Memphis Stonewall Dems to Hold Presidential Forum

The Memphis Stonewall Democrats will hold a public forum at the Memphis Gay and Lesbian Community Center on Sun., Jan. 27. The forum is scheduled to begin at 2 p.m. and is designed to debate which Democratic presidential candidate to support in the Feb. 5 Tennessee primary.

Individuals are encouraged to come and defend their candidate choice. A straw poll will be taken to see which candidate has the most support among those attending.

National Stonewall Democrats have launched their "Pride in the Party" initiative to get more LGBT people involved in the Democratic Party and help them become delegates to the Democratic National Convention.

Members are also asked to renew their membership for 2008, and those who have not joined are encouraged to do so to help support LGBT civil rights in the Democratic Party. Membership dues are $20 and can be mailed to: Memphis Stonewall Democrats, P.O. Box 42041, Memphis, TN 38174 or delivered at the meeting.

Monthly meetings are the Fourth Sundays of the month, 2 p.m. at the Memphis Gay & Lesbian Community Center (892 S. Cooper).

For more information contact mphlsstonewalldem@yahoo.com or visit www.memphisstonewalldemocrats.org.

National Stonewall Democrats is the only national organization of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Democrats, with more than 90 local chapters across the nation. NSD is committed to working through the Democratic Party to advance the rights of all people regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

TEP Offers ‘Lobbying 101’ in Anticipation of Advancing Equality Day

The Tennessee Equality Project (TEP) is not taking chances when the General Assembly reconvenes in January. The Tennessee anti-gay industry has already announced that they plan to have legislation introduced that would restrict our adoption rights and leave even more children waiting for a loving home.

TEP’s "Lobbying 101" training sessions offered throughout the state will prepare fair-minded citizens to fight back. Learning how to speak about equality issues with your legislators is not difficult. When lawmakers can put a face with an issue, it changes their minds. A commitment to tell those in power that equality matters to you can help stop bad bills. Even if adoption isn’t the most important issue to you, by getting to know your senator and representative, you will help facilitate fair legislation for GLBT citizens.

TEP will offer "Lobbying 101" in Memphis on Sat., Jan. 26, from 1-3 p.m. at the Memphis Gay and Lesbian Community Center (892 S. Cooper). MGLCC’s Initiative: Fairness will host this event, and Nike TN GLBT and Friends Network will provide refreshments.

Rep. Mike Krenell (D-93) of Memphis has accepted an invitation to speak. Other General Assembly members from Shelby County may also attend. Dr. Marisa Richmond from Nashville will facilitate the training. If expected participation exceeds the capacity of the community center, an alternative training site will be announced.

If inclement weather occurs in Memphis on Jan. 26, the training will be held on Sun., Jan. 27.

"Lobbying 101" training will prepare you for TEP’s Fourth Annual Advancing Equality Day on the Hill in Nashville on Feb. 19.

TEP tracks all legislation in the General Assembly that affects GLBT citizens in Tennessee and develops talking points you can share with your elected representative.

See Lobbying 101 on page 3

QBliss Names Leadership Award for Wilkerson

On June 9, 2007, QBliss Executive Director, Founder, and Editor In Chief Russell Olivera Jr., met an extraordinary man named Gary Wilkerson. The two met at Mid-South Pride’s "Pride Festival" in Memphis and this was the first face-to-face meeting after months of corresponding through e-mails and phone calls since QBliss was the media sponsor for the event.

Olivera had heard whispers of what was happening in Memphis — that its annual pride event was something special and unlike many other pride events. The event was produced by Mid-South Pride, which were changing the face of pride and bringing a community together in a way that was inclusive, positive, and breaking stereotypes, creating a different vision of what a pride event is all about. Olivera knew he had made QBliss a part of this event and its message, so QBliss became the event’s media sponsor.

Olivera interviewed Gary Wilkerson in person at the event and found a man who had a similar vision on where the greater GLBTI community could go, and how our community could change. The positive optimism Wilkerson showed during the interview connected with Olivera’s already positive and optimistic vision for our community.

Olivera has found over the years that a fellow gay brother and leader with vision, hope and a love for a community struggling to find the leaders of tomorrow, was gone.

In October 2007, Olivera and the greater GLBTI community local and worldwide, learned that Gary Wilkerson had passed away at 45 years old. Olivera was heartbroken that a fellow gay brother and leader with vision, hope and a love for a community struggling to find the leaders of tomorrow, was gone.

In January 2008, Olivera announced that QBliss would pay tribute to Wilkerson by naming a community award after him: The QBliss GLBTIA Creating Change Community Award — "Gary Wilkerson Visionary Leadership Award.”

Olivera said, "the award would be given to the leaders of our greater GLBTI community and our allies, whose vision and work reflects the importance of inclusion, tolerance and showing that a community is made of many people, and that each is a vital member.”
Is FDA Risking Gay Men’s Lives?

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced in December that it is adopting a new rule that would require warning labels on contraceptive products that contain the spermicide nonoxynol-9 (N-9), but the federal agency is delaying the establishment of a similar rule on condoms containing N-9.

The Deputy Director for the Global Campaign for Microbicides, Anna Forbes, said it appears to her that the FDA was “stalling” on the implementation of the N-9 rules.

Microbicides refer to a wide range of topically applied products including gels, creams and suppositories that prevent the transmission of AIDS and other STDs. The Global Campaign is a nonprofit organization that works with a network of over 285 non-governmental organizations to help accelerate the development of microbicides. It has called for the removal of N-9 from all condoms.

The FDA is considering labeling requirements for N-9 condoms separately from other N-9 contraceptive products because it classifies condoms as “medical devices.” The two major manufacturers of N-9 condoms, Church and Dwight, the makers of the Trojan brand, and Ansell, the maker of the LifeStyles brand, wrote to the FDA suggesting that warning consumers about N-9 condoms could be confusing and could stop some consumers from using condoms at all. That objection was the major factor in causing the FDA to delay N-9 labeling rules.

Citing that reason, the FDA opted to study the issue further. The first phase of the planned N-9 condom study will be completed by February 2008 and the second phase, which will take about 17 weeks, will begin after the FDA analyzes the first study, according to FDA spokeswoman Peper Long. A number of AIDS organizations have joined with the Global Campaign in calling for the removal of N-9 from condoms.

N-9 was once proposed as a way to reduce the risk of HIV transmission after it was shown to kill the AIDS virus in laboratory studies. But subsequent studies on humans showed that this was just the opposite effect.
HRC Highlights Best Places to Work for 2008

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation has released its annual list of the “Best Places to Work for GLBT Equality.” A total of 195 companies that achieve this honor will use the 2008 “Best Places to Work for GLBT Equality” seal to distinguish their company as a fair-minded employer.

The seal is given to companies who score a perfect 100 percent on the Human Rights Campaign Foundation’s Corporate Equality Index which measures policies and practices implemented to promote fairness and equality in the workplace for GLBT employees.

