte Pride will also be sponsoring other visibility events throughout the year including Gay Day at Paramount's Carowinds amusement park.

National

More GLBs vote GOP

According to exit polls from the Voter News Service (VNS), around four percent of exit-poll voters identified as GLB (as yet, transgender voters are not distinguished). Of those, 25% voted for George W. Bush. That's up from 22% of GLB voters in 1992 and 23% in 1996 who voted for the Republican candidate. In congressional voting, 30% of self-identified GL voters selected GOP House candidates.

May appeals decision

PHOENIX, AZ — An Army general rejected a state representative's appeal of the Army's decision to dismiss him from his reserve unit after he said in a legislative debate that he is gay. Major Gen. John L. Scott said Arizona Rep. Steve May should be honorably discharged for violating the military's "Don't ask, Don't tell, Don't Pursue, Don't Harass" policy. May, a Republican who was re-elected November 7, acknowledged his sexuality during legislative debate in February 1999, while an honorably discharged civilian. He was called back to the Army a few weeks later, during the Kosovo crisis.

Getting GLBTs to quit

ATLANTA — A national GLBT forum on cutting tobacco use in the GLBT community was held November 8 and 9 in Atlanta. Organized by the American Legacy Foundation (ALF), an independent public health organization, the goal of the Forum was to provide ALF with tangible recommendations for reducing tobacco use among GLBT youth, increasing quit rates among GLBT smokers, and reducing exposure to second-hand smoke. The Forum brought together more than 50 tobacco control experts and activists from the CDC and other health organizations, universities, and the GLBT community. The American Legacy Foundation, created by the legal settlement between the tobacco companies and Attorneys General in over 40 states, has designated the GLBT community as one of five priority populations in the battle to decrease tobacco consumption.

Novell changes charity policy

PROVO, UT — Networking software company Novell announced a new change in its employee matching-funds policy in November, after being criticized for singling out the Boy Scouts in an earlier change. Citing the ban on gay scoutmasters, the corporation had announced it would no longer match employee donations to the BSA. Now the company says it will match employee donations to the United Way, but not to any individual charities.

G&L Bank founder fired

PENSACOLA, FL — Steven Dunlap, founder of the G&L Bank, the first Internet bank marketed primarily to GLBT customers, is suing to get his job back after he was fired by the bank's straight chief executive officer on October 17. CEO Kay Griffith accused Dunlap of inciting employees to leave, making false and misleading statements, failing to perform some assigned duties and other misconduct. Dunlap sought a restraining order that would prevent the bank from using his name and reputation within the gay community for marketing.

Group bans Scouts' food

PORT CHARLOTTE, FL — A nonprofit agency that gives food to people infected with HIV said it won't accept food from the Boy Scouts' annual food drive. In an October 24

letter to the Southwest Florida Boy Scouts Council, Charlotte HIV/AIDS People Support Inc. (CHAPS) secretary Charles Belknap wrote that, although his group is not a gay organization, it could not support a policy that singles out people because of their sexual orientation.

TG doctor explores genders

SAN FRANCISCO, CA — Dr. Joan Roughgarden is methodically re-examining the way biologists think about sex, arguing for the existence of more than two genders and presenting evidence of widespread homosexual activity in the wild. Roughgarden's work is the outgrowth of a personal experience that has shocked scientists in the field. Until two years ago, the doctor was John Roughgarden. Then she underwent sex-reassignment surgery. Dr. Roughgarden believes a wide diversity of perspectives, including gay and transsexual scientists will increase understanding of sex and mating.

Big Brothers, Sisters bans gays

OWENSBORO, KY — Big Brothers-Big Sisters of Owensboro will no longer allow open gay or lesbian volunteers after a 10-9 vote by its board Wednesday night. Board members acknowledged that, while homosexuals may be "good" people, "children may not understand matters concerning sexual preference." The debate on whether to continue to allow homosexuals to mentor children surfaced recently after a case manager quit when the agency allowed an openly gay man to volunteer.

Bias laws apply to TGs

HARTFORD, CT — The Connecticut Commission on Human Rights ruled November 10 that the state laws prohibiting sex discrimination include transgender people within those protections. The ruling clarifies that transsexual people may bring claims of sex discrimination and defines transsexual people to include a broad range of individuals who do not conform to gender stereotypes regardless of whether or not they have or intend to have surgery. The ruling also includes intersexed people, for example people who are born with ambiguous genitalia or chromosomal ambiguity.

PA bans adoptions

The Pennsylvania Superior Court issued a decision November 8 banning second-parent adoptions for gays and lesbians. The ruling, which prohibits judges from allowing gays and lesbians to adopt their partners' children, was made against two couples who were seeking right to be recognized as equal parents under the law. Currently, if the legal parent of the child becomes unemployed or dies, the stability and welfare of the children could be threatened because they would not be able to get coverage on the partner's health insurance. Furthermore, the children can be uprooted because if the legal parent dies, the partner would have no legal claim to the children that they had been raising together as equals.

"No" to marriage statement

LAGUNA BEACH, CA — Dr. Robert Edgar, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches, withdrew his signature from the document "A Christian Declaration on Marriage" cosigned by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Southern Baptist Convention, and the National Association of Evangelicals. In a November 17 letter to the NCC Assembly, Edgar explained that he no longer supported the ecumenical declaration because many churches interpret the document as a condemnation of same-sex unions and was concerned that misinterpretation of the declaration could lead to attacks on GLBT people. Edgar earlier acknowledged that NCC member communions are divided over same-sex unions, but restated the group's support for GLBTs.

International

German partner law passed

BERLIN — Germany's lower Parliament chamber passed a life partners bill recently on November 10. One part of the bill passed by the Bundestag does not need approval by the upper house and extends to registered couples such spousal rights and responsibilities as hospital visitation, health insurance, tenancy, inheritance and child custody. A second part of the bill relates to taxes and welfare benefits, and must be approved by the Bundesrat, Germany's more conservative upper house. ▼

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