

Grand River Rainbow Historical Project

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celebrating the lives and times of rainbow folk in Grand River country

Outlook Magazine

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OUTLOOK[®]

The Voice of Waterloo Region's Gay and Lesbian Community

Court Rules In Favour of Support Payments

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Here's hoping everyone had a very happy holiday season! We here at OUTLOOK have been very busy moving from a cramped apartment into a much larger house that needs a little TLC, so we'll be busy for some time to come yet! In the process of the move though, our printer seems a bit homesick for the old place and has refused to cooperate with us. Please excuse the 'fuzzy' print. We're working on it. Please note our NEW mailing address below.

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DUTCH PARLIAMENT CONSIDERS GAY PARTNERSHIPS

The lower house of the Dutch parliament will consider a bill creating partnership registration for gay and straight couples, reported De Gay Krant.

The measure is supported by State Justice Secretary Elisabeth Schmitz as an alternative to legalizing gay marriage. She hatched the plan after the lower house voted 81 - 60 in April to support opening up marriage to gays and lesbians -- a notion Schmitz has scuttled temporarily by creating committees to study its ramifications.

Schmitz says she is mostly worried about the fact that homosexuality is taboo in many Third World countries from which the Dutch adopt babies.

The governing D66 party is a little annoyed at Schmitz's approach.

"We proceed from the view that a parliamentary majority has indicated its support for the opening up of civil marriage," said D66 MP Boris Dittrich. "As a result of that vote, a committee was set up to investigate the legal consequences of such a step. That committee must not wait for the results of other related studies. We don't want to wait forever."

Parliament also passed a second resolution last April endorsing equal adoption rights for homosexuals and single people. The government is studying that idea as well.

Actual gay marriage is not permitted anywhere in the world although a Hawaii court case will likely lead to its legalization there soon. Denmark, Greenland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden allow gays to form "registered partnerships" that grant every

right of matrimony except access to church weddings, adoption and artificial insemination services. In Iceland, gays can adopt a partner's biological children, however.

POLICE ADVERTISE IN BRITAIN'S 'GAY TIMES'

Britain's South Yorkshire police force placed an ad in the December issue of Gay Times looking for new officers.

The ad shows a handsome officer tipping his helmet flirtatiously with the caption, "Fancy a chat with Tom?"

Police spokesman Sgt. George Roper said gays make good cops because they have greater sympathy for people who are suffering.

"They can deal with them in a more sympathetic manner," Roper said. "In society there are people who hold prejudices and they do tend to pick on the gay community."

Up to five percent of South Yorkshire's cops are gay but Roper said: "We would like to bump that number up. There are many more gays in society than 3 or 5 percent."

South Yorkshire's largest city is Sheffield.

AUSTRALIAN T-ROOMS BOMBED

Police are investigating the possibility that toilets at three Sydney, Australia, train stations were bombed because they are "T-rooms" where men have anonymous sex, reported Capital Q.

Bombs exploded in October at the Circular Quay, Central and St. James stations during morning rush hours.

There were no injuries but damage was substantial at all three sites.

(These three articles Rex Wockner International News)

NAMIBIA PRESIDENT JOINS ZIMBABWE'S IN ATTACK ON GAYS

(out.com) -- Namibian President Sam Nujoma lashed out at gay men and lesbians during a political rally at a Swapo Women's Council Congress creating a flurry of international reiteration.

The Windhoek Advertiser reports President Nujoma said in his opening statement to the women's group that "all necessary steps must be taken to combat all that is influencing us and our children in a negative way. Homosexuals," he said, "must be condemned and rejected in our society."

Nujoma's comments bear a striking similarity to those made by Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe in which he said gay men and women were "no better than pigs or dogs" and called on private militias and police to arrest anyone "caught practicing homosexuality."

Mugabe soon became the focus of international demonstrations and official notices of concern.

Now under renewed human rights scrutiny, Zimbabwe has been threatened with significant cutbacks in western aid.

BLAZE FURTHERS SUFFERING

(Brother Sister News) -- The Tasmanian Gay and Lesbian Rights Group says it is confident that the Tasmanian Police will investigate the possibility that anti-gay hatred was behind a blaze which destroyed the home of a gay man who, earlier this year, lost his partner in the Port Arthur massacre.

Spokesperson Rodney Croome said that the group has been assured by the Tasmania Police that all avenues for determining the motive of the crime will be pursued.

David Capper returned home early morning to discover his house had been burgled and gutted by fire.

Capper lost virtually everything he owned, including photographs of his partner Andrew Mills who was murdered by Martin Bryant at Port Arthur on April 28.

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GAYS CAN SUE EX-PARTNERS FOR SUPPORT, COURT RULES

(Canadian Press) -- Ontario's top court has struck down a law that bars gays and lesbians from suing former partners for support in a ruling that homosexual activists say has "monumental" implications.

At Court of Appeal's three judges voted 2-1 December 18 in Toronto which put a new complexion on the battle for gay rights in areas ranging from adoption to employment benefits, lawyers said.

"It is a monumental decision for the gay and lesbian community," said lawyer Martha McCarthy, who represented the winning side.

"This case and others like it are going to lead to equal recognition and treatment of all intimate relationships."

The ruling comes in the case of a lesbian couple, known as M. and H., who separated four years ago.

One said she had developed an economically dependent relationship on the other and wanted to sue for support. But her former partner pointed to the province's Family Law Act, which defines couples as a man and a woman.

That's discriminatory, the appeal court ruled. It gave the province a year to change the law, saying a comprehensive legislated solution is better than a judicial one. If that doesn't happen, the law will automatically be changed to say a couple is simply two people who meet the definition of common-law marriage, the judges said.

They noted that the legislation was partly aimed at requiring people to support their needy ex-spouses so that the government doesn't have to do so.

"The inclusion of same-sex cohabitants... would only serve to further the desirable goals of the legislation," Justice Louise Charron said.

In a dissenting opinion, Justice George Finlayson said same-sex couples don't suffer from being treated differently. He added that

heterosexual relationships are "not only the traditional, but also the basic social structure for the procreation of children."

While the decision relates to marriage breakups and support payments, the principals could be applied to many other issues, said Michael Leshner, a criminal lawyer and gay rights advocate.

That could include people fighting to adopt their same-sex partner's child so they could both be legal parents - something not allowed now - he said.


"It has sent a clear and resounding and simple message that gay and lesbians form family units and if the government doesn't change the legislation to reflect that, the court will..."

The decision could also aid the fight to win spousal benefits for same-sex partners, McCarthy said.

Same-sex spouses can't receive old-age pension benefits when their partners die, but the Supreme Court split on that decision which left many legal questions unanswered, said McCarthy.

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SUPPORT RULING NO VICTORY FOR SAME-SEX COUPLES

The following is an editorial by Karen Selick, Special to the Citizen concerning the previous news article concerning the right to sue for support. You may find it interesting.

(Ottawa Citizen) -- Poor old H. She's the forgotten woman of the gay rights movement. She lived with her lesbian partner M. for ten years before they split up. Then M. sued her for support under Ontario's Family Law Act and won. The judge rewrote a portion of the law to define same-sex couples as spouses. Last month, the Court of Appeals confirmed the decision.

The gay community was elated by these decisions. I can't understand why. Have they forgotten that there are two sides to this case -- two lesbians, not just one, whose rights have been determined? While they exalt over M's obtaining the so-called advantages of the Family Law Act, why do they show no concern over H. suddenly being saddled with the burdens and obligations that the same law imposes? After all, H. is a member of the homosexual community too.

The court held that same-sex partners were disadvantaged in being excluded from the Family Law Act. I don't see it that way. I see them as having had an advantage. Unlike heterosexuals, they were free to bargain on terms of absolute equality to determine how their financial resources would be allocated between the members of their household. There was no statute hanging over their heads imposing a regime they did not desire.

