

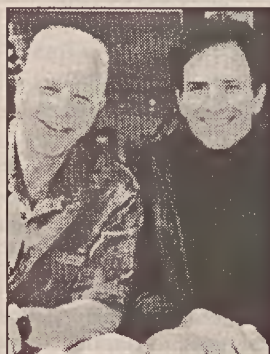
News notes

from around the globe

National >

Gay couple denied marriage license

NEW HOPE, Penn. — Two gay men from New Hope were turned down when they applied for a marriage license in suburban Philadelphia. Bucks County Register of Wills Barbara Reilly, turned the pair away telling them they should take their request to court. The men, Stephen Stahl and Robert Seneca, aren't yet sure what



Stephen Stahl and Robert Seneca

their next step will be. They say they have been approached by a number of attorneys expressing willingness to represent them in their efforts to obtain a marriage license in Pennsylvania. The two men who have been together for nearly 25 years were accompanied by two members of New Hope Borough Council, which recently approved a resolution calling on the state Legislature to recognize gay marriage. The state House is expected to debate legislation that would limit same-sex marriages.

Gephardt 'ashamed' of Bush

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congressman Richard Gephardt has delivered a rousing denunciation of the Bush administration's support for a constitutional ban on gay marriage. Gephardt (D-MO) was speaking at an awards ceremony organized by PFLAG in Washington. He and his wife Jane joined the organization shortly after he began his short-lived presidential campaign last year. "We are members of PFLAG and we are proud members of PFLAG and we're very proud of our daughter Chrissy Gephardt and her partner, Amy, who's here tonight and we love both of them a lot," Gephardt said. "We were supportive as any parent should be. We love Chrissy unconditionally and we supported her in every way

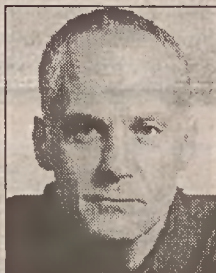
that we knew how and could." He then launched into his attack on the Bush marriage policy. "I must tell you I am ashamed when top leaders in this country and citizens of this country and even the president of

the United States suggest to the people of this country that there should be an amendment to the constitution to take away rights from people rather than giving rights to people," Gephardt said. The congressman is part of a public service announcement campaign featuring nationally recognized figures posing with gay and lesbian family members in hopes of encouraging other families of gays and lesbians to stay close. Chrissy Gephardt recently was hired by National Stonewall Democrats to lead the organization's new Grassroots Campaign Corps, aimed at organizing LGBT students across the country. She also is involved in the Victory Fund which helps raise campaign money for gay politicians.

International >

UN gay rights resolution withdrawn

GENEVA, Switzerland — Brazil has decided to withdraw its motion on integrating sexual orientation into the United Nations stance on human rights. The country first introduced the resolution at last year's U.N. Commission on Human Rights, but it was delayed until this year's meeting, currently taking place in Geneva. If accepted, the move would have been the first time that sexual orientation was included in human rights and was championed as the first time lesbian and gay people would be protected by the UN. Since the resolution has been withdrawn however, gay activists have blamed an alliance between anti-gay religious states and U.N. members who lobbied governments not to support it. Muslim member states and Vatican City, which retains observer status at the U.N., had apparently been moving to make sure the resolution was shot down when introduced to the assembly. Labour MEP and gay




Michael Cashman

activist Michael Cashman has now accused the religious countries of forming an "unholy axis" so as to scupper the motion for the second year running.

Life behind bars for gay slayers

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — Two men responsible for the biggest mass murder of gays since the Holocaust were each sentenced to nine life terms in prison. Adam Woest, 27, and Trevor Theys, 44, were convicted for the brutal 2003 slayings at Sizzler's, a gay massage parlor. In handing down his sentence Judge Nathan Erasmus of the Cape High Court said the pair had shown "utter savagery and extreme callousness." Woest and Theys were sentenced to a further 20 years each for attempting to murder the lone survivor of the killings, 15 years each for armed robbery, three years each for illegal possession of firearms and another two years each for possessing ammunition. The murdered nine victims, all employees of the club, were shot in the head at close range and their throats were slit. A 10th employee, known only as Quinton, managed to escape and activate the alarm, although he too had been shot twice in the head. Woest lived not far from the scene of the grisly murders. Police said he had a clear view of the club from his living room. A waiter in a local restaurant in the predominantly gay neighborhood, Woest, is said to have served several of the victims on numerous occasions. Theys was a taxi driver who moonlighted driving prostitutes to their clients at night.

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