“We honor the companies awarded for being the ‘Best Places to Work for GLBT Equality,’” said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. “These companies are working hard to transform their workplaces and make them safer for millions of employees around the country. We can now say that at least 10 million employees are protected on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity on the job.”

The 2008 Corporate Equality Index report, released this past fall, awarded an unprecedented 195 major U.S. businesses the top rating of 100 percent, up from 138 last year—a 41 percent increase. One of the CEI’s major findings was that a majority of rated employers now offer workplace protections on the basis of gender identity—58 percent. That number has increased from just 29 percent in 2005.

Some of the companies on the list this year include: Boeing, US Airways, Macy’s, Ford Motor Company, American Express, IBM, Apple, Microsoft, Ernst & Young LLP, Walt Disney, Yahoo!, Google, Coca-Cola, Aetna, and Kimpton Hotel & Restaurant Group.

To see a complete listing of companies who received the 2008 “Best Places to Work for GLBT Equality” seal and to find an image of the seal, visit: www.hrc.org/placeswork.

Dykes on Bikes’ Challenge Fails

A San Francisco motorcycle club gained long-sought legal approval for its trademark of the name “Dykes on Bikes” when the U.S. Supreme Court turned away a challenge from a lawyer who said the term denigrated men.

Without comment, the justices denied review of an appeal by Michael McDermott of Dublin, who challenged a decision by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to grant the San Francisco Women’s Motorcycle Contingent exclusive rights over the commercial use of Dykes on Bikes.

The motorcycle club applied for a trademark in 2003 after using Dykes on Bikes for three decades as the moniker of the motorized unit that leads San Francisco’s annual Gay Pride Parade. The club’s attorney, Gregory Gilchrist, said the group had no business plans for the phrase but decided to seek legal protection after an offshoot group, now independent, discussed putting the name on T-shirts for sale.

The trademark office initially rejected the application, saying the name was disparaging to lesbians, but approved it in January 2006 after the club submitted evidence that activists were trying to reclaim “dykes” as a term of pride. Gilchrist said the lawyers pointed out that the office had approved trademarks for other once-derogatory terms — for example, the television show Queer Eye for the Straight Guy.

“Huckabee should explain why he is socially and professionally associating with known extremists and how this squares with his professed sunny and optimistic vision for America,” said Besen. “While Huckabee makes jokes on the campaign trail, his ties to the fundamentalist fringe is no laughing matter. We hope the media will continue to explore the radical associates of Mike Huckabee.”

In 1998, Mike Huckabee co-wrote the book, Kids Who Kill With Re­constructionist author George Grant. Grant is an ideologue with extreme, even dangerous religious views. The question is, does the former Arkansas governor share Grant’s view of the role of Christianity in government? This passage is from Grant’s 1987 book The Changing of the Guard.

“Christian have an obligation, a mandate, a commission, a holy responsibility to reclaim the land for Jesus Christ — to have dominion in the civil structures, just as in every other aspect of life and godliness. But it is dominion that we are after. Not just a voice. It is dominion we are after. Not just influence. It is dominion we are after. Not just equal time. It is dominion we are after. World conquest. That’s what Christ has commissioned us to accomplish.”

The Cato Institute also reported that Huckabee held a fundraiser at the Houston home of Dr. Steven Hotze, another leader of the radical Reconstructionist movement.

There is a disturbing pattern developing that needs to be further investigated, said Besen. “With Huckabee’s stunning victory in Iowa, it is crucial that we learn more about what this candidate truly stands for and why he associates with people who promote religious extremism.”

TruthWinsOut.org is a non-profit organization that counters right wing propaganda, exposes the “ex-gay” myth and educates America about gay life. For more information, visit http://www.truthwinsout.org.

ACLU Demands Virginia High School Stop Censoring Gay Student

The American Civil Liberties Union has demanded that a high school that punished a student for wearing a t-shirt featuring a lesbian pride symbol apologize to the student and guarantee that it will no longer illegally censor her in the future.

School officials at J.C. Norcom High School had threatened the 17-year-old senior with suspension because a teacher was upset by her t-shirt, which bears an image of two overlapping female gender symbols.

“When my teacher told me she was confused, I wear that shirt every morning for a hotel management class. “I wear that shirt because I want people to know that I’m proud of being a lesbian and comfortable with who I am. And I have the same Constitutional right to free speech as any other student.”

Lobbying 101

Continued from p. 1

Advancing Equality Day is your opportunity to witness state government at work and advocate for fair legislation with your elected representatives.

Shelby County sends more legislators to the General Assembly than any other county in the state. The Shelby County Committee of TEP has set a challenging goal of sending 50 people from our area to Legislative Plaza in Nashville on Advancing Equality Day. Mark your calendar today so you can make a difference for you and your loved ones.

Sign up for “Lobbying 101” or Advancing Equality Day or receive more information by contacting the Shelby County Committee of TEP at shelbycountyatep@theequalityproject.com or by visiting www.tep.org.

Members of the Shelby County Committee of TEP contributed to this story.
Criminal verdicts in Morocco against six men sentenced to prison for homosexual conduct should be set aside and the men released, an international human rights organization said Dec. 12.

A court in Ksar el-Kbir, a small city about 120 kilometers south of Tangiers, has convicted the men of violating Morocco’s penal code, which criminalizes “lewd or unnatural acts with an individual of the same sex.”

The court sentenced three defendants to six months in prison and two defendants to four months; it sentenced the sixth, who it also convicted of the unauthorized sale of alcohol, to 10 months. The defendants range in age from 20 to 61 years old.

According to lawyers for the defendants, the prosecution failed to present any evidence that the men actually had engaged in the prohibited conduct.

“The men are held in jail on charges related to events that occurred in early November,” said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East and North Africa director at Human Rights Watch. “The men’s rights to privacy and freedom of expression have been violated, and the court has convicted them without apparent evidence; they should be set free.”

The men have been in jail since they were first arrested by the police between Nov. 23 and 25, after a video circulated online purporting to show a private party, allegedly including the men, taking place in Ksar el-Kbir on Nov. 18.

Press reports claimed the party was a “gay marriage.” Following the arrests, hundreds of men and women marched through the streets of Ksar el-Kbir, denouncing the men’s alleged activities and calling for their punishment.

The video showed no indications of sexual activity. The men all pleaded innocent. At the trial, the judge refused to release the men provisionally pending their appeals.

Criminalizing consensual, adult homosexual conduct violates human rights protection in international law, Human Rights Watch said.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Morocco has ratified, bars interference with the right to privacy. The United Nations Human Rights Committee has condemned laws against consensual homosexual conduct as violations of the ICCPR. The United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has held that arrests for consensual homosexual conduct are, by definition, human rights violations.

In the preamble to its constitution, Morocco “subscribes to the principles, rights, and obligations” consequent on its membership in organizations including the United Nations “and reaffirms its attachment to human rights as they are universally recognized.”

“In applying an unjust law in an unjust fashion, the Ksar el-Kbir court has fueled the forces of intolerance in Morocco,” said Whitson.

“If Morocco truly aspires to be a regional leader on human rights, it should lead the way in decriminalizing homosexual conduct.”