If M. and H. had wanted an arrangement in which they would be mutually obligated to provide financial support after separation, they could have written up a contract. They could have explicitly incorporated the principles of the Family Law Act and its related case precedents into their agreement to ensure that they would be treated no differently from heterosexual couples.

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In cases involving male-female partners, feminist legal theorists justify wives' support and property claims on the grounds of righting some alleged historical wrong. Women have been oppressed by men for centuries, they say, men owe them. In M. vs. H., the plaintiff doesn't even have this piece of fiction to fall back on. She's not a member of the group that was oppressed by the group her lover belongs to. They both belong to the same group: gay women.

Somewhere over the past 15 years, the cases on equality rights under Section 15 of the Charter went off track. On the face of it, the notion that everyone should be equal before the law and should have "a right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law" regardless of physical attributes or beliefs, seems perfectly just and proper. But this presupposes that the law itself will do nothing more than protect individuals rights. When the law starts enacting privileges for some at the expense of others and calling them rights, it's time to step back and reconsider what we've

been doing.

The error in the M. vs. H. case lies in believing that the Family Law Act is a statute that grants or enforces individuals' rights. It doesn't -- it violates them. It forces some people to hand over money against their will, to other people.

Imposing the Family Law Act on couples is not like enforcing a contract. If there ever was a deal between M. and H., it must have involved some reciprocity. "You earn the income, dear and I'll cook your meals, clean your house, and do your laundry." After the couple separates, however, and one of them applies for support under the Act, the reciprocity disappears. The court may order H. to continue paying money to M., but it will never order M. to continue cooking, cleaning, laundering for H. Where is the justice in letting one side out of a bargain while forcing the other side to carry on?

Gays who support the M. vs. H. decision demonstrate a shocking desire to give up their own freedom. But worse than that, they demonstrate the a desire to deprive others of their freedom -- retroactively to boot. Thanks to this decision, every gay couple in Ontario who has cohabitated for more than three years will suddenly be caught in a trap that didn't exist when they made the decision to live together. They will not be able to contract out unless both agree. If one partner balks, the other will be trapped.

It's too bad nobody thought of bringing a constitutional challenge against the Family Law Act from the other direction before M. sued H. A far more interesting case would have been for some male who was ordered to pay support to his female common-law partner to object on the grounds that the law discriminated against him on the basis of sexual preference. "I am disadvantaged by being straight," he could have argued. "If I had been gay and my partner had been male, I would not now be burdened with this support order." I wonder -- would the gay community have supported such a man who wanted nothing more than to be treated equally with them?

B.C. GAY ADOPTION LAW TAKES EFFECT

(Wockner Int'l News) -- A British Columbia law specifically legalizing adoption by gay and lesbian couples came into effect November 4.

It is believed to be the first such law in the world, said the Vancouver gay newspaper Xtra! West.

The "gay marriage" laws that are in effect in Denmark, Greenland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden grant all the rights of heterosexual marriage except access to adoption, church weddings and artificial insemination technology -- although gay couples in Iceland can adopt their partner's biological children.

BATTLING THE U.S. GOVERNMENT

(QNA) -- Chris Arnesen, living in Christchurch, New Zealand and HIV positive, is still battling the United States for social security payments while losing weight at a rate of 1kg a week.

The U.S. Government refuses to pay disability benefits, despite Mr. Arnesen having worked in the U.S. and paid into a compulsory social security scheme for 30 years.

He was told he could not receive a cent unless he returned to the U.S., but all attempts to do so have been thwarted by the U.S. Consulate-General in Auckland who says he cannot re-enter because he falls within the category "of other criminal, immoral, insane, mentally or physically defective aliens, those afflicted with loathesome or contagious diseases."

The New Zealand AIDS Foundation has attacked the U.S. Consulate in a letter to the U.S. Embassy for the use of such language, and asked why Mr. Arnesen could not be admitted to the U.S. on compassionate grounds. Mr. Arnesen has been battling the U.S. government for two years for payments that would give him monthly income to buy some of the latest drugs.

Mr. Arnesen has been advised that he will not

last much longer unless he seeks treatment in Sydney urgently. Mr. Arnesen said that "without social security, it is near impossible, and it means several journeys there and accommodation costs."

AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER SNUBS MARDI GRAS ORGANIZERS

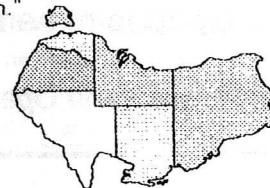
(out.com) -- For the second year in a row, the Australian Prime Minister has refused to send a message of greeting and support to the organizers of The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, the Sydney Morning Herald reports. The largest lesbian and gay event in the world is Australia's number one tourist attraction, drawing nearly \$40 million in revenue by some government estimates.

Prime Minister Howard's chief of staff, Nicole Feely, told the Morning Herald in March of this year that she had tried to persuade Howard to send a "friendly message" to event organizers in 1996, but "he just wouldn't do it."

Howard's surly refusal to greet gay and lesbian revelers is a significant departure from practices established by his predecessor Paul Keating. Keating's picture and the words of welcome frequently appeared on promotional literature welcoming gay and lesbian tourists to Australia.

A number of prominent officials in New South Wales have publicly condemned the Prime Minister's refusal to acknowledge the event or its organizers, saying his actions display a "lack of courage."

The provincial Minister of Health said in a public message of support, "At a time when diversity is under attack, and Australia's reputation for tolerance is being undermined by our national Government, Mardi Gras is a sign to conservatives that we will not cease our fight against discrimination."



ARKANSAS GAY TEEN'S BASHING RAISES AWARENESS

(NewsPlanet) -- When an openly gay high school student was severely beaten on a street near campus in broad daylight by fellow students - most of whom he did not even know - it opened the eyes of Fayetteville residents to the issue of homophobic violence in schools. It also led a heterosexual junior high school girl's family to come forward to say that she also faces a daily diet of abuse from other students because her mother is a lesbian.

Sixteen-year-old William Wagner came out when he was 14. He's been verbally abused every school day since, in the halls and even some classrooms, commonly been slapped, pushed and shoved, and not frequently spat on, kicked or a target for thrown objects. But this month, he was left with broken facial bones, a damaged kidney, and bruising over much of his body from being kicked with pointed-toe cowboy boots. The attack was well planned, with Wagner being separated from his friends while the two primary assailants jumped out of the vehicle beside him. Even though they called him "faggot", "queer" and other specifically sexual derogatory names while they battered him, they have not been charged with committing a hate crime. However, they were arrested after being identified by witnesses and have been charged with felonies as adults rather than minors.

Wagner's friends say he's "a really nice guy", but his foes respond only to his flamboyance. Ironically, his family had moved to Fayetteville in the hope that he could find more acceptance there than in the much smaller town where they'd been living.

Jamie Nabozny, the young Wisconsin gay man who recently won \$900,000 in a discrimination lawsuit for school administrators' failure to protect him from continuing abuse in school, called Wagner to extend his consolation and support.

The dramatic assault received considerable play

in local media, showcasing just how helpless - and in some cases, disinterested - school personnel may be in making schools safe places for gay and lesbian youth. It was quickly followed by the story of the junior high school girl with the lesbian mother, who has been so traumatized that she looks only at the floor when walking in school hallways. The family felt the need to speak up, fearing eventual abuse against their daughter similar to Wagner's.

FORMER FORD MOTOR TOP MANAGER COMES OUT

(News for Queers) -- Allan Gilmour, a former Ford Motor Company Vice-chairman, came out in the latest issue of "Between The Lines", a local gay and lesbian newspaper in Detroit.

Gilmour, who was once a top contender for the position of president at Ford Motor, kept his sexual orientation under-wrap in his 34-year career with the company. He retired in 1994 after Ford directors picked Alex Trotman as chairman and CEO.

By coming out, Gilmour hopes to drum up philanthropic support for the "under-served and under-resourced" gay community.

Gilmour currently serves on the board of directors for Prudential Insurance Company, Whirlpool Corporation, Detroit Edison, and Dow Chemical Company.

