

MGW

MOM GUESS WHAT NEWSMAGAZINE

VOL.30 • ISS.5 • NO.567 • MARCH 1, 2009

Spirituality
Issue

Does God Believe In You?

Artistic Vision Quest

Kurt Fishback

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BOYCOTT LIST

THIS IS A LIST OF BUSINESSES IN THE SACRAMENTO AREA THAT ALLEGEDLY ENDORSED OR DONATED FUNDING TO THE "YES ON 8" CAMPAIGN. THESE BUSINESSES ACTIVELY FOUGHT FOR THE PERMANENT REMOVAL OF OUR COMMUNITY'S MARRIAGE RIGHTS THAT HAD BEEN FULLY RECOGNIZED IN 2008 BY THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA. DO NOT LET YOUR MONEY SUPPORT THEIR HATE.

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IF ANY OF THE BUSINESSES LISTED ABOVE ARE LISTED INCORRECTLY OR UNFAIRLY, OR DID NOT DONATE FUNDS TO THE "YES ON 8" CAMPAIGN, PLEASE CONTACT MGW NEWSMAGAZINE IMMEDIATELY SO THIS INFORMATION CAN BE CORRECTED. IT IS OUR INTENTION TO PROVIDE ACCURATE INFORMATION FOR THOSE CHOOSING TO FINANCIALLY BOYCOTT BUSINESSES WHO SUPPORTED "YES ON 8". WE DO NOT ADVOCATE VIOLENCE OR VANDALISM OF ANY KIND, NOR CONDONE ANY MALICIOUS ACTION OR BEHAVIOR TOWARD ANY BUSINESS OR INDIVIDUAL REGARDLESS OF THEIR POLITICAL POSITION ON PROP. 8. THIS IS AMERICA; THEY ARE FREE TO VOTE THEIR CONSCIENCE AND WE ARE FREE TO NOT SUPPORT THEIR BUSINESSES.

HATE CRIME VICTIM SPEAKS UP

On Jan. 1, 2009 I was targeted by four individuals in a car as I left The Bolt on Boxwood St. in North Sacramento just after dark. They followed me as I drove the short distance home, and as I walked back on foot to The Bolt, they stopped their car on Frenza Ave., yelling anti-gay epithets and threatening me. The driver got out of the car with a knife, and approached me. I took my belt off and got it around his wrist and that convinced him to put the knife away. Three other males got out of the car, and the driver then took a few swings at me.

Realizing I was outnumbered, I disabled one of them by breaking his arm. I'm sure I broke it because I heard a loud snap and he screamed as I bent his arm backward at the elbow. As the others approached, I tried to do the same to one more, but wasn't as successful. While defending myself from the other two from the car, another male who was on foot joined in and hit me on the back of the head, knocking off my glasses. I defended myself for a while.

The whole time this attack was happening, we were slowly moving up Frenza Ave. toward The Bolt. After two blocks, the one on foot was choking me while the others were trying to push my shoulders down, trying to kick my feet out from under me. The male on foot who was choking me grabbed a brick out of a planter box where I fell next to the street and began hitting me over the head with it two or three times.

I was blacking out at this point and couldn't breathe. I put my hand above my head where I was being hit, grabbing the brick out of his hand, getting my feet back underneath me. I took the brick from him and hit him in the head two or three times. Somehow, I was able to jump up as the other two panicked and ran. I turned and watched the male who had been on foot stumble backward and start to run down the street as he grabbed my backpack with my prescription medication, work clothes, pay stubs and other personal items totaling over \$750.

After defending myself for two blocks, I was just glad it was over and got back to The Bolt as quickly as possible without my glasses. We called the police from there. I didn't realize it until the next day, after I had made the first report that night, but the male on foot was someone I'd seen walking on Frenza Ave. on many previous occasions.

I was able to give a facial and clothing description of the male on foot who attacked me with the brick. The officer who took my report was very professional and helpful, even taking the time to find my glasses and my belt and return them to me. He said the attack would probably be classified as a Hate Crime because of the circumstances, but it was only classified as a robbery and assault. He even called me on his day off to offer assistance to verify to my doctor if needed to refill my prescriptions.

Several days after the attack I spotted the male who hit me with the brick and grabbed my backpack and called 911 as I was instructed to do if I found anyone. I was told they would not dispatch an officer and was told to speak to a detective. First I was told a detective was working my case. I tried for eight days to contact this person.

Upon finally getting a response, he told me it wasn't his case and began yelling at me when I asked him why it was only classified as a robbery and not a hate crime. He told me he'd been passing my messages on to another detective. I called this other person and left several messages. I got no response whatsoever.

Frustrated with the inaction, my mother made

a call to an Inspector with the San Francisco Hate Crime Unit and she in turn made some inquiries into what was happening here. Within two hours, she was able to find out the name of the detective assigned to my case.

After speaking with the person who brushed me off, she found he wasn't even a detective, but a community service officer, as was the person he had referred me to. It wasn't until she spoke with him that I was assigned an actual detective.

From that point on, it seems there's been a brick wall at every turn. I tried amending my police report to reflect additional information, but some of the information was not added. I was denied a copy of my report. I was denied information on my assailant even after identifying him four times. Once in a photo lineup presented to me by the Detective, once when the Detective went to the house I sent him to after seeing him out front, twice by officers after I reported seeing him on the same street as the attack on New Years Day.

I was given the run around at every turn by personnel at Freeport Blvd. Report Writing Unit, as well as the Detective. I've missed countless days of work due to the ER visit after the attack, doctor visits to receive counseling and medication for stress and anxiety related to the attack and meeting with the Detective who has tried to discourage me from pursuing a conviction.