**Pope’s Message: Gay Weddings Threaten Peace**

The annual message from the head of the Roman Catholic Church to the world has been delivered. Pope Benedict’s statement marked World Peace Day on Jan. 1.

The message is entitled “The Human Family, A Community of Peace,” and in it he calls for the dismantling of nuclear weapons and environmental co-operation and describes gay marriage as “an obstacle on the road to peace.”

The 80-year-old German-born pontiff theorizes that peace and the family are inherently linked and any threat to the “traditional family” will be opposed by Catholics.

Cardinal Renato Martino, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, explained the thinking behind the Papal statement to journalists.

“Many legislative initiatives work against peace by weakening the family founded on marriage between a man and a woman, by directly or indirectly forcing families not to be open to accepting a morally responsible life, or by not recognizing the family as having primary responsibility in the education of children,” he said.

The Pope’s message emphasizes his opposition to gay and lesbian relationships.

**Archbishop of Canterbury: No Change Over Gay Bishop**

The archbishop of Canterbury said Dec. 14 he will not reverse his decision to exclude a gay U.S. bishop from joining other bishops at a global Anglican gathering next year.

The Episcopal Church, the Anglican body in the U.S., caused an uproar in 2003 by consecrating the first openly gay bishop, V. Gene Robinson of New Hampshire. Anglicans are now on the brink of schism, and attendance at next year’s assembly, called the Lambeth Conference, has become a focus of the tension. Theological conservatives and liberals have separately threatened to boycott the meeting because of who was and wasn’t invited.

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Gay Rights Legislation on Agenda as Congress Returns

Members of Congress began returning to Washington on Jan 14 with three LGBT rights bills still in play — the Matthew Shepard Hate Crime Act, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and repeal of Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.

Whether any of them advance will be up to the will of the Democratic leadership in the House and Senate.

The Democratic-led House reconvened Jan. 15. The Senate returns Jan. 22.

The Matthew Shepard Hate Crime Act was named for the 21-year-old college student who was murdered in an anti-gay hate crime in Wyoming in October 1998. It passed in September and then went to conference where it was stripped out.

Democrats claimed several successes in their first year in power, including raising the minimum wage, boosting fuel mileage standards for cars and small trucks, increasing security at seaports and airports, reducing student loan interest rates and requiring stricter mental health checks for gun purchases.

The Senate returns Jan. 22 to deal with a particularly divisive issue, renewal of a six-month law defining electronic surveillance powers. The law is due to expire Feb. 1. Such legislative exercises had numerous precedents in 2007, when presidential vetoes — or veto threats — and Republican filibusters in the Senate blocked Democratic-proposed legislation or forced major changes.

House Democrats are planning a vote the following week on overriding Bush’s second veto of legislation to expand the federal child health insurance program. The bill passed by a veto-proof margin in the Senate, but enough Republicans in the House have stuck with Bush to stop an override there.

The study released online by the journal Annals of Internal Medicine found the highest concentrations of infection by the drug-resistant bug in and around San Francisco’s Castro District, and among patients who visit health clinics that treat HIV infections among gay men in San Francisco and Boston.

The study estimated that one in 588 residents living within the Castro neighborhood Zip code area is infected with that variant, which is resistant to six types of commonly used antibiotics. The risk of contracting this difficult-to-treat bug is 13-fold higher for gay men compared to the rest of the city’s population, researchers found.

“Everywhere we see, whether that’s in the South or the Midwest, that we have a Democratic governor, we have a Democratic Senate, we have a Democratic House, and there’s a Democratic president, then the state is going to do better,” said Binh An Diep, a researcher at San Francisco General Hospital and lead author of the report. “This is a national problem, and San Francisco is at the epicenter.”

The germ typically causes boils and other skin and soft-tissue infections, and, despite its resistance to some drugs, is still treatable by surgical drainage and several classes of antibiotics. What is unusual in this case is the high percentage of infections — up to 40 percent — occurring in the buttocks and genitalia.

Anti-Gay Petition Signatures Becoming Harder to Get

The same-sex marriage ban in Florida may not happen in 2008 because another petition drive by conservative moralists is failing.

Signature collection is getting more difficult for right-wing extremists on both coasts. A group in California has failed to garner enough support to remove recently enacted civil rights protections.

The Orlando Sentinel reports that a conservative group backing the gay-marriage ban has failed to collect the appropriate number of signatures necessary to place a constitutional amendment — to ban gay marriage — on the 2008 ballot.

Florida is thus the only state to have a constitutional amendment on the books that would ban gay marriage.

The study released online by the journal Annals of Internal Medicine found the highest concentrations of infection by the drug-resistant bug in and around San Francisco’s Castro District, and among patients who visit health clinics that treat HIV infections among gay men in San Francisco and Boston.

The culprit is a form of MRSA, or Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus, a bug that was once confined to hospitalized patients but, since the late 1990s, has been circulating outside medical settings, afflicting anyone from injection drug users to elementary school students. A strain called USA300 has been a leading cause of MRSA infection in this decade, and an exceptionally drug-resistant variant of it is now on the loose.

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Why Political Party Matters

Commentary by Jim Maynard

Anthony Childress has written two columns in the Triangle Journal: “Why I’m Still A Republican” (September 2007) and “Is This The Season To Be...” (December 2007) to express his rationalizations for supporting the Republican Party. Why do these Rationalizations fail? He states that the Republican Party is more accepting of gays than the Democratic Party. Why? We all have to ask ourselves: What is a gay Republican really? What does he/she support? What are his/her beliefs and how do they relate to the Democratic Party?

First, he claims that while the Republicans have more acceptance of gays and more willingness to let gays express their sexuality, they have no intention of passing any laws. The Republican Party does not have any intention of ever taking steps to make their support of gay rights a reality. They are simply using gay Republicans as a “cultural war” against gays, non-Christians and racial minorities.

In the United States, we have two major political parties: the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. These parties are the main political forces in the United States. They compete for power and influence in the government. The Democratic Party is more likely to support gay rights, while the Republican Party is more likely to oppose gay rights.

Gay Republican candidates run for public office in both parties. However, the majority of these candidates run for office within the Republican Party. These candidates support the Republican Party’s platform on gay issues. They believe in the importance of individual rights and freedoms. They support the rights of all Americans, regardless of sexual orientation.

Gay Republican candidates also run for office within the Democratic Party. These candidates support the Democratic Party’s platform on gay issues. They believe in the importance of equality and social justice. They support the rights of all Americans, regardless of sexual orientation.

Gay Republican candidates must find a way to balance their support of the Republican Party and their support of gay rights. They must find a way to balance their support of the Democratic Party and their support of gay rights. They must find a way to balance their support of the Republican Party and the Democratic Party.

In conclusion, the Democratic Party is more likely to support gay rights than the Republican Party. The Republican Party is more likely to oppose gay rights. Gay Republican candidates must find a way to balance their support of the Republican Party and their support of gay rights. They must find a way to balance their support of the Democratic Party and their support of gay rights. They must find a way to balance their support of the Republican Party and the Democratic Party.
Trans Student Accuses College of Discrimination

A transgendered student says he is the victim of discrimination at a small Massachusetts community college because he is biologically female.