ILGA PLANS ROMANIA BOYCOTT

(Wockner Int'l News) -- The International Lesbian and Gay Association is preparing to launch a boycott of Romania in protest against its refusal to legalize homosexuality.

Targets will include wine, tourism and TAROM, the national airline.

"The vote by Romania's parliament to ban gay bars, clubs, associations, media and organizations

breaks the commitment to decriminalize homosexuality, given by the government over three years ago," said ILGA spokesman Andy Quan.

"It is a flagrant violation of the European Convention on Human Rights and condemns Romania's sexual minorities to further state persecution."

Despite demands from the Council of Europe, Romanian legislators have failed to legalize gayness and -- during their drawn-out consideration of the matter -- have managed to pass two new anti-gay measures.

One states, "Sexual intercourse between persons of the same sex, taking place in public, or producing a public scandal, is punishable by one to five years imprisonment."

This measure is particularly problematic, ILGA said, because Romania's legal definition of "public scandal" is "anything two or more people find offensive."

The second new measure states, "Propositioning or enticing a person to take part in sexual relations with a person of the same sex, as well as

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propaganda or association or any other acts of proselytism with the same purpose, is punishable by one to five years imprisonment."

ILGA notes: "Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals and even heterosexuals who simply give a positive representation of homosexuality in conversation like five years behind bars. Of course, gay clubs, bars, helplines, media, associations and even meetings between two known lesbians, gay men or bisexuals will also be banned."

At present, a Communist-era ban on all gay sex remains in effect in Romania. Earlier this year, the Chamber of Deputies passed a new ban on gay sex (in conjunction with the anti-gay measures detailed above) but then later voted to delete it following an outcry from European institutions. None of the new measures have become law yet, leaving the old law in effect.

To help with ILGA's planned boycott, visit the World Wide Web site at:

www.raglb.org.uk/boyc.htm

or email: boycott@raglb.org.uk.

! SACKED BISHOP WILL CONTINUE GAY BLESSINGS

(Wockner Int'l News) -- Gay Church of England Assistant Bishop Derek Rawcliff, fired by his superior in October for conducting a same-sex "blessing" ceremony, plans to keep performing the unions, reported London's Gay Times.

Rawcliff, 75, is also facing calls from evangelical groups that he be defrocked -- stripped of the "holy orders" that make him a priest.

! BERLIN ACTIVISTS CALL FOR GAY HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL

(N4Q) -- In a weekend conference sponsored by Initiative Homo Monument, Berlin gay activists called for a memorial to mark the German nazis' attempt to exterminate homosexuals during the Second World War.

Even though the German federal government has already donated a site and pledged one-third of the \$11 million needed for the Jewish memorial, governmental contributions for a gay memorial monument are unlikely.

The number of the so-called "pink triangle" victims during the Holocaust is estimated at between 10,000 and 15,000.

UNWANTED HAIRDRESSERS TO BE EXPORTED FROM KUWAIT

(N4Q) -- As part of its campaign to rid the country of "undesirable elements," Kuwaiti police arrested and detained seven Filipino gays working as hairdressers.

The foreign detainees await deportation at the Talha Deportation Center.

In its formal report, the Philippine Embassy in Kuwait quoted a police officer as saying, "The presence of gays and their actions cannot be tolerated."

While Kuwait is considered liberal by Islamic standards, Muslim fundamentalism is gaining popularity after recent election of pro-Islam representatives in its legislature.

HO, MAN OF THE YEAR

(N4Q) -- Dr. David Ho -- the scientific director of the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center and professor at Rockefeller University -- has been named TIME Magazine's Man of the Year "for helping lift a death sentence...on tens of thousands of AIDS sufferers, and for pioneering the treatment that might, just might, lead to a cure."

"While there is finally reason for optimism...much work remains to be done. These advances represent an improvement in treatment, not a cure. We have seen HIV stagger, but this tough foe has not been knocked down," said Ho.

Walter Issacson, TIME Managing Editor said, "David Ho did not make the most headlines but he helped make history.

ISRAEL'S PRESIDENT SLANDERS QUEER FOLK

(Reuter) -- Israeli President Ezer Weizman said December 20 he took a negative view of "the phenomenon" of homosexuality and drew laughter from high school students by using a mincing, high-pitched voice to punctuate his attack.

Weizman, a former general with a reputation for shooting from the lip, took aim at homosexuals during a speech to Israeli high school students in the northern city of Haifa.

"Homosexuality is abnormal from the social point of view. I don't like it. What the public decides to do with homosexuals, it will decide through laws. There are those who tolerate the phenomenon," he said in broadcast remarks.

"I know a lot of places where...I see someone and know exactly what he is."

Weizman, 72, said too much public attention has been focused on the gay community.

"It has become 'nice'," the president said, his voice rising in tone as he repeated the word 'nice' in an even higher pitch to the laughter of his teenage audience.

A major Israeli gay activist group, the Individual Rights Organization, called on Weizman to resign.

Uzi Even, a gay rights spokesman, said, "Weizman is no longer suited to be president. A man in his position should not deal with placing an entire community outside the law in a democratic state."

Weizman also has not endeared himself to women's groups.

Asked several years ago why Israel had no women air force pilots, he quipped, "The best men to the cockpit, the best women to the pilots."

Israelis Protest President's Anti-Gay Remarks

Hundreds of Israelis protested outside the Jerusalem home of President Ezer Weizman a day after his anti-gay remarks.

Demonstrators held signs saying, "Weizman is

a Homophobic" and called for the resignation of the president.

"I'm sure that the community was harmed and when violence is directed at individuals in the community...their blood will be on his hands," said one protester.

Weizman, whose presidential role in Israel is largely ceremonial and non-political, has drawn fire from women's groups for remarks they said were sexist and has been criticized for making political statements.

President Apologizes For Making Anti-Gay Remarks

President Weizman met December 23 with gay and lesbian leaders and apologized for publicly deriding homosexuality as "abnormal."

"The president says he must express sorrow for any act or comment that causes public humiliation or can be interpreted as such," his spokesman Arieh Shumer told reporters after the meeting.

"It is necessary to guard the honour, rights and welfare of all the citizens of the state of Israel," Shumer added.

Rabbis lauded Weizman's initial actions before the apology, but hundreds of Israeli rights activists protested outside the president's home to demand his resignation.

Gay leaders expressed satisfaction with Weizman's apology.

"Although it is difficult for Ezer, given his character, to say I am sorry, I apologize, he did the maximum so that we would understand in the meeting that he indeed made a mistake," activist Adir Steiner told the reporters.

COMMITTEE PASSES BRAZILIAN PARTNERSHIP LAW

(W.I.N.) -- A Senate committee passed Brazil's gay-partnership bill December 10 by a vote of 11 - 5.

The measure grants gay couples spousal rights

in the areas of property, inheritance, pensions, health benefits, loans, taxation and immigration. Adoption rights would not be granted to homosexual couples.

The bill advances to the full Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, where evangelical Christians have warned that if the measure becomes law, their God will destroy Brazil like he did Sodom and Gomorrah (according to the Bible).

Thirty seven percent of Brazilians support the measure while 51 percent oppose it and 11 percent have no opinion, according to a Datafolha poll.

"The process is the same as when they abolished slavery in the 19th century," said activist Luis Mott of the Grupo Gay da Bahia. "It took an additional 30 years to give complete freedom to blacks, with limited laws decade after decade. But this is a beginning."

CHINESE GAYS ESCHEW WESTERN TACTICS

(Wockner Int'l News) -- Meeting in Hong Kong December 6 - 8, more than 200 gay activists from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong agreed to pursue their goals without doing anything radical, reported the South China Morning Post.

Gaining straight support in Chinese cultures will require a gentler approach than what has worked in the West, said the gathering's closing manifesto.

"The les-bi-gay movement in many Western societies is largely built upon a notion of individualism, confrontational politics, and the discourse of individual rights," the document said.