One of the few bright spots is a wonderful attorney working pro bono to help me get things rolling. I cannot thank her enough for all her help and support. I really feel the Detective on my case wants me to just drop everything and go on like nothing happened. Being the victim of a hate crime is one of the most stressful experiences of my life; one I wouldn't wish on anybody. I'm thankful to just be alive after that night. Remember, never give up; always push forward. Never back down. You're not alone.

BRENT ANDERSON
SACRAMENTO, CA

NEW COLUMN GETS READERS' ATTENTION

Thank you so much for the excellent article on what it feels like to be obese in the world/LGBT world. Losing the weight truly is so much more than restricting your calories, it is taking a chance on changing your entire relationship with the world. Mr. Marshall's article brought a tear to my eye.

NADEAN LANE
SENT VIA EMAIL

I just wanted to say that I just read Donald Marshall's article "Advice from a Shrinking Fat Man" and was very impressed. As a gay woman in SF who's had gastric bypass and lost over 100 pounds myself, I can truly identify with the humor and pathos of which he writes. He's spot on as well as articulate and I really enjoyed reading about his journey. I hope you'll continue to publish his articles. I want to follow his story as well as support your publication for being brave enough to publish on a subject that too few people in our community are willing to discuss.

Again, thank you for his article.

RAVEN
A SHRINKING FAT WOMAN
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

MGW

MOM GUESS WHAT NEWSPAPER

ESTABLISHED NOVEMBER 1978

1123 21st Street, Ste. 201
Sacramento, CA 95811
V: 916.441.6397 • F: 206-202-3562
momguesswhat.com
myspace.com/mgwnews

PUBLISHED BY
Faces, Inc

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Usually when the topic of religion comes up I put on my best Fran Drescher as the Nanny accent and let go a, "Don't go there, Ma!" While in my younger days I was happy to debate religion for hours on end, now at the wise old age of ... over 35 ... I have a much different take on religion and spirituality — the less said, the better.

I was raised a middle of the road Christian mutt. My father's family was Catholic, but observed only when it suited. My mother's side was Methodist, but stopped attending church after my great-grandfather, who was a church Deacon, became enraged seeing beer bottles being used as vases at a dinner inside the church. However, while I was growing up, my family's idea of church was watching Sunday morning religious programming on television.

While I was raised to have a very deep belief in Christian teachings, I was fortunate to have a mother with a thirst for knowledge. She read endlessly about everything, including Western religions, Eastern philosophies, the occult, Paganism, the supernatural and much more.

So while I had this unyielding belief in the Christian teachings, I was also taught an understanding and acceptance of people's belief systems that were different from mine. I was lucky.

But, as almost every LGBT Christian hitting puberty, when I realized I was gay and what that meant, I also realized there was a bit of a conflict between what my spiritual guidebook and the TV preachers and the preacher at my grandmother's retirement home told me and the fact that I wanted to get my freak on with other guys. Oh, shit.

I went through my periods of denial, searching for answers, educating myself and eventually accepting that spiritual beliefs are

an individual calling. Now, I do still hold some Christian beliefs, but find it hard to believe the Bible literally. I also have embraced a strong connection with pagan spirituality. Those who seek to package each different religion into neat little boxes with labels and directions don't understand my spiritual practices. Indeed, as Mr. Miyagi believes about Karate, you do it, or you don't do it, you can't kinda do it — serious paraphrasing there.

But I firmly feel that being forced to examine my spiritual beliefs was an amazing gift. Most people who grow up in religious households and never find themselves at odds with what they are taught never have any reason to actually think about those beliefs. They never have reason to challenge or truly digest what is being etched into their spiritual psyche.

Then along comes a LGBT family member or a single woman having a baby out of wedlock and suddenly the devoutly religious find themselves in hot water — torn between the person they love and the God they were told if they didn't love that they'd be set on fire for eternity. Face it, for the seriously devout Christian, that's a serious conundrum. Especially when you consider that throughout history, some of the biggest wars, tragedies and offences to mankind have been in the name of religion.

Those battles aren't over. Just take a look

at the appalling protests by the Ukrainian Christian Immigrants in Northern California. Our community is fighting a war of love, yet in their mind, they are fighting a religious war. One they believe their God will not let them lose.

As for me, my mutt spirituality continues to grow and I have no trouble overlapping varying beliefs and philosophies. After all, Christian law says, "The law can be summed up in one word, Love your neighbor as yourself." And pagan law says, "If it harm none, do what you will." To me, these go hand in hand.

Besides which, the pagans never knock at my door at 8 a.m. on a Saturday morning asking me if I've heard of the promises the Goddess has made for those that give her preachers money and hate those different from us.

Amen and Blessed Be.

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sacramento's oscar party. more photos at momguesswhat.com

PICTURES BY NATHAN FELDMAN





RON GETTY IS THE SENIOR STAFF MEMBER OF A TAX ATTORNEY WITH HIS PRACTICE LOCATED IN SAN FRANCISCO. HIS BACKGROUND INCLUDES AN ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING DEGREE AND 30 YEARS OF SALES, MARKETING AND ADVERTISING WITH SMALL TO LARGE CORPORATIONS. A VIETNAM VETERAN OF CHU LAI - I CORPS, HE BRINGS PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES ON VETERANS AND THEIR TREATMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT.

Libertarian Perspective

Why Is Competition Unfair?

CA.LP.ORG

California's Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) has as part of its mission statement "protecting licensees from unfair competition."

The DCA comprises 40 bureaus, programs, boards, committees, and commissions totaling 2,700 employees and a budget of \$468 million, covering 255 professions and 2.4 million licensees.

The DCA's bureaus and boards budgets pay for themselves by charging fees from licensees. This income frees taxpayers from ponying up money to protect licensees from "unfair competition." Only consumers who use the licensees indirectly pay the licensing fee; not all taxpayers do.

DCA licensing requirements are designed with industry and political input. These laws, along with a plethora of local business licenses and permits, put speed bumps in the way of skilled people offering their services to consumers, thereby reducing competition and increasing prices.

