

NATIONAL NOTES

Compiled by Susan Tedder Q-Notes Staff

NGLTF sponsors youth leadership training

WASHINGTON, DC—Twenty-five young people from all over the US participated in an intensive Youth Leadership Training Institute sponsored by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) in late August. The goal of the week-long training was to increase the confidence, skills and leadership abilities of the participants.

"The energy of the youth was infectious," said NGLTF Executive Director Melinda Paras. "I was deeply impressed by the leadership abilities and commitment of the youth, and enjoyed learning about their projects back home. During the course of the week's training, they became a force to be reckoned with."

The youth worked with trainers in developing program goals, timelines, media plans, outreach and visibility programs, and fundraising.

Talk show blamed for death

SMITHFIELD, MI—The family of Scott Amedure has filed a \$25 million civil suit against *The Jenny Jones Show*, claiming that the show was responsible for his death March 9. Geoffrey Fieger, the attorney for the Amedure family said the show misled its guests and provided them with alcohol before taping to reduce inhibitions. The gunman in the Amedure murder, Jonathan Schmitz, is charged with first degree murder and using a firearm in commission of a felony. His trial is scheduled to begin October 30, and, if convicted, would face life in prison without parole.

Microsoft apologizes

ATLANTA—After choosing Cobb County as the launch site for Windows '95 despite protests from gay activists, Microsoft Corporation has issued an apology. Initially, Kim Williams, Southeast marketing director for Microsoft, said the Cobb Galleria Center was chosen strictly on availability. She also said that she was unaware of any boycott of Cobb County based on human rights violations, and if she had known, she would not have altered her decision. In late August, Williams issued a statement that said, "Many elements are considered when booking a facility, and we will make sure that in the future the venue's human rights policies are considered and consistent with our corporate policies." A stronger statement is expected when the corporate office of Microsoft reviews the issue.

Maine targeted for anti-gay initiative

PORTLAND, ME—After failing to pass statewide anti-gay initiatives in Idaho and Oregon last year, Radical Right groups have set their sights on Maine. Question #1, appearing on ballots in November, states, "Do you favor the changes in Maine law limiting protected classifications, in future state and local laws to race, color, sex, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry, national origin, familial status and marital status, and repealing existing laws which expand these classifications as proposed by citizen petition?"

The grassroots group, Maine Won't Discriminate, is working with churches and other organizations to get a "No on 1." "This flawed and intentionally confusing question targets gays and lesbians for discrimination but would adversely impact all sorts of people," says Pat Peard, Chair of Maine Won't Discriminate.

Meanwhile, Colorado's Amendment 2 is going before the US Supreme Court October 10, since the state Supreme Court found it unconstitutional. A ruling is expected sometime after the first of the year.

!OutProud! expands online

SAN JOSE, CA—!OutProud! TM, The National Coalition for Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Youth, has teamed with PlanetOut M, an international online community for lesbian, gay and bisexual people, to provide a comprehensive service to the youth community, addressing their social, political and leisure needs. This service will be provided by The Microsoft Network M(MSN). Christopher Kryzan, Executive Director of !OutProud!, says, "Our

additional presence with MSN makes it possible to reach even more of these at-risk youth, to help them better understand, accept, and ultimately celebrate who they are."

!OutProud!'s World Wide Web site (http://www.outproud.org/outproud/) will be the basis for the new service.

Shocking Gray goes under

NEW YORK—One of the nation's largest lesbian and gay catalog companies, Shocking Gray, has filed for bankruptcy. Other gay companies, Phoenix Rising in Virginia with plans to expand their catalog division, and Lambda Rising, of Washington, DC, which is providing an online shopping service, expect this turn of events to open the doors to new business for them. Rex Mitchell of Phoenix Rising said, "I'm really sorry this happened to Shocking Gray, but at least there are alternatives available [for gay and lesbian consumers]."

NGLTF participates in Combined Federal Campaign

WASHINGTON, DC—The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) has for the first time been certified as a participating agency in the annual Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). The CFC is the annual fall fundraising drive of federal employees who may each designate payroll deductions to be directed to specific participating agencies. NGLTF's CFC number for the 1995 campaign is CFC #2622.

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"We're very pleased to be included in this important fundraising campaign," said Melinda Paras, NGLTF Executive Director.

"The Combined Federal Campaign offers individuals nationwide a simple method to support NGLTF in our efforts to create change. We urge federal employees to take advantage of this campaign and designate NGLTF as a recipient of their pledge. NGLTF is proud to be part of this effort and looks forward to coming into contact with many new supporters of our work."

National lobby days

WASHINGTON, DC—After the successful lobbying trip earlier this year by transgender activists and allies, the first ever National Gender Lobbying Days will soon be a reality. On Monday & Tuesday, October 2 & 3, voters are encouraged to hit the Hill to lobby for the inclusion of transgendered people in such critical issues as child custody rights, national health care, etc. According to In Your Face, these Lobby Days are open to anyone "concerned about the regimes of gender-based oppression...or just plain pissed off about discrimination against the transgressively gendered." For more information contact Riki Anne Wilchins (212) 645-1753, e-mail RIKI@PIPELINE.COM.

Gay soldier to head post

PLACENTIA, CA—Capt. Ken L. Osborn has assumed command of the US Army Reserve's 155th Corps Support Battalion headquarters detachment. "Since the Army knows that I am gay and involved in litigation, I never expected to be offered a command position," Osborn said. "This action by the Army Reserve only reaffirms the fact that a soldier is a soldier no matter the orientation." Osborn, a 13-year veteran of the Reserve is also on the national board of the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Veterans of America.

The Salvation Army marches toward us

ST. LOUIS, MO—The central territory of the Salvation Army has issued a new policy, that has been included in the employee handbook, that says, "It is the practice of the Salvation Army to provide equal access for all persons to its programs and service without regard to sexual orientation or preference." While this doesn't affect national policy, this progressive statement is a positive move for the central US.

Right wins one

DES MOINES, IA—Jonathan Wilson, an openly gay school board member, was defeated in his bid for re-election. Wilson was the target of a massive Radical Right campaign to unseat him following Wilson's com-

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