"Certain characteristics of confrontational politics, such as coming out and mass protests and parades, may not be the best way of achieving tongzhi (queer) liberation in the family-centred, community-oriented Chinese societies which stress the importance of social harmony."

The conference was organized by the Hong Kong Buddhist gay group Isvara.

The word "tongzhi encompasses gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered people, organizers said.

ANGLICANS VOTE TO PROTECT GAY PRIESTS

(W.I.N.) -- The Church of England has voted to protect priests from being fired just for being gay, reported the BBC's Out This Week.

The Church's General Synod adopted a new rule in early December that allows bishops to ignore complaints from parishioners if the core of the complaint is merely that a vicar is homosexual.

FIVE GAYS ELECTED IN VANCOUVER

(Xtra! West) -- Five gays were elected to city posts in Vancouver, B.C.'s November elections, reported Xtra! West.

Gordon Price was re-elected to the city council and was joined by newcomer Alan Herbert.

Out park commissioners Alan Fetherstonhaugh and Duncan Wilson were re-elected and were joined by Laura McDiarmid.

That's

ENTERTAINMENT!

Rosie O'Donnell Lauded By
"Entertainment Weekly" & "People" Magazine

1996 was an amazing year for TV talkshow host/actress/comic Rosie O'Donnell, and to top it off, she was picked as both one of "People" magazine's "25 Most Intriguing People" and "Entertainment Weekly's" "Entertainer of the Year." O'Donnell came out as a lesbian in a Boston "Globe" article in 1996.

Her TV show premiered in June to the highest ratings of any talkshow since "Oprah" and has gained a steady spot in the nationwide top 20. It's O'Donnell's forum to rave shamelessly about her favourite entertainers (most of whom get around to appearing on the show, including her number one fascination, Tom Cruise), reminisce about TV shows of yesteryear and improvise wisecracks. Her show launched 1996's hit Christmas toy, Sesame Street's Tickle Me Elmo doll.

It's a gig that also gives her the chance to spend plenty of time with the year-and-a-half old son she adopted with her actress partner and to work on the construction of their dream home. Although O'Donnell doesn't discuss her sexual orientation on her show, there was a classic moment in September when Ellen Degeneres guested in connection with the possibility of her own sitcom character coming out as a lesbian, and both talked and joked about their semi-closeted status about as close to the line as they could get.

It was also a year in which O'Donnell continued the film acting career she began with "A League of Their Own", turning up on the big screen with character roles in "Beautiful Girls", and "Harriet the Spy".

And then there are those ubiquitous K-Mart commercials with Penny Marshall. When Rosie was visiting Florida last month and went to the nearest location of K-Mart competitor Wal-Mart to replace a broken VCR, her "traitorous" act made local headlines. (NewsPlanet)

Melissa Etheridge To Play Janis Joplin In Film

Open lesbian rocker Melissa Etheridge would appear to have it all - a solid relationship, a baby on the way, professional recognition, commercial success, and possibly a little too much celebrity for comfort - but it looks like one of her remaining dreams will come true as well: to play the starring role in a biographical film about the woman she describes as rock's first major female star, Janis Joplin. Etheridge's partner Julie Cypher helped to bring it about by drafting a script and using her connections as a director and producer. The currently untitled work will be directed by Mark Rocco and is expected to be released in about a year. While Etheridge doesn't expect awards for her film debut, she believes that she can perform respectably because of her commitment to the project. While she doesn't plan on an extended career in film, she relishes the anxiety and excitement of working in a new medium. (PlanetOut)

Gay-Themed "Touched By An Angel"

The Christmas episode of "Touched By An Angel", a television series admired by much of the religious right, tries to heal the tensions between a gay son with AIDS and his rejecting father. After reviewing an advance copy of the script, GLAAD, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, was favourably impressed with the episode entitled "The Violin Lesson".

In the script a prodigal son returns home to his family to reveal both that he is gay and that he is dying of AIDS. The only family member who cannot accept the son's sexual orientation is his father, but the son feels he's lost the love of God as well. One angel reassures the son that, "What you've heard have been someone else's words, words of hate and confusion. God is not the source of confusion. God's love is perfect."

The father demands to know why the angel is taking "the side of the queer". She responds, "Nothing made by God is queer. God loves all his creations, even the ones that some people see as 'flawed'. The father is helped to express his love for his son in the last moments of the latter's life.

GLAAD encouraged gays and lesbians to watch the episode and provide feedback to the President of CBS Entertainment.

This is a typical episode of the series in that an angel provides inspirational thoughts to people at times of crisis in their lives. It's billed as a family program with a strong moral and spiritual point of view, and it found an enthusiastic and growing audience after a weak start. Roma Downey stars as the angel Monica and the great singer Della Reese co-stars as her angelic supervisor.



Madonna is in the Spotlight
on MuchMusic,



January 22 - Part 1
January 23 - Part 2
January 24 - Part 3

Spotlight airs daily at 7:30
and 11:30 p.m. on Much.
Channel 29.

Monday, January 27 Sarah
McLachlan takes to the
stage as MuchMusic
presents Sarah McLachlan:
Live in Concert, Fumbling
Towards Ecstasy as part of
their 'Big Ticket' series.
Airs 8 p.m. and midnight.

Don't miss this classic from
1963 featuring Judy
Garland along with a young
Liza Minelli, Broadway's
grande dame Ethel
Merman and Barbra
Streisand in her first
television appearance.
Bravo Television Network
presents "Judy, Liza,
Barbra and Ethel".
Jan. 18, 9:30 p.m. Chan.40

FILM

The following films are
being shown at the Princess
Cinema during the run of
this issue of Outlook:

Bound - Sunday, Jan. 19 &
Monday, Jan. 20. Both
dates shows start at 10p.m.

Lillies - Friday, Jan. 31 at
9:10 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 1
at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday,
Feb. 2 also at 7:00 p.m.

For you Leonardo
DiCaprio fans look for
Romeo and Juliet Feb. 10
through 13th at the
Princess.

Carole Pope

Gyrations at
Mrs. Robinson's
by Robin Whittaker

"Who loves you?"
"Apparently you do!"

On November 8, Carole Pope's answer to the rock fans - *her* rock fans - was droll: entirely Carole.

Pope's big rock personality lit up the middle-aged crowd at Mrs. Robinson's. Her lurid and affecting music went well with her tight leather pants and rockstar band, which featured Tim Welch on guitar, Steve Welston on bass and Dan Cornelius on drums.

The crotch-grabbing veteran of Canadian Rock & Roll sang songs like "You Can't Go Back," "Crusades," and "On The Line" in hopes of selling her most recent album. If the crowd's response was any indication, Pope had no trouble with her task. Her lyrics held the audience as enthralled as her in-between-song banter: "Steve says we could use some adoring lesbians in the crowd" announced Pope.

There was something playful

and exciting in her tired sighs and seducing eyes; something even her rubber slacks couldn't slicken.

The intense aura was not just in her looks. "Apparently many of you in the audience," Pope exclaimed, "have had sex with our drummer." She went on to discuss a "testicle operation." Her pelvic gyrating absolutely enhanced songs like "Twist of the Knife," with its lyrics "You slip it in so good, babe. It's just another twist of the knife."

"Sometimes Steve's bass acts like a giant vibrator," Pope said. "And it makes me happy."

Following a sensual performance of "The Haunting," Pope announced "How 'bout a song about the rape of nature and the violation of -- like --stuff." The band promptly dove into "Kiss the Ground."

Pope's entirely infectious and honest vocals grooved well with Welch's effects-ridden guitar work.

Pope left the stage with the song "Feelings" -- decidedly the heaviest, *rockiest* song of the night.

After much table-banging, mysterious letter-givings, and shouts of "Encore!" Pope emerged to perform two more songs, including "I Want To Live."

Obviously content to leave her Rough Trade roots behind her, chants of "High School! High School!" did not result in Pope performing her acclaimed 1980 hit "High School Confidential."