Unlicensed skilled craftspeople offering affordable services who prove they can do a job, and then perform the job satisfactorily, don't need DCA or local business licensing. This situation covers neighborhood entrepreneurs who have a nail or hair salon in their homes, sell homemade sandwiches at construction sites, or provide local neighborhood taxi services.

Let's see how the DCA does "protect licensees from unfair competition" by examining one of the boards: the Contractors State License Board (CSLB).

The CSLB has 316,000 licensed contractors in 43 classifications. To protect contractors and consumers from "unfair competition," CSLB uses undercover sting operations by the Statewide Investigative Fraud Team, or SWIFT.

SWIFT targets handymen who charge more than \$500 for a job. The CSLB claims that this targeting helps eliminate unlicensed contractors. According to CSLB, unlicensed contracting generates an estimated annual \$60 to \$140 billion underground economy, which includes a whole passel of underground contractors ignoring licensing requirements.

The \$500 limit is out of kilter with today's inflationary cost of materials and labor. The \$500 maximum job cost for materials and labor stops poor-but-skilled people from making a decent living. Consumers pay the price for having state-mandated protectionism for licensees who don't want "unfair" competition.

Consumers hiring a CSLB-licensed contractor should expect decent results, right? And we should assume that the CSLB weeds out incompetent contractors so consumers are protected by the CSLB, right? Not from the experience of a friend of mine.

This acquaintance had an electrical fire break out in the deck at the back of his house even though a licensed electrical contractor had wired the lighting installation. One-third of his home was destroyed and the remainder suffered smoke and water damage.

The insurance company provided a list of approved licensed general contractors. My acquaintance talked with several before hiring one who had references, insurance company approval, and a state-approved general contractor license. What happened next was general contractor hell.

What should have been a six-month renovation project took a year-and-a-half. Subcontractors were paid late or never showed up on time. Installations had to be torn out and redone. Wrong materials were

ordered, or parts were installed improperly. The insurance company finally had its construction inspector force the general contractor to complete the renovation.

The CSLB didn't put the general contractor on probation or suspend or revoke its license for incompetence. So much for protecting consumers.

However, the CSLB does post pictures online of "Most Wanted" contractors who haven't been caught for construction scams. This is how CSLB protects consumers from the bad guys.

Previously, the marketplace — without interference of laws, rules, regulations, licenses or protectionist bureaucracies — did what it does best. Incompetent flim-flam tradesmen were tarred, feathered, and ridden out of town on a rail. Today we aren't allowed to tar and feather miscreants but still have to pay anti-competitive prices for state-licensed contractors.

State licensing protects licensees with latter-day versions of trade cartels and guilds.

Skilled unlicensed tradespeople are forced out of the marketplace. Consumers then pay higher prices due to lack of competition. With this system, the marketplace is prevented from weeding out the incompetent. Tradespeople are also prevented from forming voluntary associations that have ethical standards of conduct and performance for membership in place of licensing.

The DCA needs to repeal its anti-competitive licensing requirements to allow greater competition and lower prices for consumers. The DCA's supposed "protecting licensees from unfair competition" simply doesn't cut, whether it comes to protecting consumers or generating competitive prices.

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Churches: Friend or Foe?

Even before the passage of Propositions 22 and 8, many in the LGBT community have viewed churches with deep suspicion and resentment. Frankly, there is much reason to feel that way. Historically, at least in the western world, churches and religion have been the source of much of the suffering and pain in the world.

From the early crusades in the middle east, through the burning of heretics and the Christian support of slavery, churches and religions have much to be ashamed of. And Christian churches have been a major force in the persecution of the LGBT community.

But fairness requires that we admit that, also in the western world, the highest ideals of our society and greatest codes of ethics of our society come out of the Judeo Christian heritage. And religious bodies have been at the forefront of those who feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and heal the sick.

And, while churches have been a great source of suffering for the LGBT community they have, at times and places, been very helpful as well. For example, in 2007 no less than 65 churches and other religious bodies and organizations supported AB 43, the state bill to allow same sex marriage. A similar number supported AB 19, a previous version of that bill.

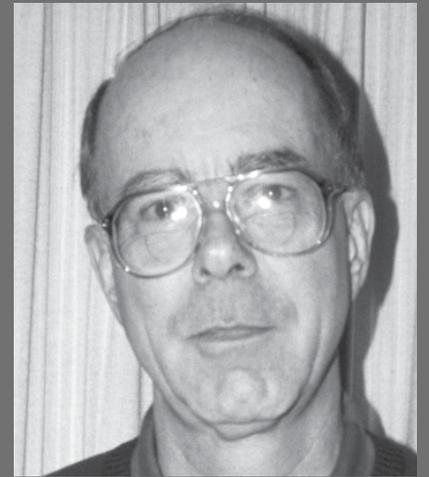
Similarly, no fewer than 121 churches, synagogues and other faith based organizations publicly opposed Proposition 8. Many of them and their clergy actively participated in the campaign against Proposition 8.

So where do we go from here? If the state Supreme Court overturns Proposition 8 we are home free, game won. If it does not, we can still appeal to the US Supreme Court. But we have a conservative US Supreme Court now. We cannot be sure they will rule in our favor.

If we end up trying to overturn Proposition 8 by putting another initiative on the ballot, we are really going to need the help of the faith community. Very many of those in the African American and Latino/Latina communities, who voted for Proposition 8, did so

because of their religious beliefs about homosexuality and about marriage. Those beliefs about homosexuality pretty much eliminate our ability to effectively advocate among them for our community. They will not take our word for what we say. The people most likely to command their respect, and to persuade them to at least consider another point of view, will be other people of faith.

