

PFLAG ORLANDO

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, their families and friends.

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Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, their families and friends. This is done through: support, to cope with an adverse society; education, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and advocacy, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights. Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

Support meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the Month at the First United Methodist Church of Downtown Orlando 142 East Jackson Street, Orlando, FL, Wesley Building, Room 205 and start at 7:30pm

Marriage Amendment

Election Day also saw the passage of a Florida constitutional amendment that will require all future amendments to pass by a 60% margin has breathed new life into our marriage equality campaign, called FairnessForAllFamilies.org. Thanks to the hard work and millions of dollars contributed by tens of thousands of fair-minded citizens, 5 out of 8 states contained support for their amendments below the 60% level needed to pass an amendment in Florida. Arizona completely defeated their amendment, a first in our nation.

Ambidextrous more likely to be bisexual

TORONTO (CP) -- People who can write with both their right and left hands are more likely to be bisexual, new research has found.

canada.com

LGBT Community Remains Upbeat Despite Gay Union Bans

By Marc Shoffman

The jubilation surrounding the election of many gay friendly candidates to Congress has been slightly overshadowed by the success of gay marriage votes across some US states, but campaigners say the margins suggest some progress.

Colorado, Idaho, South Carolina, Tennessee, South Dakota and Virginia all passed gay marriage bans, while Arizona was the only state out of the seven to reject a constitutional ban, a first in the US.

Anti-marriage amendments were on the ballot in eight state referendums and were approved in seven of the eight, but by significantly lower margins than in past years. In 2004, there were 11 anti-marriage amendments on the November ballot, and in only two of them did opposition top 40 percent: Oregon (43 percent) and Michigan (41 percent.)
247gay.com

NJ gay couples get civil unions

New Jersey became the third state to bless civil unions as an alternative to marriage for same-sex couples, choosing a middle ground that establishes a type of relationship that didn't exist before Vermont created it in 2000.

Under orders by the state high court, the New Jersey Legislature took less than eight weeks to grab the safer political option of civil unions over marriage for gays. The state House voted 59-19 on Thursday (Dec. 14) to create civil unions, just hours before the state Senate gave its approval by a 23-12 margin. New Jersey Gov. Jon Corzine (D) has signaled he will sign the measure.

The legislation was prompted by the New Jersey Supreme Court's Oct. 25 order that the state either legalize same-sex marriage or provide equal statutory treatment for gay couples by April 2007. New Jersey opted to follow the example of Vermont and Connecticut by adopting civil unions. Vermont adopted civil unions in 2000 after a legal decision similar to New Jersey's court ruling. Connecticut's Legislature voluntarily adopted civil unions in 2005.

stateline.org

School board prepares for ACLU lawsuit

By Katrina Elsen, Okeechobee News

The American Civil Liberties Association (ACLU) and Liberty Counsel will square off in federal court to determine the fate of the Gay/Straight Alliance Club at Okeechobee High School (OHS).

After being denied permission for the club to meet at OHS, club organizer Yasmin Gonzalez sought help from the ACLU to sue the Okeechobee County Board. The lawsuit, filed Nov. 15, in United States District Court, seeks equal access for the Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) to meet at the high school.

newszap.com

Tenth Circuit hears challenge to Oklahoma's adoption law

By Ann Rostow

Oklahoma is home to one of the most disturbing anti-gay laws in the country. Hurriedly passed in April 2004, the law amended the adoption code to ban the state from recognizing "an adoption by more than one individual of the same sex from any other state or foreign jurisdiction."

Lambda Legal Defense wasted no time in challenging the measure, which set a new standard in statutory animosity towards gay and lesbian families. After Lambda won in federal court last May, the state appealed, setting the stage for a showdown before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit. Oral arguments were held before the federal appellate panel Nov. 13, and the legal community will now sit back and wait for a ruling from the three-judge court in Denver.

dallasvoice.com

Scottish Tory leader backs gay adoption

By Marc Shoffman

Scotland's Conservative Party leader has echoed the gay friendly attitude of Tory head David Cameron by backing gay adoption. Ms Goldie said she would be voting for the legislation which would give gay couples in Scotland adoption rights

pinknews.co.uk

Two Brazilian gay men adopt girl

A judge in Brazil has ruled in favour of allowing two gay men to adopt a five-year-old girl in a landmark case in the state of Sao Paulo.

One man, Vasco Pedro da Gama, had already adopted the girl. The name of his partner, Junior de Carvalho, was then added to the birth certificate

news.bbc.co.uk

Birth mother loses in appeal of Pa. lesbian custody case

Winning lawyer says biological ties can't trump best interests of the child

A lesbian woman has retained primary custody of twin boys, despite the objections of her former partner — the children's biological mother.