Ethane Santiago says that North­ern Essex Community College in Haverhill, Mass., is refusing to let him to use the men’s locker room.

Santiago, 20, began transitioning two years ago and has recently begun hormone treatment. He presents as male and wears men’s clothing.

But because he still has female sex organs the college says that he is in danger of being sexually assaulted in the men’s changing room.

“I’ve never been beaten up,” Santiago tells the Eagle-Tribune newspaper. “But I figure that some day I will probably be beaten up. That’s a fact of life for me and I’m not afraid.”

Santiago says that he would feel uncomfortable using the women’s locker room.

“I just want people to see me the way I see myself,” he told the pa­per.

Poll: Republicans Have Sex More Often

We know people have issues with polling in general and with poll­ster Frank Luntz in particular, but sometimes survey results are just too important to ignore.

In a poll that appears in current issue of Playboy, Luntz says that more Republicans than Democrats have sex at least once a week. Fifty-five percent of Republicans but only 43 percent of Democrats report hooking up at least weekly.

On the other hand, 67 percent of Democrats but only 51 percent of Republican say they’ve watched porn with their partners.

Do Republicans and Democrats see eye-to-eye on anything sexual? Yes. Twenty-three percent of Re­publicans and 24 percent of Demo­crats say they’d probably have a one-night stand with a president if they found that person physically and sexually attractive.

Which presidents fit that bill? Luntz’s respondents overwhelm­ingly picked Bill Clinton as the sexiest president of the past 40 years, with Ronald Reagan a very distant second. The least sexy president? Richard Nixon, with Clinton second.

Ewan McGregor and Jim Carrey Sign Up for Gay Roles

A new Hollywood movie, already dubbed Brokeback Prison, will see comedian Jim Carrey play a married prisoner who falls in love with another inmate, played by British actor Ewan McGregor.

Production is due to begin on I Love You Philip Morris in the spring.

It is based on the true story of Steve Russell, a convicted conman, who fell for his cellmate, the Mor­ris of the film’s title.

When Morris was released, Russell broke out of jail four times to try to be reunited with him, lead­ing him to be locked up for a 144­year sentence.

On one occasion, he faked his own death to escape and on another occasion colored his entire uniform green to make them look like sur­gery scrubs.

“It’s an unusual love story,” McGregor told The Star.

Mainstream Press Reports on Ron Paul’s Anti-Gay Screeds

Ron Paul’s anti-gay, anti-black, anti-Semite newsletter articles: how much did Paul himself write?

Linked to Christian Reconstruc­tionists (people who want to toss law as we know it and replace it with Old Testament-based codes of justice) and various conspiracy theorists, and the supposed author of newsletters that have insulted blacks, Jews, and others, evidence of 2008 hopeful Ron Paul’s anti­gay bias has is coming to light in the press.

In an article published Jan. 8, The New Republic examined an archive of newsletters seemingly published under Paul’s auspices, and though many articles do not bear a by-line (and the article said that Paul had disavowed himself from some of the content of the newsletters), the question remains as to whether Paul knew much of what was being written in the newsletters.

The New Republic article states that the newsletters have been pub­lished under a variety of titles, more or less monthly since two years after Paul was initially elected to Congress in 1976, but most, if not all, of the titles have featured Ron Paul’s name, from the folkly Ron Paul’s Freedom Report (senior, not junior) signing into law a hate crimes measure and then al­lowing “the heads of homosexual lobbying groups to the White House for the ceremony,” with “I miss the closet” appearing after­wards under a title that once allowed Ron Paul Survival Report.

The article offers a wealth of detail about the oft­handled insults (and sometimes shocking vitriol) that the newsletters have dished out to minorities of various sorts over the years, and includes a section dedicated to what Paul’s newsletter had to say about gays.

The newsletter articles cited, and praised, Rep. William Dannemeyer, who had advocated quar­ralling people living with AIDS, saying of Dannemeyer that he had spoken “out fearlessly despite the organized power of the gay lobby.”

Other articles attributed to Paul’s newsletters mocked the ACT-UP motto “Silence = Death,” asking, “Shouldn’t it be ‘Sodomy = Death?’” according to The New Re­public.

However, as The New Republic article summed up in its final para­graphs, “Ron Paul is not going to be president. But, as his campaign has gathered steam, he has found himself increasingly permitted inside the boundaries of respectable debate.”

Tennessee Presidential Preference Primary

Tues., Feb. 5

You must already be registered to vote in this primary.
U.S. Military Mum on Gay DADT Policy

The U.S. military apparently is not enforcing its policy of discharging gay soldiers who speak of their sexual orientation, USA Today reported Jan 8.

The report cited the case of Army Sgt. Darren Manzella, who appeared on the CBS program 60 Minutes in December. In the interview, Manzella said his fellow soldiers knew he was gay and showed a home video of him kissing his boyfriend.

He told USA Today he told his commander he was gay in 2006, and the Army investigated and saw the kissing home video. "They found 'no evidence of homosexuality,'" Manzella said. U.S. President Bill Clinton approved the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy in 1993 and about 12,000 troops have since been discharged for saying they were gay, the report said.

Eugene Fidell of the National Institute of Military Justice, a group of military legal experts, said with wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, discharging troops was questionable. "Military managers may be turning a blind eye because it's a nuisance and we need these people," he said to USA Today.

Mid-South Pride to Host Prides of the Southeast Conference

Mid-South Pride will host the annual conference of Prides of the Southeast (POSE) at the Memphis Hilton (formerly Adam's Mark Hotel) from Fri., Feb. 14, through Sun., Feb. 16. Approximately 150 members of Pride leadership will be in attendance for idea sharing and workshops.

A series of eight workshops will be held during the Saturday sessions on subjects ranging from "Preserving the Legacy of Pride" and fundraising to the role of Christianity in gender and sexual identification; media; and volunteer recruitment.

Among the presenters are:
- Vincent Astor, unofficial historian of the Memphis GLBT community
- Phyllis Tickle, founder of the Religion Department of Publishers Weekly and an authority on religion in America
- Mary Schuenert of Arnoux & Associates, Inc. and an authority on non-profit fundraising
- Russell Olivera, founder and editor-in-chief of QBllis, an internet site devoted to gay issues
- Darie L.K. Wolfson, an authority on volunteer recruitment and maintenance.

In addition, the Ryan Parker/Mark Jones film Eli Parker's Getting Married? will be screened for the participants.

For more information on the conference, go to www.midsouthpride.org.
Oregon Domestic Partnership Law Halted

A federal judge on Dec. 28 placed on hold a state domestic partnership law that was set to take effect Jan. 1, pending a February hearing. The law would give some spousal rights to same-sex couples.

Opponents asked U.S. District Judge Michael W. Mosman to intervene after the Oregon secretary of state's office ruled in October that they had failed to collect enough valid signatures on a referendum to block the law.