So it is in our community's interest to acknowledge the great debt of gratitude that we owe to those people of faith who have openly supported our community and to build strong, friendly relations with them. We will need them as we seek to change the views of people of faith in the African American and Latino/a communities. That will be key to our winning the next initiative battle.



BY BOYCE HINMAN
CALIFORNIA COMMUNITIES
UNITED INSTITUTE
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ABOVE: FREEDOM TO MARRY RALLY DREW SEVERAL THOUSAND ACTIVISTS THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF THE DAY. LEFT & BELOW: "HOT ITALIAN" THE NEW RESTAURANT ON Q & 16TH IS NOW OPEN FOR BUSINESS AND PREPARING FOR THEIR OFFICIAL GRAND OPENING IN COMING WEEKS. RIGHT: THE AMGEN RACE MADE A SPLASH IN SACRAMENTO. ALL PHOTOS BY NATHAN FELDMAN

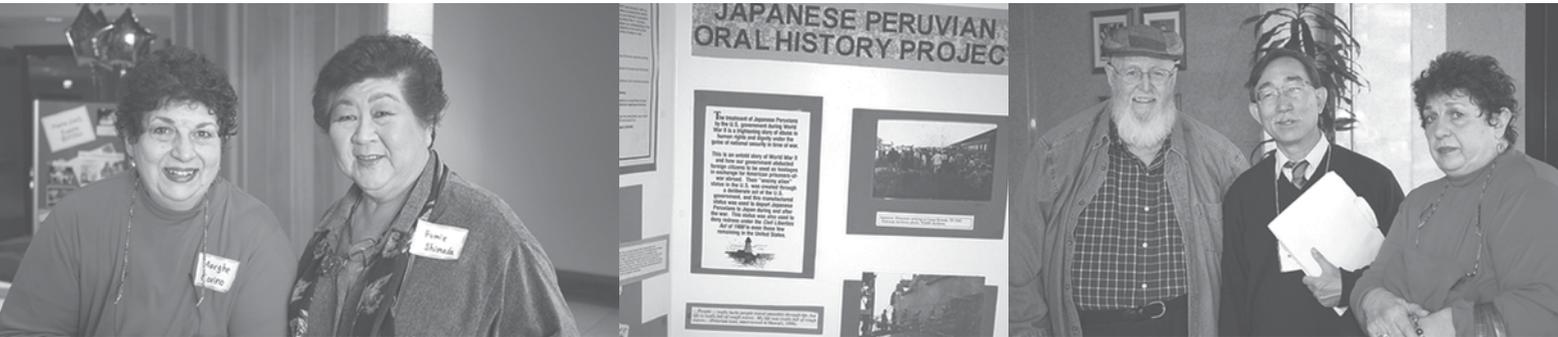
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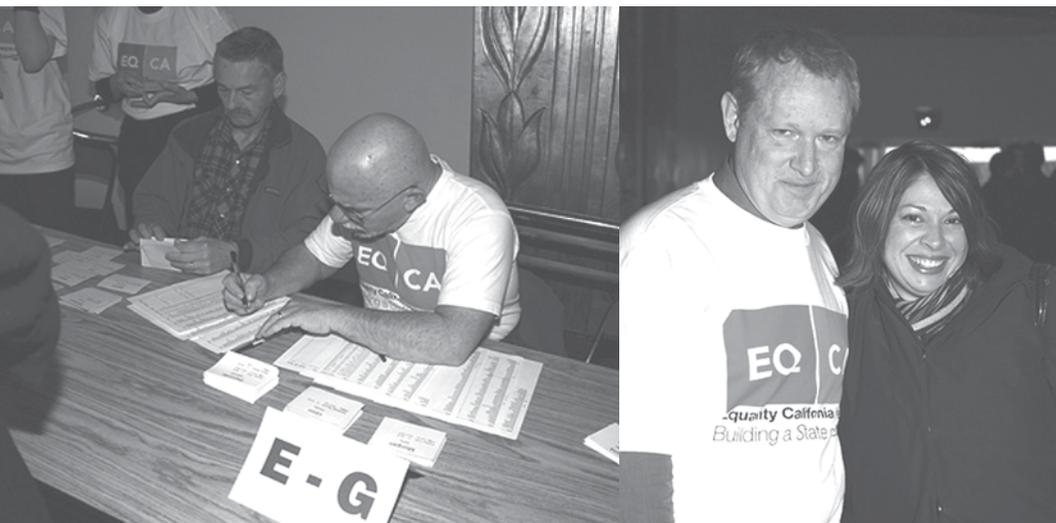
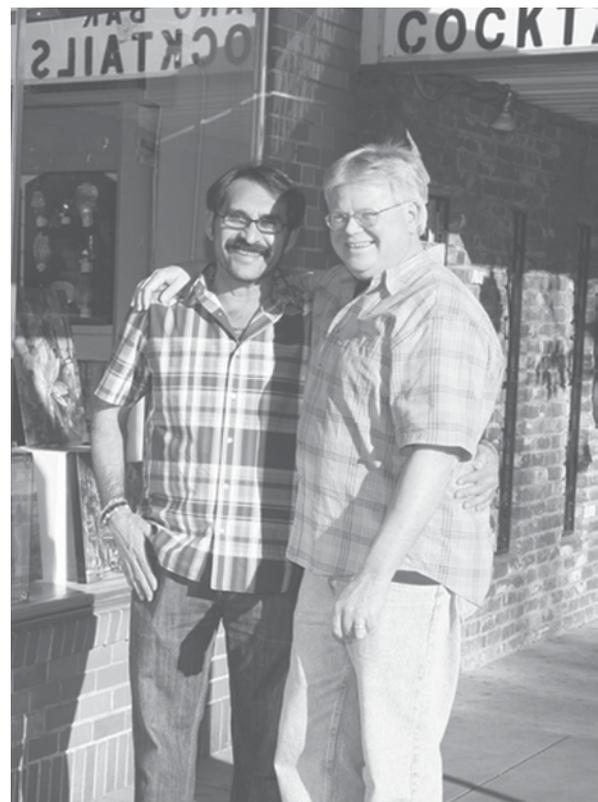