The state Supreme Court on Tuesday kept in place a Bucks County judge's ruling that the boys' best interests were served by granting primary physical custody to Patricia Jones rather than Ellen Boring Jones, partners for 13 years.

washingtonblade.com

Campaign against gay-marriage ban aimed at straight couples

By Howard Fischer Tucson, Arizona | Published: 11.08.2006

PHOENIX -- Foes of a ban on same-sex marriage said Wednesday they managed to make Arizona the only state to kill the measure by focusing public attention on its effects on straight couples rather than what it would mean to gays.

Rep. Kyrsten Sinema, D-Phoenix, chair of the campaign to defeat Proposition 107, conceded that the strategy of the media campaign was to show straight couples who would lose their domestic partner benefits. That's because the initiative would not only have constitutionally barred gay marriage but also precluded governments from adopting policies that allow employees to add their domestic partners -- whether of the same or opposite sex -- to their health insurance or to gain any other benefits

azstarnet.com

Tulsa County Judge Says He Didn't Know He Granted Divorce to Lesbian Couple

By Troy Espera

A Tulsa County judge granted a divorce to a same-sex couple last Monday but says he only discovered Thursday that both people involved were women.

The Associated Press reports that Special District Judge Michael Zacharias granted the divorce last Monday to Cait O'Darling and Stephanie O'Darling.

Same-sex marriages are not legal in Oklahoma and Zacharias says he's researching whether it's inappropriate to enter a divorce decree in the case. The judge says he has 30 days to set aside the divorce decree.

According to Tulsa World, the divorce filing listed the petitioner as C. O'Darling and the respondent as S. O'Darling. Tulsa County Court Clerk Sally Howe Smith told Tulsa World that in Tulsa County, "there is no precedent, to the best of my knowledge, for this case."

247gay.com

Mass Equality Hails Vote By Legislature Effectively Derailing Anti-Gay, Anti-Family Ballot Measure

(Boston, MA) - MassEquality campaign director Marc Solomon late yesterday hailed the move by the Legislature to recess the Constitutional Convention until Jan. 2, thereby all but guaranteeing defeat of the proposed ballot measure slated for 2008 which would have ended marriage equality in Massachusetts.

"This is the right outcome," said Solomon. "Today, the Legislature sided with the majority of people in Massachusetts who believe that marriage equality is good for families and communities and that it's time for government to move on to other pressing matters."

247gay.com

Same-sex marriages are on the rise, study says

James Rusk

From Monday's Globe and Mail

Wedding bells are ringing for a growing number of same-sex couples across Canada, according to data compiled by Canadians for Equal Marriage, an organization that backs the country's current marriage law.

theglobeandmail.com

FBI releases gay hate-crimes data

Hate crimes in the United States dropped last year by 6%, the FBI reported, though hate crimes based on sexual orientation accounted for 14.2% of reported incidents.

More than half of all hate crimes were triggered by victims' race, with religion coming in a distant second, the FBI reported Monday, but Joe Solmonese, president of the gay rights group Human Rights Campaign, noted that changes in federal law sought by gay activists would more accurately reflect the extent of anti-LGBT violence.

advocate.com

N.J. outlaws gender-based discrimination

Written by National Center for Transgender Equality;

Empire State Pride Agenda

Friday, 15 December 2006

New Jersey has made a historic stride forward in protecting the civil rights of transgender people. New Jersey's Senate passed bill S362 on Monday, Dec. 11, by a vote of 31-5.

The Assembly version, A930, passed New Jersey's lower house by a vote of 69-5, now goes to Governor Jon S. Corzine, who is expected to sign the bill into law. Once signed, New Jersey will become the ninth state in the country to make discriminatory practices based on gender identity or expression illegal.

gayalliance.org

Sex Change for the Better

By JORGE BARRERA, OTTAWA SUN

Marching through downtown streets yesterday, about two dozen members and supporters of Ottawa's transgendered community called on the Dalton McGuinty government to put sex-change operations on the list of insured medical procedures.

ottsun.canoe.ca

How Corporate America fell in love with gays and lesbians - December 11, 2006 By Marc Gunther,

(Fortune Magazine) -- Business is booming at Raytheon (Charts), the \$22-billion-a-year defense contractor that sells Tomahawk cruise missiles, laser-vision goggles and advanced radar systems to the Pentagon. This, improbably, is good news for the gay-rights movement.

A platoon of Raytheon employees wearing identical blue-and-black bowling shirts, pins with the company's logo and black pants proudly walked the halls of this fall's convention of Out & Equal, an organization that brings together the networks of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people - GLBT, in the argot of the moment - that have taken root at America's big companies.