The Oregon measure covers benefits related to inheritance rights, child-rearing and custody, joint state tax filings, joint health, auto and homeowners insurance policies, visitation rights at hospitals and others. It does not affect federal benefits for married couples, including Social Security and joint filing of federal tax returns.

New Jersey Gains Strongest Transgender Protections

By a 65 to 10 vote, the New Jersey Assembly has approved sweeping legislation to strengthen New Jersey's hate crimes and anti-school bullying laws. On Jan. 10, the New Jersey Senate approved the bill 35 to 0.

The bill, conceived by Garden State Equality with the New Jersey Anti-Defamation League and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, adds "gender identity or expression" to the state's existing hate crimes law and strengthens the hate crimes law in several other ways.

N.H. Civil Union Count Nears 100

Nearly 100 same-sex couples have been joined in civil unions since they became legal in New Hampshire on New Year's Day.

William Bolton, director of the state Vital Records Administration, said 183 civil union licenses have been issued since Dec. 10, when the paperwork became available; most — 171 — were issued to New Hampshire residents. The licenses are valid for 90 days. Officials know of 95 ceremonies that have taken place and 63 happened on Jan. 1, the day civil unions law went into effect.

"I think mostly people are saying, 'Let's take the legal protections we can right now and keep up the fight,'" said Mo Baxley, a state lawmaker and executive director of the New Hampshire Freedom to Marry Coalition, which supports full marriage for gay people.

The largest of those Jan. 1 ceremonies took place just after midnight on the Statehouse steps, when dozens of couples celebrate the new law in a mass ceremony in front of the building where it was passed and signed into law in 2007.

But the overall number of civil unions is small compared to marriages. Since Dec. 10, 614 marriage licenses have been issued to couples and at least 426 ceremonies have taken place, Bolton said.

The New Hampshire law gives couples in civil unions the same rights and responsibilities of married couples in all aspects but name, but that promise, though largely untested, has clear limits.

Gay couples taking advantage of the law acquire substantial new benefits ranging from important health benefits to the ability to inherit without a will. But they will be treated legally as two unmarried adults in all but New Jersey, Vermont, Connecticut and California which recognize civil unions or domestic partnerships for gay couples.

Gay couples united in New Hampshire — or any other state — won't qualify for federal Social Security or veterans survivor benefits or be able to sponsor a foreign national to immigrate as their spouse.

Baxley said she already has heard from state residents who have been surprised to learn that civil unions don't provide all the benefits of heterosexual marriage.

"People are starting to understand exactly what this law means and what it doesn't mean," she said.

New Hampshire is the fourth state in the country to adopt civil unions after Vermont, Connecticut and New Jersey. Massachusetts is the only state that allows marriage.
Analingus: The Curious Lovers’ Guide to Oral-Anal Contact

Not everybody feels comfortable with the thought of kissing or licking their lover’s anus or with having it done to them. But the fact is, many lovers are curious about oral-anal contact — known as analingus and casually called “rimming” — and often feel surprised by their interest, but when they try it, some become enthusiastic about it.

By AJ aka Dutty (duttyboy15@yahoo.com)

Many lovers have an accidental introduction to analingus during cunnilingus, since the bottom of the vaginal entrance is quite close to the anus. Sometimes a little lick meant for the lower vagina slips further south than intended, and the recipient experiences an unexpected delight — and sometimes a surprisingly powerful urge to explore analingus further.

For other lovers, interest in rimming develops from anal play. The most common oral-anal activities are sphincter massage and fingering, and many people also enjoy butt plugs and penis-anus intercourse. But as people explore other forms of anal eroticism, many warm up to the idea of analingus.

Another Way to Play

There is absolutely nothing wrong with accommodation about rimming. If you feel tempted to condemn it, remember that, not too long ago, oral sex was considered a disgusting perversion and was outlawed in many states. Now oral sex is so widely accepted that about three-quarters of Americans say they have performed it on a lover and had it performed on them. In fact, many couples don’t make love without it.

Rimming may not ever become as popular as oral sex, but in recent years Americans have become somewhat more sexually experimental. In fact, surveys suggest that around 15 percent of American adults — more than 20 million people — have experienced some form of anal sex play. There are no statistics specifically on rimming, but as people become more comfortable with sexual experimentation in general, and anal play in particular, it should come as no surprise that many heterosexuals and homosexuals alike are expressing curiosity about analingus.

Why Analingus Feels Erotic

The anus and surrounding tissue are richly endowed with nerves that are highly sensitive to gentle, playful, loving touch. The same is true for the lips and tongue, and when you put these areas together, the combination can be powerfully erotic.

Another reason anal stimulation feels erotic is the pelvic floor muscles, which lie beneath the surface of the anal area. These muscles play an important role in sex and are the ones that contract during orgasm. Using a sex toy, finger, or tongue to massage or insert into the anus stimulates the pelvic floor muscles and heightens overall erotic sensations.

Finally, sex draws a good deal of its emotional power from lovers who wholehearted acceptance of each other. Analingus involves acceptance of an area that’s often not accepted — in fact, one that’s usually rejected. Analingus becomes a way for the giver to say: “I love all of you. No part of your wonderful body turns me off.” And it’s a turn-on for the receiver to try the totally yours. No part of me is off limits to you.” This level of mutual acceptance can be a powerful turn-on.

Raising The Issue

If you’re interested in rimming, raise the issue before you dive in. Some couples prefer to discuss sexual experimentation in non-sexual settings. Others like to discuss experimentation while making love. Raise the issue in whatever way feels the most comfortable to you in your relationship.

If you and your lover have open and frank sexual communication, you might simply announce that you’d like to try analingus. On the other hand, if you feel reluctant to admit your interest — the case for many — you might raise the issue indirectly, perhaps by mentioning something you read or heard about anal contact. San Francisco sex therapist Jack Morin, Ph.D., author of the now-classic *Anal Pleasure & Health*, insists that the anus, anal canal and rectum usually contain surprisingly little stool. Most fecal material is stored above the rectum in the descending colon. When stool moves into the rectum, you feel “the urge,” and it then passes out of the body fairly quickly. Most of the time, when you feel no urge to defecate, there are only trace amounts of stool in the rectum, and the anorectal muscles that can easily be washed out.

The digestive tract might also contain other harmful micro-organisms that can spread through oral-anal contact. Among them:

- **Other bacteria.** Two significant germs are Shigella and Salmonella, which cause food poisoning. These germs can cause acute and often vicious diarrhea, and it’s possible for someone with mild symptoms to transmit the infection to someone else who develops severe symptoms.
- **Intestinal parasites, notably Giardia lamblia, and amoebas, both of which cause diarrhea.**
- **Viruses, notably HIV (the AIDS virus) and the one that causes hepatitis A. HIV typically spreads through blood-to-blood contact. Anal tissue bleeds easily, making it a potential vector for HIV.**
- **Protozoa.** Both of which cause diarrhea.
- **Other infections.** Among them:
  - **Fecal contact.** Fecal contact with a minimum of precautions you want to take.
  - **Consider an enema.** For an extra margin of hygiene safety, the recipient might want to try an enema before washing. Enemas rinse the rectum and anal canal, removing most traces of fecal material. They’re easy to use, especially the disposable enemas available over the counter from pharmacies. Simply insert the flexible nozzle into the anus while you can make sure the end is clean and ready to go.

