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Anti-gay forces at work in '05

from page 1

foster greater understanding of cultural differences," wrote Ed Vitagliano. "However, a short step beneath the surface reveals that one of the differences being celebrated is homosexuality."

• Focus on the Family (FOF)

In November Macy's stood by helplessly as FOF tried to distribute 5,000 "stress balls" during Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade to promote a website it operates that claims homosexuality is a disorder that can be changed through faith. The undertaking, overshadowed by a balloon accident, is part of a major effort by FOF to reach a wider audience during the holidays. Each ball carries the name of its advice site, www.troubledwith.com.

Throughout the year FOF has continued its make no bones about it attack on LGBT families with programs like its Love Won Out "ex-gay" ministry and its continuing support of constitutional amendments banning same-sex marriage throughout the country.

During the controversy surrounding the Supreme Court nomination of Harriet Miers, FOF's James Dobson suggested on his radio show that the White House had made guarantees to him that Miers would oppose gay rights and abortion.

In January Dobson turned his sights on Canada, attacking the country verbally for allowing same-sex marriage. In May, FOF ceased doing business with Wells Fargo because they felt the company was too

gay supportive. Their latest effort was a call for a boycott of Ford Motor Company because of that company's support of various LGBT events and advertising in gay publications. Although FOF initially cried victory when Ford agreed to their terms, reaction from LGBT activists prompted Ford to reverse its decision and agree to continue advertising and supporting LGBT community events. AFA's Donald Wildmon's final words on the matter: "Continuing the boycott is still a consideration."

• The Liberty Counsel (LC)

Under the direction of Matt Staver, a graduate of the University of Kentucky Law School who holds a Master's Degree in religion, the Liberty Counsel may perhaps be best described as the antithesis of the American Civil Liberties Union. In October LC had their hands in Florida's efforts to ban same-sex marriage. They've battled same-sex marriage in practically every state of the union and gone gung-ho after companies offering benefits for domestic partners as well as states attempting to enact hate crimes laws.

• Family Research Council (FRC)

On the sugar-coated website, the statement of purpose for the The Family Research Council says they "champion marriage and family as the foundation of civilization, the seedbed of virtue, and the wellspring of society. FRC promotes the Judeo-Christian worldview as the basis for a just, free, and stable society." Blah, blah, blah. Dig a little deeper and you'll find a hate-filled organization under the direction of Tony Perkins, a man committed to stepping in the way of any civil rights advancements for LGBT Americans.

Their most successful anti-gay family activities have come from their "Justice Sunday" television productions, which are shown via satellite across the country and frequently feature the worst of the most conservative politicians. In April Justice Sunday trotted out Bill Frist to get their double-speak gay hate speech over the airwaves. Comic Bill Maher summed up the group's agenda succinctly in an interview with Jay Leno: "'Activist judges' is a code word for gay. The judges verbally tarred and feathered are those who have decriminalized gay sex as they once did abortion and [those] who countenance marriage rights for same-sex couples."

Tying the knot

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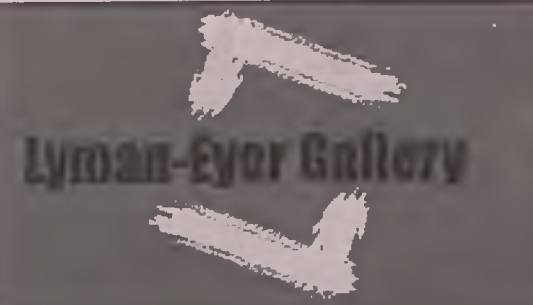
marry his partner Kenny Goss.

Michael said he and Goss, who have been a couple for nearly 10 years, have planned a "small, private ceremony. I'm not very romantic about it to be honest," he said. "I think Kenny probably would be if I let him, but it's just not me."

Michael said that legalizing their relationship provides them with protections if something should happen. "We want to do it, just in case," Michael said. "You never know, I could get hit by a bus and the poor man could have nothing."

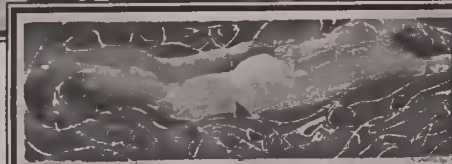
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