LEFT: ARTISTS DISPLAY THEIR LATEST AND GREATEST AT FEBRUARY'S SECOND SATURDAY ART WALK

BELOW: MGW WRITERS AND STAFF TURNED OUT TO SUPPORT THE JAPANESE DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

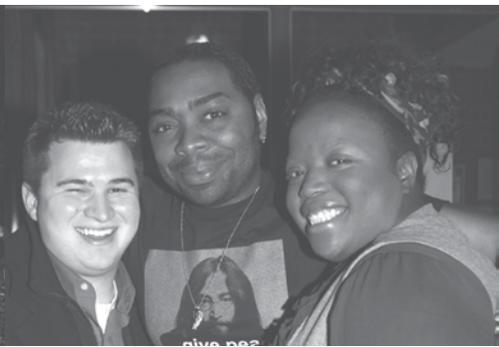


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ABOVE MIDDLE: FUN TIMES AT BADLANDS DANCE CLUB AND THE DEPOT FEB. 21; MIDDLE RIGHT: THE GUYS FROM ETC. TAKE A MOMENT TO POSE OUTSIDE THEIR SHOP ON HE CORNER OF 21ST & L STS.; LEFT & RIGHT: LOBBY DAY TO OVERTURN PROP 8 AT THE CREST THEATRE FEB. 17.

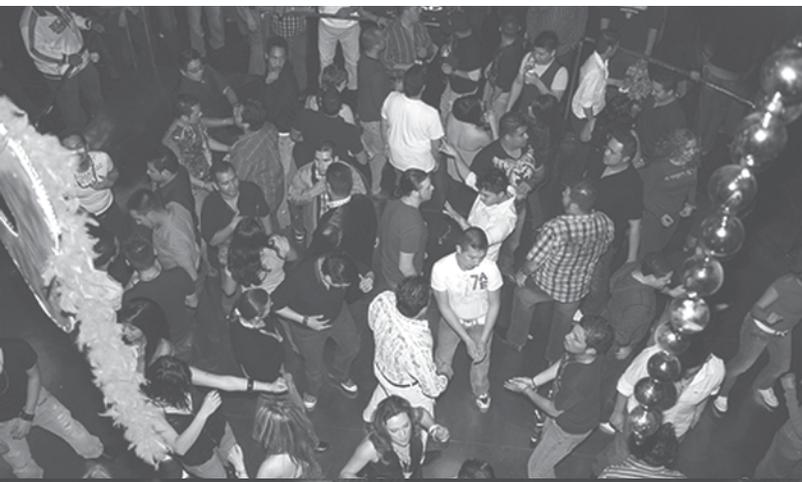




ABOVE: BARTENDERS AND MANAGERS DRESS IN DRAG FOR FACES NIGHTCLUB'S RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE MONDAYS PROMOTION. BELOW: VALENTINE'S DAY CELEBRATION AT BADLANDS DANCE BAR. RIGHT: VALENTINE'S DAY CELEBRATION AT FACES NIGHTCLUB. PHOTOS BY NATHAN FELDMAN.

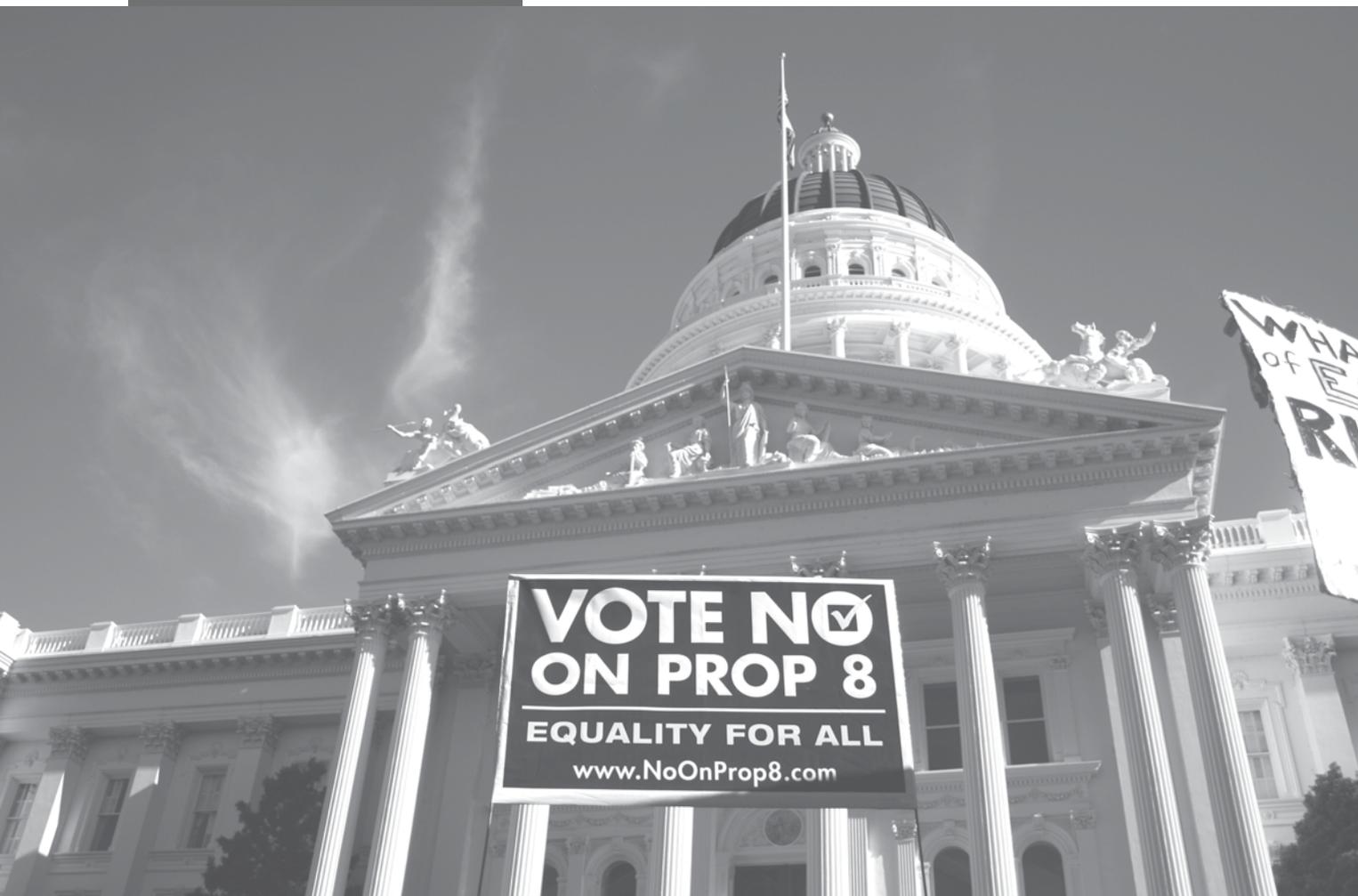
MORE PHOTOS FROM THESE AND PAST EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON MOMGUESSWHAT.COM