Nevertheless, the crowd, and myself left the Canadian rock diva's show in a fit of satisfaction.

-Robin Whittaker writes for 'The Cord' at WLU.



OUTLOOK MAGAZINE

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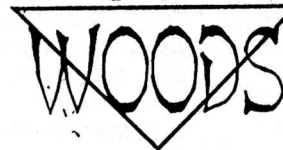
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What's Happening? Community Events

CHURCH SERVICES M.C.C. RAINBOW CHURCH

Every Sunday at 7 p.m. at St. Matthias Anglican Church. 171 Kortright Street West in Guelph. Services are under the direction of Pastor Sid Bater. Call 519-██████████ for more information.

COMING OUT DISCUSSION GROUPS

Waterloo

GLLOW Coming Out Discussion Group has the following meetings upcoming:

- January 15 - Coming Out To Yourself
- January 22 - Coming Out To Others
- January 29 - Coming Out To Parents and Other Family Members
- February 5 - What Do I Want In A Relationship?
- February 12 - How I Prefer To Meet People
- February 19 - Crushes and Infatuation

All meetings will be held in Hagey Hall (Humanities Bldg) Rm. 378, starting at 7:30 p.m. Only the Jan. 8 meeting will be held in Modern Languages 104. Check out the GLLOW website at <http://www.csclub.uwaterloo.ca/clubs/glow/> or call the GLLOW Line at ██████████

KW FRONTRUNNERS

KW Frontrunners is a running and walking group for the lesbian, bisexual, transgender

and gay community. People of all ages and abilities are welcome. We meet every Sunday morning at our new location at the Waterloo Recreation Complex on Father David Bauer Drive. There are usually three groups; walkers, short distance runners (5k / 25 minutes) and longer distance runners (10k / 50 minutes). A few of us even go swimming! Afterwards, we pop over to William's (a local coffee pub) to chat and eat muffins. Hope to see lots of you there. For more information please call Todd, Mark or Lindsay at (519) ██████████

GAY, LESBIAN AND BISEXUAL YOUTH
A discussion group for gay, lesbian and bisexual youth (16-25) is currently running. If you are interested please give Rob a call at 570-3687.

'BEAUTIFUL THING'
The Bookshelf Cinema in downtown Guelph will be showing 'Beautiful Thing' January 15 and 16. 9:30 p.m. both days. 'Priscilla: Queen of the Desert' will also be playing at the Bookshelf Cinema February 26 at 9:00 p.m.

'THE CHILDREN'S HOUR'
On February 12-15, the UW Drama Department presents a stage production of the play on which a famous film was based: "The Children's Hour" by Lillian Hellman. The play tells a story in which two straight women are the object of a lesbophobic witch hunt in a small town. Some people believe that Hellman based the play on actual events in Scotland. For info. or tickets call 519-888-4908 (Mastercard or VISA)

DESTINATION AMSTERDAM invites you to an evening of fun and frivolity! Curling at the Granite Club, 69 Agnes St. Kitchener followed by a party at The Mercado, 101 Frederick St. No experience or equipment is needed for curling as we will supply everything! The party will include live entertainment, dancing and a snack buffet. Cost per person is as follows:
Curling & Party - \$20.00
Curling only - \$10.00
Post Curling Party - \$12.00
Tickets & info. available by calling Linda at TCB Travel at (519) 748-0850



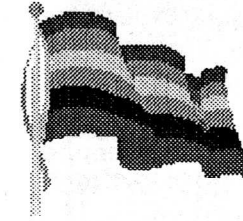
THE RAINBOW COMMUNITY CENTRE

Serving the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Communities of Waterloo/Wellington Region.

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We're your one stop regional resource directory. Check us out!

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classifieds

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

GLLOW (Gay and Lesbian Liberation of Waterloo) is looking for volunteers to help staff the phoneline. We are looking for women and men who are willing to commit to 2 hours in an evening (7:30-9:30 pm) once every other week to answer phone calls at the GLLOW office.

You:

- don't have to be a student
- can remain anonymous while on the phone
- only need about 30 minutes of training

-don't need any prior experience
If you are interested please send me an e-mail and I will arrange an evening that suits your schedule. E-mail me at marco@hookup.net or call the GLLOW office at [REDACTED]

OUTline needs volunteers. Help! I know you all have friends in the Guelph/Kitchener/Waterloo/Cambridge area. It's not too late!!! If you're dying to do something that really counts, OUTline still needs you and all of your friends to volunteer. Training starts Jan. 18. Get your application by Jan. 16 and call me to confirm your space in this chance of a lifetime. Do it. It will be rewarding and really good experience you can put on your resume. Call now, before it's too late! Don't you wish someone like you had been there to listen when you were coming out? Call Cheryl at (519) 836-4550 or (416) 554-5634 (toll free).

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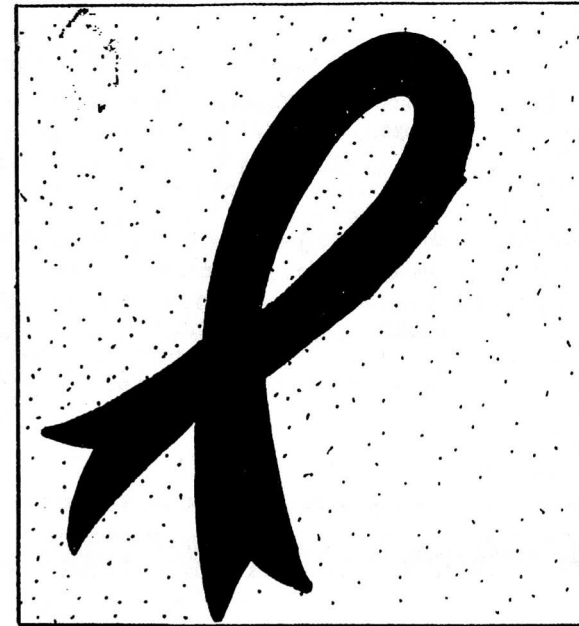
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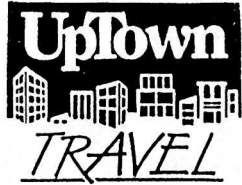
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BELIZE

December's issue of "OUT & ABOUT" Magazine features BELIZE, an "all purpose vacation spot promising isolated beaches, snorkeling, Mayan ruins, rainforests, pine-covered mountains and a bevy of eco-adventures." While this is not yet a destination with exclusive gay venues, gay and lesbian travellers who seek active vacations and secluded beaches will find Belize very attractive.

Belize is the only English-speaking country in Central America, with a standard of living higher than any of its neighbours, including Mexico. Beaches lack all the annoying vendors and the heavy crime. Only 1000 yards off the coast is a 176 mile coral reef, second in size only to Australia's Great Barrier Reef. Perfect for deep-sea lovers and those craving their first trip in a glass bottom boat!

GAY SKI EAST

March 7-10, 1997 - Lake Placid, NY

Several hundred men (and some women) will congregate in Lake Placid for the sixth season of Gay Ski East. Alpine Skiing, Cross-Country, Ice Skating, Bobsledding, Tobogganing and lots of partying are on the agenda. Accommodations to suit various budgets are available.

