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SUNDAYS

Vodka High Balls \$2.75, Imports \$2.75

Open 7 days a week 5 p.m. to 1 a.m.

316 Rensselaer Ave. Charlotte, NC 28203 704.376.1617

news notes

from around the nation & globe

by David Stout
Q-Notes staff

National >

Gay staffer supports Santorum

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Following months of speculation Robert Traynham (pictured), the deputy chief of staff and communications director for staunchly anti-gay Sen. Rick Santorum (R-Pa.), has confirmed that he is gay. Traynham came out to journalist Michael Rogers in a telephone interview. Rogers posted the news on two websites.



Santorum is a 2008 presidential hopeful and vocal supporter of a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage. When the Supreme Court struck down sodomy laws in 2003, Santorum said, "If the Supreme Court says that you have the right to consensual (gay) sex within your home, then you have the right to bigamy, you have the right to polygamy, you have the right to incest, you have the right to adultery. You have the right to anything."

Traynham defended Santorum's hard-line positions, telling Rogers, "Senator Santorum is a man of principle, he is a man who sticks up for what he believes in, I strongly do support Senator Santorum."

Dad guilty of killing 'gay' son

TAMPA, Fla. — At press time Ronnie Paris Jr., 21, had been found guilty of second-degree manslaughter and aggravated child abuse for beating his three-year-old son to death. He will be sentenced in August and faces life in prison.

According to testimony from the child's mother, Nysheerah Paris, her husband was concerned that the boy might be gay and would force him to box. She told the court that Paris would slap the child in the head until he cried or wet himself. On one occasion Paris slammed the boy against a wall because he was vomiting, she recalled.

According to records the Florida Department of Children and Families placed the child in protective custody after he had been admitted to the hospital several times for vomiting. He was returned to his parents last Dec. 14. One month later he was rushed to the hospital in a coma. Six days later he was removed from life support and died. An autopsy showed swelling on both sides of his brain.

After his trial Paris told a *Tampa Tribune* reporter, "I raised my son in the right way. We played football, went fishing, went to wrestling matches, boxing, all that." Nysheerah Paris has been charged with felony child neglect and faces a maximum of 15 years in prison.

Gay club destroyed by arson

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. — On July 16 the area's only gay club was destroyed by an intentionally set fire. A local fire official said Studio 716 was engulfed in flames when fire crews arrived shortly after 7 a.m.

"There was substantial damage to the building itself and a total loss of the contents," Fayetteville Fire Department Battalion Chief Terry Lawson told The Associated Press.

Investigators say it appears the fire was set inside the club, which has faced a string of difficulties including a June 26 arson attempt that damaged an exterior wall of the building and a recent break-in by vandals. Investigators said the blaze spread quickly.

A few days after the fire the club's website was updated with a message thanking customers for their support and a vow that "We will not let this destroy the [Northwest Arkansas] community. ... This is a time for the gay & lesbian community to stand together."

Governor splits on LGBT bills

HONOLULU, Hawaii — State lawmakers sent Gov. Linda Lingle (pictured) two LGBT civil rights bills on July 11; she allowed one measure to pass into law without her signature and vetoed the other.

The new state law adds sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of classifications protected under fair housing regulations (an exemption for religious organizations was crafted with officials from Brigham Young University-Hawaii). The rejected proposal would have prohibited employment discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression.

The rejection of the transgender employment bill prompted about 20 members of Kulia Na Mamo, a transgender support and advocacy group, to stage a noisy demonstration near the capitol. Ten states currently protect workers from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression and six additional states have sexual orientation only protections.

Gay student fined for emails

WACO, Texas — James Matthew Bass, a former Baylor University student who had his scholarship revoked by administrators after he came out, has been ordered to pay \$77,000 to the school for sending employees and their families more than 1,000 sexually explicit emails.

Bass was forced to quit the Baptist university in 2003 due to financial hardship. In January Baylor representatives sued Bass, accusing him of sending a barrage of lewd emails in retaliation. The judge in the suit ruled that Bass, who now attends Atlanta's Emory University, must pay \$47,000 in damages and \$30,000 in attorneys' fees to Baylor. He also ordered Bass to stop sending emails to school officials.

According to Baylor's student handbook, punishment for any misconduct — which includes homosexuality, drinking, gambling, premarital sex and cohabitation — ranges from a written warning to expulsion.

Council rejects DP benefits

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — The Salt Lake County Council voted July 12 to reject a proposal to extend full benefits to domestic partners of county employees. All five

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