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Function Without Fear

Because infections such as HIV can be transmitted during analingus, it’s crucial that lovers who play this way take prudent precautions.

- **Wash thoroughly.** Before any sexual encounter involving oranal play, the area around and inside the anus should be carefully washed with soap and water.
- **Consider showering together.** Washing is good, but showering together is even better. Not only is it sensual foreplay, but you can both make sure everything is clean and ready to go.

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Standing bent over. The person on the receiving end stands and bends at the waist, and his or her partner kneels, sits or squats behind.

• Lying supine. The person being licked lies on his or her back, legs bent, knees drawn up to the chest or apart, while the other lover squats or lies on his or her stomach. It often helps in this position to place a pillow under the recipient’s hips, which raises the anus and allows for easier access.

• Sixty-nine. Compared with mutual oral-genital contact, mutual analingus requires somewhat more physical flexibility, but many people enjoy this position.

Once you’re both in position for analingus, here are some tips on technique:

- **Take it slow.** Some recipients enjoy having their partner plunge into analingus. But unless they specifically request it, you should approach this highly sensitive area slowly. Massage, kiss and lick the person’s lower back, thighs, hips and buttocks as you slowly work your way towards his or her anus.

A slow approach builds anticipation for what’s about to happen and often heightens the eroticism of analingus.

• **Use your lips.** Kiss your lover’s anus and the area around it.

• **Use the flat of your tongue.** Press it against your partner’s anus.

• **Use the tip of your tongue.** Wiggle it around the anus, slip it inside and move it in and out or wiggle it around in circles.

From Rimming to Other Forms of Anal Play

As mentioned earlier, some lovers discover analingus while involved in other forms of anal play. For those analingus might be their introduction to anal eroticism. If analingus makes you curious about other aspects of anal sex, see MyPleasure’s ([www.mypleasure.com](http://www.mypleasure.com)) article, “Introducing Anal Sex,” as well as the Introducing Anal Sex Anal Collection of sex toys specifically designed to enhance backdoor fun.

Whatever you and your lover ultimately decide about analingus, discussing it can deepen the intimacy you share. You will learn more about yourself and each other. You will become clearer about what you’re willing and unwilling to try. In the end, as it were, these discussions will help you feel closer to one another and better able to experience whatever sexual pleasure you both enjoy.

"Drag is when a man wears everything a lesbian won’t." —Author Unknown
10 Things Gay Men Should Talk About with Their Doctors

Here is a list of ten key things that gay men should discuss with their doctors.

Vincent M. B. Silenzo, MD, MPH
Board of Directors, Gay and Lesbian Medical Association

1. HIV/AIDS, Safe Sex: That men who have sex with men are at an increased risk of HIV infection is well known, but the effectiveness of safe sex in reducing the rate of HIV infection is one of the gay community’s greatest success stories. However, the last few years have seen the return of many unsafe sex practices. While effective HIV treatments may be on the horizon, there is no substitute for preventing infection. Safe sex is proven to reduce the risk of receiving or transmitting HIV. All health care professionals should be aware of how to counsel and support maintenance of safe sex practices.

2. Substance Use: Gay men use substances at a higher rate than the general population, and not just in larger communities such as New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles. These include a number of substances ranging from amyl nitrates (“poppers”) to marijuana, Ecstasy and amphetamines. The long-term effects of many of these substances are unknown; however, current wisdom suggests potentially serious consequences as we age.

3. Depression/Axiety: Depression and anxiety appear to affect gay men at a higher rate than in the general population. The likelihood of depression or anxiety may be greater, and the problem may be more severe for those who remain in the closet or who do not have adequate social supports. Adolescents and young adults may be at particularly high risk of suicide because of these concerns. Culturally sensitive mental health services targeted specifically at gay men may be more effective in the prevention, early detection, and treatment of these conditions.

4. Hepatitis Immunization: Men who have sex with men are at an increased risk of sexually transmitted infection with hepatitis viruses that cause the serious condition of the liver known as hepatitis. These infections can be potentially fatal, and can lead to very serious long-term issues such as cirrhosis and liver cancer. Fortunately, immunizations are available to prevent two of the three most serious viruses. Universal immunization for Hepatitis A Virus and Hepatitis B Virus is recommended for all men who have sex with men. Safe sex is effective at reducing the risk of viral hepatitis, and is currently the only means of prevention for the very serious Hepatitis C Virus.

5. STDs: Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) occur in sexually active gay men at a high rate. This includes STD infections for which effective treatment is available (syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, pubic lice, and others), and for which no cure is available (HIV, Hepatitis A, B, or C virus; Human Papilloma Virus; etc.). There is absolutely no doubt that safe sex reduces the risk of sexually transmitted diseases, and prevention of these infections through safe sex is key.

6. Prostate, Testicular, and Colon Cancer: Gay men may be at risk for death by prostate, testicular or colon cancer. Screening for these cancers occurs at different times across the life cycle, and access to screening services may be negatively impacted because of issues and challenges in receiving culturally sensitive care for gay men. All gay men should undergo these screenings routinely as recommended for the general population.

7. Alcohol: Although more recent studies have improved our understanding of alcohol use in the gay community, it is still thought that gay men have higher rates of alcohol dependence and abuse than straight men. One drink daily may not adversely affect health, however alcohol-related illnesses can occur with low levels of consumption. Culturally sensitive services targeted to gay men are important in successful prevention and treatment programs.

8. Tobacco: Recent studies seem to support the notion that gay men use tobacco at much higher rates than straight men, reaching nearly 50 percent in several studies. Tobacco-related health problems include lung disease and lung cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure and a whole host of other serious problems. All gay men should be screened for and offered culturally sensitive prevention and cessation programs for tobacco use.

9. Fitness (Diet and Exercise): Problems with body image are more common among gay men than their straight counterparts, and gay men are much more likely to experience an eating disorder such as bulimia or anorexia nervosa. While regular exercise is very good for cardiovascular health and in other areas, too much of a good thing can be harmful. The use of substances such as anabolic steroids and certain supplements can adversely affect health. At the opposite end of the spectrum, overweight and obesity are problems that also affect a large subset of the gay community. This can cause a number of health problems, including diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease.

10. Anal Papilloma: Of all the sexually transmitted infections gay men are at risk for, human papillomavirus—which cause anal and genital warts—is often thought to be little more than an unsightly inconvenience. However, these infections may play a role in the increased rates of anal cancers in gay men. Some health professionals now recommend routine screening with anal Pap Smears, similar to the test done for women to detect early cancers. Safe sex should be emphasized. Treatments for HPV do exist, but occurrences of the warts are very common, and the rate at which the infection can spread between partners is very high.