THE GAY TRAVEL CALENDAR
 Your Guide to Upcoming Events Worldwide

March:

- Gay Ski East - Lake Placid NY (3/3-3/9/97)
- Winter Party - South Beach FL (3/9/97)
- Lesbian Physician Conference -Hawaii (3/20-3/23/97)
- South America Cruise (3/21-3/29/97)
- Black Party - NYC (3/22/97)
- Dinah Shore Weekend - Palm Springs (3/27-3/31/97)
- White Party - Palm Springs (3/28- 3/31/97)
- Lucy & Ethel's Easter Caper (3/29-4/5/97)

April:

- Utah Desert Hike/Raft (4/19-4/27/97)
- Windjammer Cruise (4/20-4/26/97)
- Queen's Day - Amsterdam (4/25-5/3/97)
- Club Atlantis - Mexico (4/26-5/3/97)

May:

- Spring Fling in P-Town (5/3-5/5/97)
- Weekender Cruise on the QE2 - NYC (5/9-5/12/97)
- Italian Theatre Tour (5/9-5/19/97)
- Sailing - Acapulco to San Francisco (5/12-5/19/97)
- Scottish Hiking Tour (5/22-6/2/97)



Listings are available until early 1998. To make contact with Mark at Uptown Travel send you know you want to call 886-3320, 800-667-0803, or Email Uptown@Sympatico.ca

A Message From

A C C K W A

The AIDS Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo and Area
 123 Duke Street, East
 Kitchener, Ontario N2H 1A4
 Phone: (519) 570-3687 Fax: (519) 570-4034

Chairs for Charity - Join us at the Rotunda Gallery on the 8th of February for ACCKWA's 3rd Annual Chairs for Charity Art Auction. Dozens of regional artists have created and donated one-of-a-kind works of art using a chair as their canvas or inspiration. Their art will be auctioned at a gala fundraising auction also featuring a delicious buffet, a cash bar and musical entertainment. This year's auction will be expanded to include theatre tickets, accommodations, antiques and more!

Saturday, February 8, 1997

7pm - Preview 8:30 - Auction

Rotunda Gallery, Kitchener City Hall

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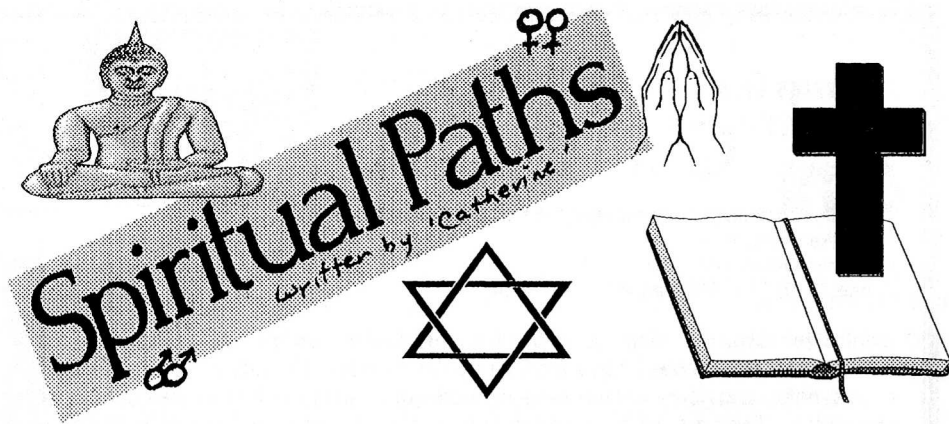
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**Part 4 of 4
Paganism, Generic Spirituality and
Mysticism**

Paganism

If you think communism gets bad press in this country and the one south of us, it's nothing compared to the nasty rap given to witchcraft and paganism. Paganism is a blanket term used for the earliest spiritual systems, the simple nature religions of cultures we demeaningly term "primitive." People living close to nature saw spirit in everything - in animals, in mountains and in the stars. By paying homage to the spirits in these things they felt oneness with the earth and the universe.

Followers of these nature religions rejoice in their sexuality - homosexuality and heterosexuality - and often included sex in their religious rites. For most, the idea of judging this as wrong never occurred to them until so-called civilized peoples taught them to be ashamed of their bodies and that lovemaking was evil unless it was to create children.

It was uptight Christians who

recorded most of what we call history and they damned everything inconsistent with what they believed. Witchcraft never had a Satan or devil. This was a malicious attack by Christians on the nature god Pan who also had horns, but was associated with merriment and love of life, things that were only evil to the puritanical Christians.

Native American religions, voodoo from the West Indies, the animism of the Orient, the Celtic Druids of Northern Europe were all judged repugnant by the Christians who believed they had the only "truth."

As individuals in our society return to their connectedness with nature, it is not surprising that pagans and witches, or Wiccans as they prefer to be called, should be among the rise again and that gay men and lesbians should be among the vanguard of this movement.

Generic Spirituality

Perhaps it's reflective of the basic optimism that, despite the fear and judgement of the predominant Christian sects, certain creative individuals have been able to trace

spiritualism back to its positive, hopeful sources and redefined the higher power of the universe in terms of love, compassion and the affirmation of human worth.

The predominant religious organizations in this category are Science of Mind (or Religious Science, not to be confused with Christian Science) and its first cousin the Unity Christian Church (not to be confused with either Unitarian or Unification churches.) Both tend to be highly supportive of gays and lesbians.

These groups follow the Sunday go-to-meeting format of traditional Christian churches but with a cheerful "God is us" message. This is an inner-directed path which might be called applied metaphysics and should not be confused with the very different outer-directed social responsibility stressed by the Unitarians.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and other 12 step programs work on a parallel concept. Here, people who have been self-destructive exchange mutual support to escape their obsessions and turn their lives over "to a higher power." Extremely careful wording on this spiritual issue has kept AA and NA from getting into a narrow, dogmatic posture. "Higher power" can be interpreted in either a personal or religious framework.

Oppression from a hostile society along with other co-factors have led a considerable number of lesbians and gay men into alcohol and drug abuse. Such programs have provided a haven for many of them and for a lucky few the necessary impetus to achieve a high level of well-being.

Mysticism

Throughout history there has always been a certain breed of men and women called mystics who have felt they have an intense personal interaction with the universal God force. Some have claimed communication with forces or entities not embodied on this planet. Some of these people claim psychic gifts - reading minds, seeing auras, foretelling the future or even moving objects with just the force of their minds.

Individuals within the context of accepted religion who claim these powers are thought of as prophets, sages and saints. Those beyond a religious framework are commonly thought of as "nuts." Each of the world's major religions has had its mystics. Christian mystics include St. Theresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, Meister Eckhart and Teilhard de Chardin. Jewish mystics followed a book called the Kabbalah. The Sufi are the Moslem mystics. Buddhist practice is all about the way to achieve mystical reality.

It sometimes seems that gays have an inside track on mysticism. One of the most respected books in the field, "Cosmic Consciousness," by Richard M. Bucke, traces the history and writings of known mystics through the years. Several of those it follows - Socrates, Walt Whitman and Edward Carpenter - are known to have been gay. Many of the others are thought to have been.

To this day, there are a number of lodges, societies and churches that are dedicated to fostering the "mystic

realities." Unless strongly under the thumb of a dogmatic, judgmental hierarchy, the groups tend to have the following elements in common: 1) a belief in reincarnation; 2) a belief in the ascent of the human soul beyond the earthbound condition to that which is sometimes known as transcended saint, archangel, or bodhisattva, toward oneness with the universal God force; 3) belief in the ability of some individuals to communicate with these entities; 4) belief that all people are incipient gods with the eventual future of such ascendance; 5) belief in psychic powers as a gift of those making progress in such ascendance; 6) belief that each individual is unique and must discover his or her path through awareness of the universe already within his or her being; and 7) belief that it is inappropriate for people to judge others in any area of life, including sexual preference.

While those following religious and secular mystic traditions offer rituals and disciplines to develop psychic and mystic gifts, some individuals come to such revelations on their own or through close work with another individual. Today there are sane, ethical and educated persons who make their gifts available to others for counselling and healing.

A far cry from storefront Gypsy fortunetellers, these individuals earn degrees and certification to add the official blessings of the establishment to the use of what they feel are special gifts, which includes practicing gay men and lesbians. On some level, most of us would admit to at least being curious and fascinated about mysticism and prophecy telling. Just look at how popular James Redfield's book "The Celestine Prophecy" and its subsequent follow-up "The Tenth Insight" have been.

