



RTI International is interested in talking with gay and bisexual men about sex and meth use

- ◆ Reimbursement for time/travel
- ◆ Must be 18 years of age or older
- ◆ All information is CONFIDENTIAL



For more information:

Curt Coomes
MASH Study
919-990-8348

the
bright light
in your
nightlife



blond

157 e. rosemary st. | downtown chapel hill, nc | (919) 338-2746
www.fireflyfriday.com

International News Notes

by Jack Kirven . Q-Notes staff

Crackdown on playground slurs

LONDON, England — In some European nations adults can be arrested for using homophobic language. In the U.K., it's been determined that the 1986 *Public Order Act* can also be used against children, especially when anti-gay epithets are used on playgrounds for bullying purposes. The Act makes it an offense to use threatening, abusive or insulting words or behavior in a way likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress.



Claude Knights, the training manager of Kidscape, an organization that assists bullied children, said that to many children the word "gay" now means only "the opposite of cool." Still, youth who use the term risk being charged. In one case, police in Cheshire dismissed a complaint against an 11-year-old boy only after he explained that he meant that his friend was "stupid."

Schools ordered a clampdown on the use of "gay" as a playground slur amid fears it legitimizes more virulent homophobia after a survey by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers showed a huge rise in the use of playground insults like "poof" and "lezzie."

The Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, Ed Balls (pictured), directed the survey. In a statement he said, "I reject any notion that addressing homophobic bullying is political correctness for its own sake. Even casual use of homophobic language in schools can create an atmosphere that isolates young people and can be the forerunner of more serious forms of bullying."

Soldiers arrested for bashing

AMSTERDAM, The Netherlands — Two Canadian soldiers are being held on charges of attempted manslaughter, attempted criminal negligence causing bodily harm and public violence after they allegedly attacked a gay man while on furlough from their deployment in Afghanistan. The pair, who are both 22 years old, were arrested on May 26. One is being prosecuted as the actual attacker and could receive eight months in prison, while the other could receive six weeks in a Dutch jail.

The soldiers, whose names have not been released per a Canadian privacy law, served more than 60 days in jail before being transferred to a Canadian Forces installation in The Netherlands. They are required to stay in the country while their cases are pending. The soldiers are paying their own expenses and have secured Dutch lawyers. Their case is expected to be heard soon.

Police campaign raises concerns

NASSAU, The Bahamas — Police harassment of LGBT people and nightclubs has escalated in recent weeks and gay rights activists are concerned. Over the course of a single weekend, three separate clubs and a private party were all "visited" by local police, despite the fact that no one present had been involved in any suspicious or illegal activity. One of the three nightclubs opened the same night it was raided. Although sever-

al gay men were outside, the bar had not yet established itself as a gay venue.

The private party that police disrupted was host to over 100 LGBT tourists at the Hard Rock Café and was not open to the public. "It's obvious that the presence of the police had gone far beyond them determining if any laws had been broken. At a certain point in the evening it was obvious to everyone present that the purpose of them remaining in the building was to shut the party down, even though the patrons and the organizers of the event had broken no laws," one partygoer told *The Nassau Guardian*.

According to Erin Greene, spokesperson of the LGBT advocacy group Rainbow Alliance, the party was an annual event that had been held for six years without incident. She added that her group hoped to meet with senior police officers to discuss the situation.

India's gay prince turns 42

VADODARA, India — Prince Manvendra Singh Gohil (pictured), heir apparent to one of India's wealthiest men, former Maharajah Raghbir Singh Gohil, recently had a large birthday party involving LGBT people and LGBT artists from across India. The prince gathered with hundreds of friends at the royal palace in an attempt to bring visibility to a group that normally suffers derision and harassment in India, where homosexuality is still illegal and punishable with imprisonment. India is also home to more people living with HIV/AIDS than any other nation in the world.

The prince is the chairman of the Lackshya Trust, an organization that assists LGBT people and offers HIV/AIDS education and prevention. He had been out to his family since 2002, but when he came out to the



general public in 2006 his father disowned him. Within weeks his father relented and restored the prince to his titles, inheritance and rights.

"I was in an awkward situation and didn't know how to deal with it. Relatives from all over the country called me up. Rajpipla is a conservative place. Women still cover their heads with a pallu; sex is a taboo topic to talk about. I was in the line of fire," Raghbir Gohil told *India Times*. The prince will speak to Oprah on her talk show this fall.

Petition drive to lift sodomy law

SINGAPORE — More than 2,000 signatures have been collected by www.repeal377a.com, which is the website for a campaign to repeal Singapore's sodomy law. Under Section 377A of the Penal Code it is a crime for men to have sex with men, whether in public or private. Many signers chose to remain anonymous; however, a number of high-ranking corporate executives signed using their full names and the names of their companies. Poh Mui Hoon, the CEO of Network For Electronic Transfers, an electronic banking services and financial payments company, signed the poll. John MacLennan, Microsoft's gay finance director for Asia, also supported the effort with his signature. ■