RIGHT (L TO R): JANICE GIMBEL, DAVID DILLEY VPA, ALAN S. ANDERSON (DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SHRINERS HOSPITALS FOR CHILDREN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA) MR. MARK SCAMMELL, AND HONORARY TEAM MEMBER MS. SHARON THIESSEN PRESENTED SHRINERS \$2,000 ON FEB, 14; LEFT AND BELOW: FAT TUESDAY MARDI GRAS CELEBRATIONS AT FACES NIGHTCLUB, 2000 K ST.





Gay History 101: Dade County, Briggs, And The Prop 8 Catastrophe

BY REM MELTON

BY NECESSITY THIS IS A LONG ARTICLE. THE GIST IS THAT RESEARCH SHOWS THAT EQUALITY CALIFORNIA, LED BY GEOFF KORS, DID A LAZY JOB AND SHOULD BE IGNORED; DONATIONS SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN TO THEM. INSTEAD, MORE RESEARCH LED ME TO SUPPORT MARRIAGE EQUALITY USA, GET TO KNOW US FIRST, AND COURAGE CAMPAIGN; THEIR WEB ADDRESSES ARE AT THE END OF THE ARTICLE. THESE ARE THE GROUPS I CONTRIBUTE TO NOW. OTHER GREAT ORGANIZATIONS ALSO EXIST, BUT I HAVE NOT RESEARCHED THEM.

I am not a professional journalist, nor am I a professional activist. I am just an average gay guy in San Francisco: middle aged, go to the gym, and watch "Top Chef" every Wednesday. Although not an activist, gay rights have been an issue for me since I came out in 1980 at the age of 18. I have boycotted Coors, supported politicians who were gay friendly, and have done volunteer work for gay organizations. When the courts gave us marriage in 2008, I was ecstatic. When we lost it in the same year I was surprised, angry, and despondent. As much as I detest those Christian Nazis who stole our marriage rights, I was far angrier at the No on 8 leadership.

Like many of you, I supported the No on 8 campaign with both my money and labor. Again, like many of you, I wrote email after email to Geoff Kors of Equality California pleading that the campaign change its tactics from vague human rights messages to a much more forthright campaign that would have openly gay people visible in the advertising and to challenge the accusations from the Christian right directly. I got no response to my emails; although I got plenty more emails asking for more money. And, I gave more money only to see it squandered. What really angered me was No on 8's response after our defeat, which amounted to a sorry we did our best. The main excuse I read was that the No on 8 leadership had no past examples of how to do a successful campaign, so they relied on the advice of professional pollsters and consultants. That response sent me through the roof because the gay community has faced these Christian

Nazis many times, and our community ran a successful campaign against them in 1978 concerning the Briggs initiative. I have a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in history, so I decided to do some research to see if there was any information out there that might have guided our community for Prop. 8.

I went to the LGBT archives in downtown San Francisco to see what they had from the Prop. 6 campaign. The research was fruitful. The LGBT archives have a lot of material from Prop. 6. I looked through the campaign literature donated by Paula Lichtenberg, which has documents from the Bay Area Coalition Against the Briggs Initiative (BACABI) and the Coalition for Human Rights (CHR). Surprisingly, in just two and half hours of research, I found enough material to construct a basic strategy for a successful campaign. All the material was interesting, but the brochures were perhaps the most useful and thought provoking. What surprised me the most was that a number of the brochures were published by an organization called Lesbian Schoolworkers. (The name appeared in bold letters in the brochure.) I had no idea that in 1978 gay school teachers were so honest and open about who they were. An excerpt of this material would be instructive:

HOMOSEXUALS ARE NOT CHILD MOLESTERS. Even Briggs admits this. Studies show that heterosexual men are responsible for at least 95% of all child molestation.

GAY SCHOOL WORKERS ARE NOT OUT TO RECRUIT THEIR STUDENTS.

We DO want to be honest about our lives. It is very strange that John Briggs and Anita Bryant are so worried about our recruiting children. If they think our lifestyle is so disgusting, how can they think it's so enticing?

HOMOSEXUALS ARE NOT SICK AND UNHAPPY. The latest Kinsey report concluded that most of the lesbians and gay men surveyed were as well adjusted as the heterosexual control group.

HOMOSEXUALITY IS NOT UNNATURAL OR ABNORMAL. Homosexuality has existed in every society and among most animal species. The unknown is always considered unnatural and abnormal; many sexual habits common today were considered abnormal a few years ago.