THE END

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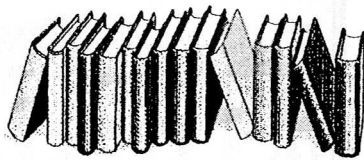
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COVER TO COVER

Books of Interest



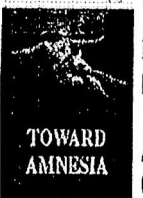
The Necessary Hunger
by Nina Revoyr
Simon & Schuster

This is a great story about the intense friendship and competition between two girls, Nancy Takahiro and Raina Webber, who are both high school basketball stars in inner-city Los Angeles. Nancy starts to fall in love with Raina when she first sees her play, but Raina loves the game of basketball as much as anything, or anyone, else. The contrasting expectations of Raina and Nancy, who have college recruiters lining up at their door, and their friends and teammates, who don't, are a painful reminder of what the future holds for a lot of high school kids.



Sanctuary: A Tale of Life In the Woods
by Paul Monette
Scribner

Monette's last work is a gentle yet pointed fable about two animals exiled from an enchanted forest because of their 'different' love. Renarda the Fox and Lapine the Rabbit are doubly different, being same-sex lovers from different species. With a little help, they stand up to the hypocritical demagogue who rules the forest.



Toward Amnesia
by Sarah Van Arsdale
Riverhead

A woman sheds her identity after her lover leaves her for another. She hits the road in North Carolina and ends up in Maine. A moving meditation on loss, with beautiful and symbolic encounters with nature. Excellent writing. (New in Paperback)



Shadow Man
by Melissa Scott
Tor

Science fiction author Melissa Scott, has created in *Shadow Man* a wonderfully real portrait of two cultures clashing over gender and identity. On Earth, there are five genders and nine sexual orientations - the result of mutations caused by space travel. On Hara, a lost colony, the same five genders exist, but people of the three odd genders are required to choose a legal gender of male or female, and to be "straight" within their chosen gender. Warreven, a Haran hermaphrodite, is caught in the political and social upheaval when these two societies rediscover each other.

Out Of The Blue: Russia's Hidden Gay Literature
edited by Kevin Moss
Gay Sunshine Press



On the heels of their highly successful anthology of Japanese gay literature, *Partings at Dawn*, comes this collection of stories from Russia published by Gay Sunshine Press. The authors represented range from 19th century "Golden Age" writers Alexander Pushkin and Leo Tolstoy through early 20th century poet Sergei Esenin to a variety of post-Soviet writers whose work is just beginning to be recognized. This anthology ranges widely through literary forms, with stories, poems, essays, and biographical narratives all included.

For A Lost Soldier
by Rudi van Dantzig
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"I clicked my heels and said, 'There's no place like home, there's no place like home.' I just didn't have those ruby slippers!" -Boat mechanic Steve Burton to the Associated Press when he couldn't get home because flooding closed Interstate 5.

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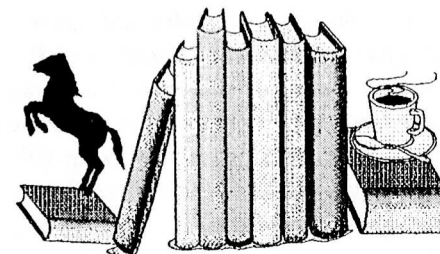
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Gay Owned and Operated

Hugging Ricky

by Edward K. Ricketts

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Authors Note: *This has been a difficult essay to write. There are three pieces of "background" that I cannot assume people know that need to be explained for it to make sense. It shows how different aspects of one's life are so interwoven in a tangle, that it is often not worth the effort to try to separate them. Heh! The world is mad, y'know!*

Food & Friends is an organization that prepares and delivers meal packs to PWA's (and their families, if needed) every day of the week except Sunday. It is one of the most respected AIDS service organizations in the DC area. It was started by a friend of mine, a Presbyterian minister. Carla's original idea was to utilize left over food from local restaurants to provide one meal a day to PWA's. Her goal, when she started in the fall of 1988, was to provide one meal a day to 20 individuals by the end of the year. The goal was reached in less than a month. This has developed into an operation providing complete, balanced nutrition, 6 days a week for nearly 500 PWA's, with a \$3 million per year budget (80% from donations). This does not count the value of time contributed by volunteers in the preparation of the food, packing of the meals, and delivery. A few weeks back, Food & Friends delivered their one millionth meal.

Touching and hugging are simultaneously among the most threatening and comforting things that humans can do to/with one another. It took me a long time to overcome my own (almost bizarrely irrational) fears of touching. When those fears passed, I learned that I NEED to be touched, and I am not saying groped. (Though I am not ruling that out. <g>) Many people are afraid of touching, or being touched, and not just by a person with AIDS, but by anyone. Touching is one of the most humanly comforting things we can do, and I know from personal experience, repeated many times over. I recall many times when I have found, and also have transmitted, an inner peace through hugging and being hugged. The hug that came (unexpectedly) from my oldest daughter when I checked on her in the middle of the night when she was about two years old. The first time I hugged someone after my divorce. The hug that Andrew gave me when I was visiting him two months before his death, and the hug I exchanged with Andrew's younger (but much taller) brother after the scattering of Andrew's ashes. And Danny's phrase to Mary when she posted about Casey....my hand in yours....

HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO GET HIT BY THAT 2X4?!

A few weeks ago, I was to do the Pulpit Assistant role at church on a Sunday when we would have a guest preacher. In my congregation, some Pulpit Assistants write part of the liturgy that is used, and I usually do so. In coordinating the service with the guest preacher, he told me that his sermon theme for that day would be Christ's "transformation" of the ordinary Jewish greeting "Shalom!" into the theological statement that "I leave my peace with you. My peace I give unto you, not as the world gives." This gave me the key for developing the Confession of Error, that I wrote for that Sunday.


This is a true story that has bugged me since it happened last fall. I failed to do that which I have committed myself to doing. I needed to get it off my chest. I had shared the barebones of the story with a few people, who comforted me by saying, "Ed, you can't save every one," but it still nagged my conscience.

I have been a delivery volunteer for Food & Friends for a bit over three years, and, since retiring, have delivered twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Over this period, I have delivered different routes, mostly in Prince George's County, Maryland, but some in DC as well. I have no idea how many clients I have met, many of whom I will never forget, but there is one in particular. Ricky was just 34, and was on service for only three weeks.

On a Tuesday last fall, I delivered the very first F&F meals to Ricky. It was a beautiful day, and after finding his place, I parked and went up to the door. Ricky had a young, very cute, lively, little terrier that barked at me but wagged her tail in a very friendly manner. When Ricky answered my knock, he apologized for how messy his place looked (although it really wasn't messy at all) and I said something about how it was too beautiful outside to stay indoors and do housework. Ricky's answer to that was "It's YOU who brings beauty into my home!" I was stunned, stammered something, we exchanged hugs, and I went on with the route.

During the following weeks, the little terrier would always greet me, and Ricky and I would exchange time-of-day-pleasantries, until on another Tuesday, the dog was very agitated as I came up the walk, and a nurse opened the door when I knocked. Ricky's mother was in the living room, and Ricky was lying on the sofa. Even though he was very weak, Ricky tried to sit up to greet me, but he couldn't make it. There was a look on his face that said, "I am seeing death, up close and personal." I went to the sofa, put my hand on his shoulder saying, "Hang in there!" I smiled at the two women, and continued with my other deliveries.

Thursday, I re-arranged my route so that Ricky would be the last delivery. When I got to Ricky's door, the Wednesday bag was still outside, so after knocking and getting no answer, I took both the Wednesday and Thursday bags with me, and went directly home. I called F&F, telling them what I had found at Ricky's. F&F called back a couple of hours later to tell me that Ricky had died early that morning.



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(I watched the newspaper for a week, but there was never an obituary, or even a death notice. This is something else that bugs me: that a PWA's death goes unacknowledged by family and friends. There is still too much AIDS phobia and shame.)