For three days in Chicago, with about 1,700 delegates from other companies, the 67 members of Raytheon's GLBT network could attend workshops with such titles as The Cost of Transgender Health Benefits, Breaking Through the Lavender Ceiling and Male-on-Male Sexual Harassment: An Emerging Issue.

As a high-profile supporter of gay rights, Raytheon of course provides health-care benefits to the domestic partners of its gay employees. It does a lot more, too. The company supports a wide array of gay-rights groups, including the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest gay-advocacy group. Its employees march under the Raytheon banner at gay-pride celebrations and AIDS walks.

money.cnn.com

Supporting Boys or Girls When The Line Isn't Clear

Written by PATRICIA LEIGH BROWN
Saturday, 02 December 2006

Until recently, many children who did not conform to gender norms in their clothing or behavior and identified intensely with the opposite sex were steered to psychoanalysis or behavior modification.

But as advocates gain ground for what they call gender-identity rights, evidenced most recently by New York City's decision to let people alter the sex listed on their birth certificates, a major change is taking place among schools and families. Children as young as 5 who display predispositions to dress like the opposite sex are being supported by a growing number of young parents, educators and mental health professionals. amhersttimes.com

New York easing rules on documents reflecting gender change An ABC Action News report 11/07/06

NEW YORK - New York is rewriting the rules to help transgender residents identify themselves.

The city wants to make it easier for them to switch the sex listed on their birth certificate. It's a policy change considered critical to helping the transgender community with I-D's that now are required to enter office towers, air terminals, public monuments and all sorts of government buildings.

Even without reassignment surgery, residents will be allowed to switch the gender on their birth certificates just by showing proof of hormone therapy or other gender-identity treatment.

Under present city rules, only people with proof of surgery qualify for a revision that eliminates any reference to gender.

tampabaylive.com

NYC Backs Off Allowing Trans to Alter I.D.

Health Dept. policy 'out of touch' say activists
Monday, December 11, 2006

NEW YORK (AP) — City health officials last Tuesday withdrew a plan that would have allowed New Yorkers to switch the sex on their birth certificates without undergoing sex-change surgery.

Health Commissioner Dr. Thomas Frieden said the issue needed further study, in part to guarantee it wouldn't conflict with federal rules now being developed. But transgender advocates vow to press forward.

Like most other cities and states, New York has long allowed people who have undergone sex-change surgery to get a new birth certificate reflecting the change by removing any reference to gender.

newyorkblade.com

Some restrooms at UA will be 'gender neutral'

By Dan Sorenson

Soon, restrooms at the University of Arizona will come in at least three varieties: men's, women's and "gender neutral". The UA has adopted a "Statement on Restroom Access" to make relieving oneself a bit less stressful for transgender people and other folks who feel uncomfortable with standard gender labeling azstarnet.com

Scottish Tory leader backs gay adoption

24-November-2006 Marc Shoffman

Scotland's Conservative Party leader has echoed the gay friendly attitude of Tory head David Cameron by backing gay adoption.

Annabel Goldie looks set to anger some of her own party members as well as religious groups ahead of a vote on the Scottish Executive's Adoption and Children (Scotland) Bill by saying allowing gay couples to adopt will make Scottish law a fairer reflection of society.

pinknews.co.uk

Remembering a fallen hero (Gay)

Annual service for gay veterans calls attention to military ban Friday, November 03, 2006

In D.C.'s historic Congressional Cemetery, an epitaph reads, "When I was in the military they gave me a medal for killing two men and a discharge for loving one."

So reads the gravestone of Sgt. Leonard Matlovich, the first gay man who openly challenged the military's anti-gay policies. On Saturday, Nov. 4, Matlovich's resting place will be the site of the annual gay veteran's recognition service, an event that has been held jointly for five years by the Arlington Gay & Lesbian Alliance and the American Veterans for Equal Rights, an organization dedicated to ending the military's discriminatory practices against gay service members.

washblade.com

"Caring is not enough, My Last Wishes and Personal Records"

is a guidebook written in a question/answer format, designed to help you document your most important personal, medical and financial information for your family. Just fill it out, put it in a safe place, and tell someone you trust where it is.