HOMOSEXUALS ARE NOT PROMISCUOUS AND PREOCCUPIED BY SEX. At least not any more so than heterosexuals.

MANY LESBIANS AND GAY MEN ARE INVISIBLE. One out of every 10 people is gay, so you've probably met many more than you think. The media likes to push one particular stereotype but in actuality most of us don't fit any one stereotype.

The capital letters and bolding are as they appeared in the brochure. Please notice that this brochure let everyone know that it was produced by lesbians. It also answered all the accusations that the Briggs literature used to defame gay people. This was not an isolated brochure. These points were made time and again. This was a campaign that did not shy away from the fact that gay people were fighting for their rights. This was also a campaign that honestly and directly answered all the lies and accusations made by the right wing.

Beside the brochures and campaign literature, I came across a pamphlet that examined why gays failed in the Dade County election in 1977. The pamphlet, *Gay Liberation TODAY* had a number of essays, but the one that caught my attention was *No More Miamis! Winning Allies for Gay Rights* by Diane Wang. The essay had a number of underlined passages and notes in the margins. Clearly someone at BACABI had read the essay and taken its suggestions to heart. Here is an excerpt:

... [L]eaders of the Dade County Coalition for Human Rights deliberately put the brakes on attempts to organize a mass-action campaign which could have posed the issues clearly and mobilized supporters of the gay rights ordinance. ... Instead, the coalition hired several Democratic Party "pros." And these engineers of defeat told gay men and lesbians to leave the work to them. The politicians ... hit Miami with an expensive media blitz designed by professionals. ... But human rights cannot be "sold" in an ad campaign ... There were no massive actions to give all supporters of human rights the chance to publicly answer the slanders against gay men and lesbians.

The essay also examined how Dade County gay politicians did not make the effort to enlist help from both labor and the black community. Essentially, the mistakes made in Dade County were the same mistakes made in the Prop. 8 campaign: an elite group of gays financed a tepid uncontroversial campaign that did not address the issues of gay rights and bigotry directly. Furthermore,

the campaign did not get other groups involved. No wonder that we lost Dade County. When I left the archives I was furious. It took me a mere two and a half hours to find the information necessary to mount a successful campaign dealing with fundamentalist Christians. More infuriating was that the information about what not to do was there also.

My next research project was even easier. I read Randy Shilts' *The Mayor of Castro Street*, and I watched the documentary, *The Times of Harvey Milk*. Both the book and the film made one thing very clear: Harvey Milk did not trust the moderates, led by Advocate owner David Goodstein. Goodstein and company wanted to run a Dade County style campaign. Harvey disagreed, and he was very direct about it, referring to one of the moderate brochures as "shit and masturbation." Harvey and those of his mind knew that the only way for gay people to defeat Prop. 6 was to be open about who we are and to honestly address all the accusations made by our opponents. He also knew it would take a grass roots campaign to defeat Briggs. Both the book and the film make it clear that Harvey and groups like BACABI learned from the mistakes made in Dade County. Thus, the anti-Briggs campaign included many openly gay people, large rallies, brochures that directly countered the accusations made by Briggs, and public debates. Alliances with minority groups and labor were made. The campaign included setting up tables in malls, door to door canvassing, and candidly talking to people about what Prop. 6 would do to gay men and women. It was a successful campaign and Prop. 6 was defeated with 59% of the voters voting against it.

What struck me in doing my research was that the No on 8 campaign led by Geoff Kors was not only run by a bunch of moderates of the temperament Harvey Milk detested, but that they are also very lazy and very arrogant. It took me very little research time to find out what did work and what didn't. What clearly didn't work were vague arguments about human rights that did not address gay rights and anti-gay arguments. What clearly didn't work was keeping openly gay people out of the public eye. Openly gay people working hard in the public eye and directly countering all those offensive, dishonest accusations made by the religious right is what worked. So for those who say that there was no model out there to organize a successful anti-eight campaign, I say this: what a bunch of bullshit. The information was out there and had No on 8 leadership spent even the briefest time looking for it they would have found it.

However, the point of this article is not to pick the No on 8 campaign apart. Rather, it is to demonstrate that we can challenge Christian Nazis and win. Further, I want to emphasize that no matter what moderates like Geoff Kors say, they cannot be trusted. Moderates will always want moderate campaigns. Giving money to moderates and to moderate campaigns is pointless; you may as well just throw your money away. Thus, my quest has been to find an organization that will provide good leadership and to which I can give my money with the confidence that it will not be squandered. I made a number of inquiries, and I heard good things about

Marriage Equality USA. I called Marriage Equality and spoke to Molly McKay, whom I have met. I asked her why I should give my money to her organization, and she gave me a number of impressive reasons. These are four points that convinced me to support Marriage Equality USA:

1. Marriage Equality USA has no overhead; it is a volunteer organization.
2. Marriage Equality USA has established outreach programs to get our message to a host of communities: African American, Asian, Hispanic, and Christian to name a few.
3. Marriage Equality uses gay images. In one of their brochures, there are three pictures of gay couples. All pictures have a brief statement about the couple's history and how proposition 8 has hurt them.
4. Marriage Equality honestly addresses the dishonest claims made by our opponents. For example, their material states clearly that legal gay marriage will not force any church to do gay marriage ceremonies.

