

National News Notes

by David Stout . Q-Notes staff

Appeals court gets marriage case

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — The California Court of Appeal heard oral arguments July 10 in *Woo v. California* and five other cases that will decide whether excluding same-sex couples from marriage violates the California Constitution. Plaintiffs Lancy Woo and Cristy



Chung (pictured) have been together 18 years and have an eight-year-old daughter.

Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, who are also plaintiffs, said, "During our 53 years together, we have witnessed enormous changes in California law concerning lesbian and gay people. At one time, the law treated us as complete outsiders. Today, the law recognizes our existence, but it does not yet recognize our full humanity and equality. We have loved one another faithfully for more than five decades. We wish to marry before either one of us dies."

More than 250 religious and civil rights organizations, including the NAACP and California Council of Churches, filed amicus briefs supporting gay marriage. The Court of Appeal has 90 days from the hearing to issue a decision.

Lesbian wins state House seat

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Patricia Todd (pictured) made history July 18 when voters in the 54th District elected her to serve as their state representative, marking the first time ever that the Alabama legislature will include an openly gay Representative. Todd, a Democrat, has no Republican opponent in the general election in November.



"The road to equality in Alabama is a mile shorter [now]," said Chuck Wolfe, president of The Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, the nation's largest gay political action committee. "Gays and lesbians in Alabama will now have what all Americans deserve — a voice and a vote. Alabama knows well what a single voice can accomplish. We applaud Patricia's courage in stepping up to be heard."

The Victory Fund helped raise tens of thousands of dollars for Todd's campaign. Human Rights Campaign Regional Field Director Sarah Scanlon traveled to Alabama and joined HRC members in canvassing the district with get-out-the-vote messages. Todd won by just 70 votes.

Trans jobs bill expected to pass

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — At press time the San Francisco Board of Supervisors was expected to pass a \$300,000 initiative to improve employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for transgender people to counter high rates of unemployment and underemployment. One recent survey found that 59 percent of the city's transgender respondents made less than \$15,299 annually, with only eight percent earning above

\$45,000 per year.

"The Comprehensive Transgender Employment Initiative is a great investment for San Francisco," said Supervisor Bevan Dufty. "Too many well-qualified transgender people who want to work or start businesses are frozen out of the market. The Initiative is a vital first step in making sure that this community can fully participate and contribute to the well-being of our great city."

San Francisco's Airport and the Public Utilities Commission collaboratively contributed \$100,000 to the Initiative so that a portion of the employment training programs will be specifically geared to meet their employment needs. The remaining commitment comes from the city's General Fund.

Judge rules against gay marriage

NEW HAVEN, Conn. — Superior Court Judge Patty Jenkins Pittman ruled July 12 that same-sex couples cannot demonstrate a sufficient harm from not having marriage because Connecticut's civil union law provides indistinguishable benefits. "Civil union and marriage in Connecticut now share the same benefits, protections and responsibilities under law," she wrote. "The Connecticut Constitution requires that there be equal protection and due process of law, not that there be equivalent nomenclature for such protection and process."

"The case for full marriage equality in Connecticut continues despite this bump in the road," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. "We knew the fight for marriage would neither be easy nor quick, but the country is on a clear trajectory toward equality and we must never give up until we reach that point."

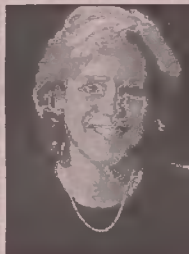
He added that the Connecticut case has a long way to go, reminding that the successful push for marriage equality in Massachusetts started with a loss at the same court level.

LGBT family fest gets underway

PROVINCETOWN, Mass. — As this issue is hitting the street, hundreds of families from all over the world are gathering here for the 11th annual Family Week sponsored by Family Pride, the only national non-profit organization solely dedicated to equality for LGBT parents and their families. Family Week runs July 29 through August 5 offering an array of social activities for families as well as workshops and discussion days for adults.

"It has been an extraordinary and challenging year for Family Pride and for our families ...," said Jennifer Chrisler (pictured), executive director of Family Pride. "Family Week gives us an opportunity to gather and draw strength from each other as well as plan for the challenges we face this Fall in elections across the nation."

In addition to a full slate of events and programs, Family Pride will recognize two families who have contributed to the visibility and rights of LGBT families nationwide. ▀



Miss North Carolina USofA Schedule of Preliminaries 2006-2007

10/06	Miss Fayetteville USofA Club Spektrum www.clubspektrum.com	contact: Diamond 910-578-7394
11/05	Miss Greensboro USofA Warehouse 29 www.w29.com	contact: Kent 336-207-8411 W29 336-333-9333
11/19	Miss Piedmont USofA Warehouse 29 www.w29.com	contact: Chris 336-402-0501 W29 336-333-9333
01/05	Miss Hickory USofA Club Cabaret www.clubcabaret@earthlink.net	contact: Jeff 828-322-8103 jeffreves@webtv.net
01/07	Miss Tarheel USofA Warehouse 29 www.w29.com	contact: James 336-908-2168 W29 336-333-9333
01/14	Miss Wilmington USofA www.ibizawilmington.com	contact: Kristine 910-264-6056 Scott 910-473-2533
02/03	Miss Greenville USofA www.greatamericanminingcompany.com	contact: Michelle 252-320-4052
Miss North Carolina USofA FINAL March 8-11, 2007		
Warehouse 29 www.w29.com		

Preliminaries still available
for purchase:
Miss Asheville USofA
Miss Capitol City USofA
Miss Central Carolina USofA
Miss Western North Carolina
USofA



If interested in holding
a preliminary contest
at your venue,
please contact
Kent at 336-207-8411.
Deadline for scheduling
preliminaries is August 30th.

Miss North Carolina USofA at Large Pageant "Memoirs of a Harajuku Girl"

Sunday, September 3

Registration of contestants 3:00-4:00/\$100 entry

Interview 4:30/Contest begins 10:00 pm

\$500 Prize Package to the Winner!

Entertainment to include:

PAISLEY PARQUE

Miss NCUSofAatLarge2006

JESSICA JADE

Miss NCUSofA2006

KRISTINA KELLY

Former Miss NCUSofAatLarge

Both events listed above to be held at:

WAREHOUSE 29

1011 Arnold Street, Greensboro, NC 336-333-9333

www.W29.com