GLMA, the recognized leader in LGBT health, represents the interests of thousands of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender physicians, medical students, and other health professionals as well as millions of LGBT patients throughout North America. The largest organization of its kind, GLMA was founded in 1981 to combat homophobia in medicine and promote quality health care for all LGBT people.

Hadrian the Gay Emperor

The bust is classically Roman, the face imperious. But this is no ordinary emperor.

As a major new exhibition at the British Museum makes clear, Publius Aelius Traianus Hadrianus was not only a peacemaker who pulled his soldiers out of modern-day Iraq. He was also the first leader of Rome to make it clear that he was gay.

“Hadrian: Empire and Conflict” will see the bust make pilgrimages to both ends of Hadrian’s Wall, the first time it has left the British Museum since being found in the Thames 200 years ago. But it is the singular life-story of the gay emperor that is likely to capture the interest of most visitors.

After being made emperor AD117, he inherited a Roman Empire in its prime, which had thrived on a policy of endless expansion and conquest.

His first move, within hours of coronation, was to withdraw his troops from Mesopotamia, now Iraq, and fortify the empire’s boundaries by building his eponymous wall in northern England and others in the Danube and the Rhine valleys, ushering in a new era of peace. The reign that followed can be traced through 200 ancient treasures, many of which have never been display in Britain.

Several of the artefacts relate to his male consort, Antinous, who accompanied him on his travels around the empire. These items include a poem written on papyrus, featuring the two men hunting together, and new finds that include memorials to the dead lover at Hadrian’s villa in Tivoli.

Although it was not uncommon for his predecessors to have taken gay lovers alongside a female spouse, Hadrian was unique in making his love “official” in a way that no other emperor had before him.

A bust of Roman Emperor Hadrian

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Tom Cruise leaves before the intermission. It really bothered him. He was definitely homophobic.

Cruise’s lawyer Bert Fields has described the contents of Tom Cruise: An Unauthorized Biography as “lies.”

Scientists have discovered that people whose index finger is shorter than their ring finger run an elevated risk of getting osteoarthritis. The finding strengthens the curious biological importance that this index finger/ring finger ratio (known as 2D:4D) has on our lives. It has previously been associated with hormone levels, athletic prowess and sexual orientation.

Nottingham University researchers compared finger lengths of 2,000 osteoarthritis sufferers with those of 1,100 healthy individuals. Those with relatively long ring fingers — the pattern usually seen in men — were twice as likely to be in the osteoarthritis group. Women with this “male” finger ratio were particularly likely to have bad knees.

The researchers say that they are unsure why such an association exists, but it could be due to hormonal influences in the womb. Generally, a longer ring finger is thought to indicate higher exposure to prena-tal testosterone. In women, the index finger is either similar in length or slightly longer than the ring fin- ger.

This has led to various studies on finger ratios in sports people. A 2006 paper in the British Journal of Sports Medicine suggested that gifted sportswomen show a “male” 2D:4D. A separate study, from the University of Central Lancashire, indicated a fascinating correlation between finger ratios and footballing success in men. Professional footballers tend to exhibit longer ring fingers than the nonfootballing population, while the ratio is even more pronounced among international players.

Rather more controversially, the ratio has also been linked to sexual orientation. Lesbians are more likely to sport a “male” ratio than straight women, but gay men are more like to have an even 2D:4D ratio which supports the idea that sexual orientation is shaped by hormonal exposure in the womb.

Tom Cruise Refutes Gay Rumors

A controversial new Tom Cruise biography alleges the actor was an insatiable womanizer during high school.

The actor has been hounded throughout his career by rumors he is gay — but Andrew Morton’s unauthorized book suggests he has pursued women relentlessly all through his life, and one former girlfriend claims he was homosexual.

Morton interviewed Cruise’s actress-ex Melissa Gilbert, who said, “I can honestly say he’s a very sexual person. There was a lot of making out on the couch in my mom’s living room.” The pair dated when he was 19, until he ditched her for Heather Locklear.

On the gay rumors, one date who accompanied Cruise to a production of La Cage Aux Folles, tells Morton, “Men dressed as women, making out on the couch in my room. He didn’t care. He couldn’t handle it. We had to pursue women relentlessly all the time. He’d insist on Volunteers and a Cookbook.”

“Tom Cruise is a very powerful person. He is very dominant, very clever. He’s a very insecure person,” Morton tells of Cruise’s relationship with his girlfriend claims he was homosexual.

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Tom Cruise

Arthritic, Sporty, Gay? Your Finger Ratio Gives You Away

Your fingers can point to many things — and not just physically.

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there are “only” 380 days left of the horrible disaster of the worst president in modern U.S. history. 2007 ended with the worst year in Iraq since Bush’s illegal invasion. Despite all the claims of improvements with the recent “surge” of U.S. troop, 2007 has been the worst year yet in Iraq. With over 175,000 troops in Iraq, 494 U.S. soldiers were killed, making 2007 the deadliest year of the entire U.S. military occupation. During the surge, the number of Iraqis displaced from their homes quadrupled. By the end of 2007, the U.N. estimates that over 2.3 million Iraqis are displaced from their homes and over 2.3 million have fled the country, creating one of the worst refugee crises in the world. With growing internal divisions and political turmoil, 2008 may be even worse.

According to the New York Times, the situation of gays in Iraq is also worse. Religious extremism sparked by the war in Iraq has left once-comfortable gays in Iraq demonized and afraid. Gay Iraqis have become greater targets after soldiers were killed, making 2007 worst year yet in Iraq. Several newspapers have published endorsements of “multiple-Mitt” Romney. Everyone realizes now that he is a fake. (Romney did win the endorsement of homophobic bigot Rev. Lou Sheldon!) Former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee won the Iowa caucuses. Obama won 37 percent of the vote there. John Edwards came in second, leaving Hillary Clinton in third place. In New Hampshire, Hillary Clinton won first place, surprising most pollsters. Obama’s spine-tingling speech about his MLK called for Robert Kennedy, but I’m not sure he has “the stuff” to be president yet. I would like to see an Edwards/Obama ticket; but its looking more like a Clinton/Obama ticket.

I was a Kucinich supporter, but I am now supporting John Edwards. While Dennis Kucinich deserves the votes of progressives and gays for sponsoring a single-payer health care bill and articles of impeachment against Dick Cheney, and standing up for marriage equality, he has no chance of winning. John Edwards is my second choice because of his populist, anti-corporate, anti-establishment candidacy. He is coming (some say it is already here!), and an African-American or a woman will be our next President. Here’s to 2008 and the final end of the Bush/Cheney nightmare!

While Giuliani and Romney are sinking, I’m predicting that John McCain will make a comeback and win the GOP nomination. The big question is what will gay Republicans do? After being ignored and having their donations returned by their past Republican candidates, which candidate will the Log Cabin Republicans endorse in 2008? They can’t endorse Mike Huckabee or Mitt Romney, both of whom are making their opposition to gay rights a centerpiece of their campaigns. Even Rudy Giuliani, their last best hope, has reversed his past support of civil unions and accuses gays of engaging in “sinful acts.” (I can’t think of anything more ironic than having an adherent of Giuiliani condemn homosexuality as sinful.)

