

Forward Strides

by Cynthia Janes

Documenting our progress towards freedom and justice
Summarized from press reports across the Nation

Gay activist Glen Maxey, the first openly gay person to win a seat in the Texas State House (and in any state house in the Southwestern U.S.), was sworn into office in March by Governor Ann Richards. Maxey credits his victory to "20 years of coalition-building," and to billing himself as the most "effective" candidate.--*Washington Blade*, 3/8/91

Puerto Rico has the first gay magazine in the Caribbean. Begun in January, *Caribbean Heat* is about one-third Spanish and two-thirds English. Write 106 de Diego Ave., Box 78, Santurce, Puerto Rico 00907.--*Outlines* (Chicago), 3/91

Coors Brewing Company continues to woo the gay and lesbian community, which it alienated years ago by its (now remedied) anti-gay employment practices. Coors has signed on as an endorser of the California Gay Rights Bill.--*Windy City Times* (WCT, Chicago), 4/11/91

The U.S.'s apparently sole gay-identified financial institution, the Dallas Gay Alliance Credit Union, is offering the world's first gay credit card. The Mastercard features the group's full name in bold purple letters across the top.--*Asheville Citizen-Times*, 2/9/91; *Charlotte Observer*, 2/10/91; *Outlines* (Chicago), 3/91

In March, a three-judge panel of Ohio's 10th Appellate District in Columbus ruled that laws concerning domestic violence apply to same-sex couples, too. Legal activists say that the ruling is the first of its kind in the

U.S.--*Washington Blade*, 3/29/91; *Gay Community News* (GCN, Boston), 4/9/91

The Minneapolis city council approved two domestic partnership measures January 25. Gay and lesbian (and heterosexual) partners can now register their relationships at city hall, and city workers who are domestic partners may take sick leave and bereavement leave.--*The Advocate*, 2/26/91; *Partners Newsletter for Gay and Lesbian Couples*, 3-4/91

Andrea Bernstein, former VP of Gay and Lesbian Independent Democrats (NYC), has been named deputy press secretary to New York City comptroller Elizabeth Holtzman.--*The Advocate*, 2/26/91

The first Asian Lesbian Conference was held in December, 1990, in Bangkok, Thailand. Items on the agenda included creation of an Asian Lesbian Network to fight for lesbian rights and lesbian visibility.--*OutWeek* (New York), 3/27/91

The Student-Faculty Senate at the University of Minnesota voted 151-12 to recommend that the school set a deadline by which the military must remove its ROTC from campus or change its discriminatory policy against gays. The board of regents must approve the measure.--*Washington Blade*, 3/1/91

Lesbian writer-activist Sabrina Sojourner has become the first openly gay journalist to receive an award from the Atlanta Association of Black Journalists. In accepting the award, Sojourner said that she hopes her winning will encourage more African American lesbian and gay journalists to come out.--*GCN*, 2/25/91

On March 15 Florida Circuit Court Judge M. Ignatius Lester struck down a state law prohibiting gays from adopting children, stating that the law violates the state constitution's provisions for right to privacy, due process, and equal protection; Judge Lester told a news service that "the statute suffers from the trite notions of homosexuals' unsuitability as fit parents and evidences discrimination through archaic stereotypes associated with homosexuals." As it stands, the ruling will directly affect only one county, but if upheld on appeal, may affect the entire state.--*NY Times*, 3/20/91; *Washington Blade*, 3/29/91; *OutWeek*, 4/10/91

Rev. Charles Curran, a Catholic University theology professor barred by the Vatican from teaching Catholic theology because of his acceptance of homosexuality and other "sins," has gotten a tenured position at Southern Methodist University, Dallas.--*OutWeek*, 1/16/91

The College Council of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in NYC voted to remove ROTC from its campus.--*Southern Voice* (Atlanta), 4/11/91

Britain has its first openly gay knight. Openly gay British Shakespearean actor Ian McKellan was knighted on New Year's Eve by Britain's Queen Elizabeth II.--*OutWeek*, 1/16/91