You probably have a will and perhaps an advance directive.. but does anyone know where they are located? And your minor children...have you named a guardian? Who is it and what is their phone number? These and over 100 more questions are in our book. in English, Chinese, Spanish and GLBT editions. caringisnotenough.net

Conservative Jews back gay rabbis, unions

By LAURIE GOODSTEIN 12/07/06

The highest legal body in Conservative Judaism, the centrist movement in worldwide Jewry, voted yesterday to allow the ordination of gay rabbis and the celebration of same-sex commitment ceremonies.

philly.com

That's a Family! Statistics on US Families Gay-and Lesbian-Headed/Unmarried Partner Households

Between six million and 10 million children of lesbian, gay and bisexual parents currently live in the United States. 11

The number of unmarried partner households has increased by 72 percent in the last decade from three million in 1990 to more than five million in 2000. These figures include both same-sex and different-sex couples. 1

One-third of lesbian households and one-fifth of gay male households have children. 1

The Census Bureau reports that New York has 46,490 same-sex households, Ohio has 18,937 same-sex households and Missouri has 9,428 same-sex households. 13

During the past decade, the number of same-sex households "grew significantly" in 10 states for which figures have been released: more than 700 percent in Delaware and Nevada; more than 400 percent in Vermont, Indiana, Louisiana and Nebraska; and more than 200 percent in Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts and Montana. 14

womedia.org

Ads beckon gay travelers

Pinellas County subtly markets its beaches in gay magazines. By CRISTINA SILVA Published November 12, 2006

ST. PETERSBURG - After months of anxious debate, the Pinellas County tourism agency is preparing to court gay tourists for the first time in its history.

But don't expect glossy images of women holding hands or a bar-hopping group of men. Instead, the advertisements that will be published in two of the country's most popular gay magazines will feature a deserted beach at Fort De Soto Park.

County officials say they will reach out to gay visitors the same way they target other groups. The Fort De Soto photo, which is also used for mainstream ads, is meant to conjure breezy afternoons and sun-drenched shores. sptimes.com

World's Most Lesbian Friendly City: Seattle

For the second, ahem, straight year, Seattle has been crowned Most Lesbian-Friendly City. Why exactly lesbians are drawn to the rainy coffee-soaked city we don't know but they are and, though the initial why of Seattle's lez scene may be foggy, these days it's clear what brings ladies and the ladies that love them to Seattle. There

gridskipper.com

Know Someone Who's Gay? Most People Do New Poll Shows More Homosexuals Coming Out

A majority of American adults know someone who is homosexual. In a new poll, 70 percent of heterosexual adults in the United States said that they know someone who is gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender -- often referred to as GLBT. More than half of those polled who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender (54 percent) said that concern about being the victim of a hate crime would be a reason for a person to not come out.

Other concerns that GLBT adults cited about why a person might not come out included rejection by their families (39 percent), rejection by their friends (32 percent) and losing their jobs (27 percent).

wnbc.com

List of Nation's Top Emerging Gay Ghettos Announced 11.28.06

(Denver, CO) - Whether or not you subscribe to Richard Florida's "creative class" theory, where the gays go eventually so do higher property values, less crime, better schools, ethnic diversity and growth.

In that vane, *GayGhettos.com* in partnership with *GayRealEstate.com*, the leading resource for gay-friendly real estate transactions, has announced its inaugural list of the nation's top up-and-coming "gay ghettos."

Uptown (Tampa Bay, FL)—Just north of downtown, Uptown offers several architectural styles, is one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city and has a great history. Brick streets, mature oak trees, and a variety of housing add to the character. Round Lake offers a peaceful respite in an urban area. Prices are still affordable. 247gay.com

Bill would give gay couples right to file taxes as married couples BUT LANDMARK VICTORY WOULD COME WITH TAX HEADACHES By Mark Schwanhausser

Gov. Schwarzenegger has three days left to decide whether to give a landmark tax victory to gay rights activists -- the right to file as married couples -- but stick them with a tax-filing headache.

The bill, which is among a stack of bills that will become law unless vetoed by Saturday, would require California's 75,000 registered domestic partners to file their state tax returns as if they were legally married -- even though they'd still have to submit single returns to Uncle Sam.

mercurynews.com

'The L Word' is a turn-on for Cybill

Look for Cybill Shepherd and Marlee Matlin as lesbians on Season 4 of Showtime's sexy drama, *The L Word*, premiering Jan. 21.

Matlin has a thing for Jennifer Beals' character, Bette. Shepherd plays a vice chancellor of a large university. Married with two children, she has a fling with Leisha Hailey's character, Alice.

Shepherd hadn't seen the show until a DVD of last season was sent to her. "I was blown away," she says. Her daughter, Ariel, 19, said to her, "Mom, you should do the show. It's really important."

Shepherd, 56, says she "never played a character like this before. It's just thrilling to be part of a show that's almost all women."

As for the love scenes? "It's easier to play a love scene with a woman," she says. Men have more "issues."

Shepherd says more than once that she was "turned on" by the woman-woman sex scenes. But the twice-divorced Shepherd says that in real life, she has a boyfriend. Basically, she doesn't like labels. "If you look at what we know about men, women and our sexuality, a great majority of people are bisexual. So what's wrong with that?"

usatoday.com

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