John McCain, who the Log Cabin Republicans supported in 2000, is also opposed to LGBT equality and even supports the military’s “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” anti-gay policy. While he seems more “moderate” than other GOP candidates on some issues, he is very conservative on most social issues. He opposes abortion rights and marriage equality, as well as civil unions. He is also one of the strongest supporters of Bush’s illegal invasion and occupation of Iraq, and has suggested U.S. troops should stay in Iraq forever.

That leaves Ron Paul, the Libertarian Republican candidate who opposes the Iraq war and abortion, but indirectly supports marriage equality because he thinks government should not be involved in marriage at all. However, while Ron Paul is taking a heroic stand against Bush’s invasion and occupation of Iraq, he is too extreme even for the Republicans in his criticisms of U.S. “imperialism” and desire to do away with all of the popular New Deal programs, including Social Security.

Journalists have dug up some of Ron Paul’s old newsletters, Ron Paul’s Freedom Report, which, according to the New Republic, contains, “decades worth of obsession with conspiracies; sympathy for the right-wing militia movement, and bigotry against blacks, Jews and gays.” And Ron Paul, a “libertarian” opposes all civil rights laws, claiming that government should not pass laws to combat bigotry!

In 2000 and 2004, gay Republicans overwhelmingly supported George W. Bush. Being about 25 percent of the gay vote, they gave Bush over a million votes which helped defeat Al Gore and John Kerry, both strong supporters of gay rights. They helped elect not only the most anti-gay candidates, but also the worst president in modern history. Did they learn from their mistakes? My advice to the Log Cabin Republican is to support the most moderate GOP candidate, Rudy Giuliani, and try to defeat Mike Huckabee and Mitt Romney. If either of them wins the GOP nomination there will be an all out civil war in the GOP. As much as I detest the Republican Party and would welcome its political death, it would be a disaster for all of us if the Christo-fascists win complete control over the party.

Even if a moderate candidate like Rudy Giuliani wins the GOP nomination, it would still be a disaster for LGBT people if he wins the general election. Giuliani is promising the Christian Right that he will appoint more anti-gay conservative federal judges like Scalia and Roberts. We simply cannot afford another Republican in the White House. Given my history with gay Republicans, it is up to the rest of you to try to persuade them, your friends and family, to do the right thing in 2008 and vote for the Democratic candidate.

The anti-gay American Family Association (Tupelo, Miss.) has a new DVD, They’re Coming to Your Town which shows “how a small group of homosexual activists took over the city council in Eureka Springs, Ark., and began imposing their homosexual agenda on that community.” According to the AFA website, the DVD “shows how, using deceitfulness and lies, homosexuals maneuvered themselves into positions of power and then used those positions to promote their agenda.” I wonder if the homos in Eureka Springs could do this, why can’t we do it in Memphis?

Looking into my crystal ball for 2008, I predict a severe recession is coming (some say it is already here!), and an African-American or a women will be our next President. Here’s to 2008 and the final end of the Bush/Cheney nightmare!

(Read More Queer Notes at queernews.blogspot.com)
COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Jan 20
- Feast For Friends, 6:30pm, St. John's Methodist Church

Jan 21
- Lavender University, "Then and Now Memphis Heritage," 7:00pm MGLCC

Jan 22
- Womyn's Potluck, 6pm, MGLCC

Jan 23
- GLBT History Documentary Series, 6:30pm, MGLCC

Jan 24
- Q-Cafe: 7pm, MGLCC

Jan 25
- Tennessee Equality Project, "Lobbying 101" training, 7pm, MGLCC

Jan 26
- Tennesse Equality Project, "Lobbying 101" training, 7pm, MGLCC

Jan 27
- Stonewall Democrats, 2pm, MGLCC

Jan 28
- Perpetual Transition, 7:30pm, MGLCC

Jan 29

Jan 30

Jan 31

Feb 1
- Q-Cafe: 7pm, MGLCC

Feb 2

Feb 3
- Feast For Friends, 6:30pm, St. John's Methodist Church

Feb 4
- MARDI GRAS

Feb 5
- Tennessee Presidential Primary

Feb 6
- Men's Potluck, 6pm, MGLCC

Feb 7
- Q-Cafe, 7pm, MGLCC

Feb 8
- Gaze Ad Reservation Deadline for Mid-February edition

Feb 9

Feb 10
- MGLCC Board Meeting, 1pm, MGLCC

Feb 11
- Perpetual Transition, 7:30pm, MGLCC

Feb 12
- Mid-February/Gaze Production Deadline

Feb 13
- VALENTINE'S DAY

Feb 14
- Q-Cafe, 7pm, MGLCC

Feb 15
- Prides of the Southeast Conference Workshop sessions, 9am-4:30pm, Memphis Hilton

Feb 16

14 —Gaze —Mid-January 2008— www.gazememphis.com
Idle Thoughts and Random Musings

By Allen Cook

Every once in a while I get a chill down my spine while selecting stories for this or any other newspaper I've worked on.

One of those moments came this month when I came across a story about a new staph germ that appeared to have a concentration in the gay male community. (See story on page 5.)

On just seeing the headline, I flashed back to sometime in 1982 when I saw a similar story about a mysterious cancer concentrated in the gay community of San Francisco. Of course, that cancer turned out to be Kaposi's Sarcoma and the underlying cause was AIDS.

The irony? I didn't run that story in 1982. I am not making the same mistake twice. Caveat.

Another space to check out is 901 Complex (136 Webster St.) downtown. A very inauspicious exterior hides the vastness of the interior, formerly a warehouse. In addition to the normal things a dance/drag bar has, 901 Complex has a dazzling light show and a slate of pageants that boggles the mind.

The place is owned by the same folks who owned the Allusions Entertainment Center which closed in October.

Another rumor that has surfaced (where do these things come from) is that Otherlands is being bought out by Starbucks.

The owner has no knowledge of the sale and no one really knows where the rumor started. The point is that it is not happening. So don't worry.

While it may or may not include a Target store, something is happening in the area across from Pumping Station roughly at Poplar and Watkins.

The project — officially called the Midtown Memphis Planned Development — is comprised of more than 90 individual lots or parcels. The developers are proposing a mix of uses for the property, including small and large retail shops, restaurants and medical offices.

Approval also will be sought to permit apartments or condominium spaces above the retail shops. Target has reportedly expressed interest in building at the site but has not yet finalized a deal for the Midtown property.

Mardi Gras is coming early this year (Feb. 5). The irony of it falling on the day of the Tennessee Presidential Primary is not lost on this observer. One wonders if the poll workers will be throwing beads and doubloons to the voters.

Secret societies (krewes) being taught what they are, it's sometimes difficult to get information on them.

According to krewecentral.com, none of the three predominantly gay Memphis krewes are celebrating hard this year. The Mystic Krewes of Hathor is having a Super Bowl party on Feb. 3, but the Mystic Krewes of Memphis United and Pegasus post no plans.

Oh, well... maybe they just went to New Orleans.

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