TV's first (apparently) lesbian kiss occurred February 7 when *LA Law* attorney CJ Lamb participated in a kiss after a date with attorney Abby Perkins. Although in the episode the two planned to "get together again," a network spokesperson said that the story line will not be continued.--*GCN*, 3/2/91

The *Minneapolis Star Tribune* became the first major U.S. daily to include same-sexed union announcements in their paper. The *Star-Tribune* has renamed its weddings and engagements section "Celebrations," and includes announcements of same sex couples who choose to register their partnerships under the city's domestic partnership ordinance. The paper's decision was the result of a request by a lesbian who works for the paper, and who had registered her partnership.--*NY Times*, 3/23/91; *Southern Voice*, 4/11/91

AAA Washington has made its associate membership available to same-sex domestic partners. The decision, aided by the Seattle Human Rights Department, was based on Seattle's ordinance prohibiting discrimination based on marital status, but will affect much of western and central Washington.--*Southern Voice*, 4/11/91

Minnesota governor Ame Carlson has signed an executive order prohibiting discrimination against gay men and lesbians in state employment. Governor Carlson also said he would support a state gay rights law and repeal of the state's sodomy law.--*WCT*, 4/4/91

Lesbian Joan Drury has donated \$300,000 to the Astraea Foundation, a lesbian grant foundation, for the creation of a Lesbian Writers' Fund to support lesbian fiction and poetry.--*Washington Blade*, 2/15/91

Montefiore Medical center, NYC, has become the largest private employer in the nation to offer the same health benefits to gay employees and their partners as are offered to married heterosexual employees and their spouses. The extension does not apply to heterosexual unmarried domestic partners, but is limited to employees "who are unable, by law, to marry because of laws prohibiting marriage of persons of the same sex."--*NY Times*, 3/26/91--*Thanks to Mary Davis*

An estimated 28,000 lesbians and gay men marched on the Texas state capitol for the second time in three years to point out the need for an end to discrimination against gays.

San Francisco's school board has approved an on-site gay-sensitive program for each public school. The board has also passed a resolution calling for gays and lesbians, among other minorities, to be represented in curricula and textbooks, and are making existing gay and lesbian books widely available in school libraries and classrooms.--*WCT*, 3/21/91

For the first time, a group of US Congressmen and Congresswomen have urged President Bush to issue an executive order banning anti-gay discrimination by the military. In a March 15 letter, 40 congresspeople asked Bush to repeal the ban.

In the first lawsuit to invoke a non-discrimination insurance regulation, a gay man has filed suit against an insurance company that refused to enroll him in its insurance program because he is gay. Indiana's insurance regulations prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation.--*WCT*, 4/11/91

For the first time, the *International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10)*, published by the World Health Organization, will not list homosexuality as a disease. The last issue (*ICD-9*) was published in 1972, before the American Psychiatric Association and the American Psychological Association had removed homosexuality from their lists of mental illnesses.--*WCT*, 4/4/91

The Worcester, MA, city council voted February 5 to amend their human rights ordinance to include sexual orientation.--*GCN*, 3/11/91

SANDRA KREMER, ACSW/CSSW

Clinical Social Worker
Counseling & Psychotherapy

123 A Fifth Avenue East
Hendersonville, NC 28792
(704)696-9999

Ellen Hines, M.Ac., Dipl.Ac. (NCCA)
California and Hawaii State, and National Board Certified



Traditional Chinese
Acupuncture & Herbology

(704) 252-7491 in Asheville, NC
(615) 928-0005 in Johnson City, TN

OUR SERVICES ARE FREE

Blue Ridge Travel Agency, Inc.

- COMPLETE TRAVEL SERVICES -
SENIOR CITIZENS - INDIVIDUAL
CORPORATE - GROUP

- AUTHORIZED AMTRAK AGENT •
- WORLD WIDE CRUISES •
- DOMESTIC & INTERNATIONAL •
- AIRLINE TICKETS •
- HOTEL - CAR - RESERVATIONS •

669-8681 or 669-7849

MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED
102 CHERRY ST - BLACK MTN