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# Over 3,000 same-sex couples married and counting

San Francisco's Mayor Gavin Newsom continues to allow marriages while New Mexico gets in on the act

by Donald Miller

With jubilant gay and lesbian couples literally dancing in the streets, the city of San Francisco, which has sanctioned more than 3,000 gay marriages in recent days, began proceedings Feb. 19 to sue the state of California and challenge its prohibitions on same-sex marriages on constitutional grounds.

Despite efforts by conservative groups to prevent the marriages, a judge for the second time Feb. 20 refused to halt them, prompting California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to fire off a letter to California Attorney General Bill Lockyer. Schwarzenegger demanded that he "take immediate steps" to get a definitive court ruling, declaring what the city is doing to be illegal.

The frenzy surrounding the situation didn't stop there as Lockyer curtly reminded the governor he has no authority over the Attorney General. A spokesman for Lockyer said Schwarzenegger "can direct the Highway Patrol. He can direct 'Terminator Four.' But he can't tell the attorney general what to do."

## What the government is saying

President George W. Bush said Feb. 18 he was "troubled" by gay weddings in San Francisco and by legal decisions in Massachusetts that could clear the way for same-sex marriage. He declined to say whether he was close to backing a constitutional ban.

"I have watched carefully what's happening in San Francisco, where licenses were being issued, even though the law states otherwise," Bush said. "I have consistently stated that I'll support a law to protect marriage between a man and a woman. Obviously these events are influencing my decision."

In response to President Bush's statement, San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom said, "The president and I obviously don't see the world through the same eyes ... I would ask him to see Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin, who have been together 51 years, and explain to me why they shouldn't have the same things that I share with my wife."

As conservative groups vowed to take their case to higher courts, Mayor Newsom said the weddings would continue.

"We're still moving forward, business as usual at city hall," he said. "This is a long road, and I am resolved, more resolved today than ever."

Surprisingly, California's two senators, Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, both San Francisco Democrats, expressed opposition to the city's stand, angering gays in the state, who until today have been staunch supporters of the two.

"If the mayor believes that law is unconstitutional, the place to go is the court," Feinstein said. "I believe this makes the national situation much more complicated and gives ammunition to those who are pushing for a constitutional amendment."



Thousands of gay couples line up outside San Francisco's city hall, waiting to be married.

Even openly gay Rep. Barney Frank said San Francisco's decision to challenge state law and grant marriage licenses to same-sex couples could damage efforts by gay rights advocates to defend the Massachusetts court decision legalizing gay marriage.

"I was sorry to see the San Francisco thing go forward," said Frank. "If we go forward in Massachusetts and get same-sex marriage on the books, it's going to be binding and incontestable."

## New Mexico gets in on the act

A county clerk in Bernalillo, N.M., issued marriage licenses to at least 26 gay couples, some of whom then exchanged vows outside the courthouse, and dozens more same-sex couples lined up for a chance to tie the knot.

Although a county clerk announced she would grant marriage licenses to same-sex couples, the offer was later revoked when the attorney general ordered the marriages stopped. Within hours a county sheriff and deputy moved in to block the clerk's counter and prevent the last 30 angry couples from obtaining licenses.

# HIV rate up among black male college students

Health officials contend young males ignoring safe sex messages

by Christopher Curtis and Donald Miller

RALEIGH, N.C. — A sudden, surprising increase in HIV infections has been discovered among male black college students in North Carolina, and state and federal officials fear the same is probably happening across the South.

"It's a public health emergency," Dr. Peter Leone, HIV medical director at the state Health Department, told the Associated Press (AP). "I don't know any other way to put it."

Officials believe the HIV increase started in mid-2001 with young men having risky sexual encounters with other men.

Over the past three years, researchers found 84 newly infected male college students, with 73 of



HIV infections in African-American male college students are reportedly on the rise.

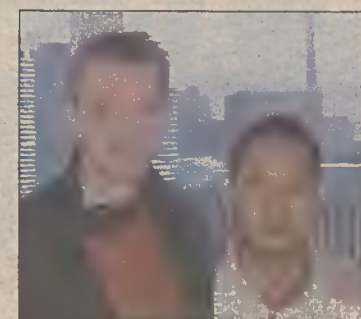
# A year later: gay couple in exile

N.C. psychotherapist's partner denied re-entry to U.S. — two now living in Toronto

by David Moore  
Q-Notes staff

It has been just over a year since Glen Tig, a North Carolina native, and Chitpol Siddhivarn, a Thai citizen, were forced to move from Chapel Hill, N.C., to Toronto, Canada.

The circumstances surrounding the couple's abrupt departure captured media attention in the area — *The Raleigh News and Observer* ran a lengthy feature piece exploring the difficulties a same-sex couple could face — especially if part of the two-some wasn't an American citizen.



Glen Tig, a North Carolina native, and Chitpol Siddhivarn, a Thai citizen, had to move to Canada in order to maintain their relationship.

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