Many times since, I have asked myself, "Why didn't I pause that last Tuesday and give him a male-male hug and a kiss on his cheek and just hold him for awhile?" I sensed that he needed this, and the few minutes it would have taken to give him that solace and comfort would have made no difference to anyone else but Ricky (and me). In my everyday, overly-busy mode of thinking, I didn't pause long enough to do the right thing. (I told this story to another volunteer, a friend of mine, who delivers the same route, and who also had met Ricky. His comment to me was, "Ricky left a nick on your soul," and he's right about that.)

Well, this is the confession I wrote as a result of my "encounter" with Ricky:

*God...We drift through this glorious world, soul blind, aware only of our own problems and schemes, missing the multitude of opportunities that come our way to witness to love and grace. Through our self-absorption we *transform* these opportunities for service to our fellow beings into sins of omission....He gave us*

power to change the gray ordinariness and agitation of our over-busy lives into the rainbow-hued ecstasy of souls at peace within ourselves. Open the eyes of our hearts so that we give others the smile that brightens their day; the greeting that says that they have been seen; the touch that tells them they matter to us; the word of encouragement that can lift their spirits out of misery. Help us to know that every time we do this for others, the life-change will run both ways, for that which we give we will surely receive. We ask this in the name of your Son, our teacher and enabler.

Amen. Amen.

By taking that opportunity to draw a lesson out of my failure with Ricky, my own soul has found a measure of peace - not a self-satisfied peace, but one that reminds me that there is NEVER a wrong time to do the right thing. One may not expect it to happen at the moment, and feels unprepared, but sometimes it is better to just go ahead and ad lib it. Afterwards, you'll wonder, "Did I do enough? Did I do too much?" but it won't really matter so long as you actually do SOMETHING. Life, ultimately, is what happens while we are busy making other plans.

Can we exchange a hug? PLEASE!

Peace, Ricky! You are not forgotten.

-THE END

"Even within the safer-sex parameters, you add up all the odds over an entire lifetime and many gay men feel it's inevitable they'll contract HIV. That's a very hard psychological barrier to break through for prevention, education and, indeed, just morale."

-New Republic Senior Andrew Sullivan to The New York Times.
Sullivan is HIV positive.

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GUESTLIST

A Monthly Guide To All Things Hot And New In Spank's Record Box
Compiled by Jayson Spank

1. Unbreak My Heart (Soul Hex Anthem Mix - Toni Braxton
2. Blue Skies (Deep Dish Blue Phunk Mix) - BT featuring Tori Amos
3. Cosmic Girl (Morales Classic Mix) - Jamiroquai
4. Sugar Is Sweeter (Armand's Drum n' Bass Mix) - CJ Bolland
5. Up To No Good (Original Mix) - Porn Kings
6. Burning (Klubbheads Remix) - MK
7. Krupa (Original Mix) - Apollo 440
8. Driving (Masters at Work Dub) - Everything But The Girl
9. Inner City Life - Goldie vs. Rabbit in the Moon
10. Back Together (Boris Dlugosch Mix) - Urban Soul feat. Sandy B.
11. Tha' Wildstyle (Skideep Remix) - DJ Supreme
12. Stamp 9 (Original Mix) - Jeremy Healy and Amos
13. The Way (Original Murk Groove) - Funky Green Dogs
14. 4 Your Love (City of Love Mix) - BKS
15. Hand in Hand (Oakenfold and Osborne Mix) - Grace

_Spank has a residence at Club Renaissance where he plays every Friday and Saturday.
His new mix-tapes #rst and SM:)E are forthcoming.

Every Monday from 9:30 'till 10:30 pm get



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www.golden.net/~bearsden/outabout.html



Community Info

ACCKWA (The AIDS Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo and Area)
123 Duke Street East
Kitchener, Ontario
570-3687

AIDS Clinical Trials Hotline
Information on FDA listed clinical trials accessible from Canada.
1-800-TRIALS-A

AIDS Committee of Guelph and Wellington County
204-85 Norfolk Street
Guelph, Ontario
763-2255

AIDS Hotline
Ontario Ministry of Health
1-800-668-2437

AIDS Information and Education
205 Queen Street East
Fergus, Ontario
843-2460

Brethren Mennonite Council for Gays and Lesbians
P.O. Box 43031
Eastwood Square,
Kitchener, ON. N2H 6S9

Canadian AIDS Society
Ottawa
1-613-230-3580

Community AIDS Treatment Exchange (CATIE)
Toronto
1-416-944-1916

CKWBL (Cambridge, K-W, Bisexual Liberation)
P.O. Box 28002,
Parkdale Postal Outlet
Waterloo, Ontario
N2L 6J8

COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere)
Provides education, support and community on local and international levels.

Contact Sarah at [REDACTED]
or e-mail to: [REDACTED]

DISTRESS LINE
Kitchener 745-1168

GLLOW (Gay and Lesbian Liberation of Waterloo)
U of W [REDACTED]

GLOBAL (Gays, Lesbians or Bisexuals at Laurier)
e-mail:
00global@mach1.wlu.ca

website:
www.wlu.ca/~wwwclubs/
www/global.html

GQE (Guelph Queer Equality)
[REDACTED]
email: gqe@uoguelph.ca

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth Line
1-800-268-YOUTH

Ontario AIDS Network
Toronto
1-416-364-4555

Outline (formerly Gayline) LGBT Information Line
836-4550

PFLAG (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)
Acton..... [REDACTED]
Cambridge..... [REDACTED]
Guelph..... [REDACTED]

Project Angel
Waterloo Region AIDS Memorial
250 Dundas Street S. #221
Cambridge, Ontario
N1R 8A8

Sexual Assault Centres
KW - 741-8633
Cambridge.....658-0551
Guelph.....823-5806

Substance Abuse Prevention
Kitchener
741-3827

Two Spirited People of First Nations
Toronto
1-416-944-9300

Waterloo Region Alliance for Equal Rights
[REDACTED]

Women's Centre
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-Joan Rivers to Denver's Out Front

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HIV Clinic - 2nd Floor

Duke St Clinic - 

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Cambridge 150 Main St.

Waterloo 99 Regina St. South

STD Clinic - 2nd Floor

STD Clinic - 2nd Floor

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- ▶ Tuesday 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.

- ▶ walk-in: first come, first served
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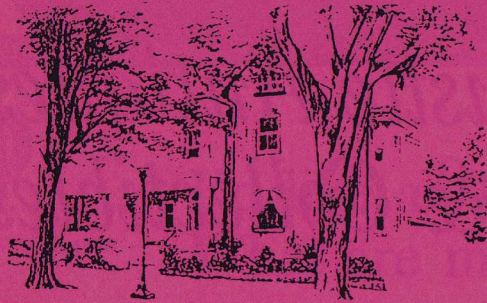
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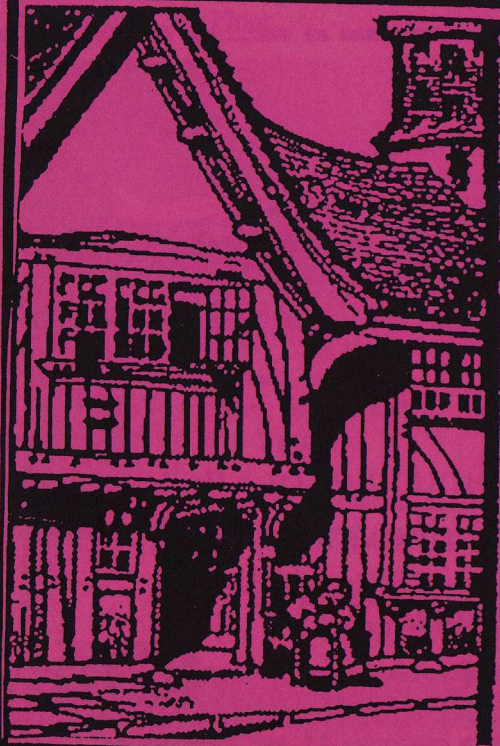
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