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News notes

from around the nation & globe

National >

'Queer Eye' star helps sell Goldfish

NEW YORK, N.Y. — Norwalk-based Pepperidge Farm followed Pier 1 Imports' lead by hiring one of the five stars of TV's popular "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" as a celebrity spokesman. The company began airing a 15-second television spot for its new Goldfish Crisps featuring Carson Kressley, who hands out fashion advice on "Queer Eye," hoping he will draw more young adults, teenagers and younger "tweens" to its line of snack crackers. In December, Fort Worth, Texas-based Pier 1 announced it hired Thom Filicia, who tackles interior design challenges on "Queer Eye," replacing actress Kirstie Alley in its marketing efforts.



Carson Kressley

Execs: Gay marriage ban costly

ATLANTA, Ga. — Don't expect the Atlanta business community to sit on the sidelines in the days leading up to a vote on whether to amend the Georgia Constitution to explicitly ban gay marriages. Not only do executives believe that such an amendment

would be bad for business, they also believe it sends the wrong message to the rest of the nation and world. But if it's up to Ben Johnson, managing partner of the Alston & Bird law firm, the business

community will take a pro-active stance on this issue. Johnson serves on the Atlanta chamber's executive committee. "The whole amendment in my view is nothing other than a calculated effort to tell some people that they don't belong here," Johnson said. If an amendment passes, Johnson believes "it will make it harder to get the most talented people to come to Georgia and Atlanta. I don't think it helps Georgia's image when its competing against New York, Chicago and Los Angeles to be perceived as being closed and intolerant."

Policy protects gay workers

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The agency charged with protecting federal employees from bias in the workplace has revised its policy to include sexual orientation. Bowing to pressure from the White House, the Office of the Special Counsel reinstated the long-standing anti-discrimination policy, which it had put on hold in February pending a legal analysis. "It is the policy of this administration that discrimination in the federal workforce on the basis of sexual orientation is prohibited," said Scott Bloch, the head of the agency. Bloch, an appointee of President George W. Bush who took office in January, had said earlier this year that sexual orientation was not covered as a "conduct" under

continued on next page >

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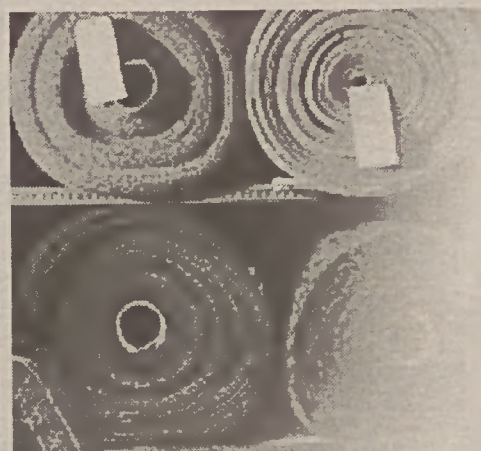
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