What impressed me the most about Ms. McKay is that it was easy to get hold of her. I got her phone number from Marriage Equality USA's web site, called her, spoke with her about the research I was doing, and set a date to have coffee. She met with me, was charming, and answered all of my questions. She understood that I wanted to ensure that my donation money would be spent well and had no problem with me questioning her. I was very impressed with Ms. McKay and her organization, and I shall definitely support Marriage Equality USA with my contributions. I also asked Ms. McKay what organization she contributed to for media advertising. She told me that Get to Know Us First has a number of commercials ready to be aired. They just need the money to pay for the air time. This is the group that had gay couple commercials during the inauguration. Their commercials have gay couples from different communities and have both English and Spanish language advertisements. I had

heard good things about this group and was heartened to hear her endorse them. Ms. McKay also endorsed Courage Campaign, which I have heard good things about too. When I left the coffee house, I had what I wanted: a group of organizations that are on the right track. All of these groups reach out to other communities, have gay people visible in their material, and directly counter the lies of our opponents. It is a pity I didn't know more about them last year.

I began this article stating that I am not a professional journalist or activist. I only began this research because I was angry that forty five million dollars of our community's money was squandered on a poorly done campaign. As I began speaking to friends, acquaintances, and strangers about the Prop. 8 catastrophe, I realized that I was not the only person who was angry about the No on 8 performance. More important though, was that all the people I spoke to didn't know what organizations to trust and whether or not Equality California was to blame for losing this campaign. That's when I decided to do my own research. My conclusion is that had the No on 8 leadership done even a day's worth of research, they would have had all the information they needed to run a successful campaign. We have faced Christian bigots before and prevailed. I have realized that Harvey Milk was right: gay moderate leadership, whether it be 1977 Dade County or 2008 San Francisco, will deliver only shit and masturbation. That is when I decided to look for organizations based on the winning strategy of Harvey Milk. I have found them in Marriage Equality USA, Get to Know Us First, and Courage Campaign. The web addresses are below. For those who want to succeed in our quest for marriage equality, I strongly urge you to support them.

Marriage Equality USA: marriageequality.org; Get to Know Us First: gettoknowusfirst.org; Courage Campaign: couragecampaign.org.



PHOTOS BY WEST RAMSEY





Lavender Knights

BY M.R. COVINO
PHOTO BY NATHAN FELDMAN

The words are evocative ... Lavender Nights ... makes one think of soft, balmy summer evenings scented with gardenia and honeysuckle; the tree frogs and crickets creating a romantic symphony for lovers. BEEP BEEP! Reality check here — we're talking about the Lavender Knights, Sacramento's new iteration of the Lavender Angels, for protection in the LGBT community.

Alarmed at recent attacks in the downtown area, Deanna Delgado, bartender extraordinaire at The Depot and Badlands, has been putting the Knights together for several months. She hopes to have enough fundraisers to be able to buy reflective vests and two-way radios to equip volunteers who will soon be escorting Lavender Heights customers to their cars in safety.

Delgado is outspoken about her concerns. "Police presence should not mean parking enforcement which forces community people to walk further and further. Their efforts seem to be more about arrests for DUIs but it can take up to three hours for someone to show up and take a report — our protection is not a priority," she said, "we have to take care of ourselves and our own safety."

Delgado is looking for people to participate in the Lavender Knights who will commit to work at least one night in a three-month cycle. The shift would be from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. and involves escorting people to their cars and keeping an eye on street activity.

On March 11, "Groovin' For The Cause" fundraiser will be held at 8 p.m. at Badlands and will feature Ronnie and the Flight house band. Volunteers can sign up for Knighthood and also check up on other activities of the Knights at the event. There will also be voting that night on the logo that the Knights will wear.

To sign up, donate, or just to contact the Knights' organizers, e-mail LavenderKnights@gmail.com



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Dawn Nhan smiles gleefully as she says, "I'm just an ordinary American — and here I have my American Dream." She looks around at her new Vietnamese/Chinese restaurant at 1315 21st St. "It's called 'Sarus'. That means a bird — a crane — it's very good luck."

"I always work two or three jobs since I came here in 1980," she says, "and I always loved to cook, to serve people, to share culture. So I always wanted to have a restaurant." It was a long journey to her dream. Nhan relates that she was one of the Vietnamese "boat people" who launched themselves into the China Sea in anything that would float in order to flee the Communists who took over in South Vietnam after the war.

Nhan's husband Moc, (now Mark in America), was then just the boy next door who loved her. Because he had been in the army and fought with American troops, he was in danger of being jailed. Forced to flee the country he went to Nahn's work to take her with him, but she wasn't there. He searched for her but eventually had to leave. He wound up in Sydney, Australia where he worked as a carpenter and kept searching to find Nhan.

Nhan spent 19 days in a boat on the China Sea with no food and very little water. After many close calls with pirates (she had to cover her body in engine oil to avoid being raped) and other terrors, they made landfall in Thailand. Starving and dehydrated, she had to be carried off the boat and into a refugee camp. When she recovered, she found a letter from Moc waiting for her. When he got her response, he immediately sent her money, knowing she would not have been able to bring anything with her. Moc wanted her to join him in Australia but Nhan had found that her sister was in America and was determined to be close to family. She let Moc know that he still wasn't family — yet.

Able to read the bottom line, Moc came to America, married his childhood sweetheart and they had two boys. Nhan continued working and doing volunteer service in their community while Moc found work at a furniture manufacturer where he has worked for 28 years. The furniture shop recently went out of business so Moc is working at the

restaurant. Their two sons, ages 23 and 27, also pitch in to help.

Although Nhan has worked for the State of California Department of Employment Development for 20 years and is now a supervisor, when she first came to America she couldn't speak a word of English. She and her sister ate only ramen noodles for months but she refused to take welfare and continued to work at menial jobs and volunteer until she was able to get something better.

She sold goods at Deno's Market for years while she worked and studied to pass tests and exams and finally was hired to work at the State. She was able to use her college accountant training and started her climb up the ladder.

"Dawn the Dynamo" continues to do volunteer work and supports children in Africa as well as doing work with the Asian Community Center and other agencies. Before the restaurant opened, Nhan spent three months scrubbing and cleaning the kitchen and interior until it shined. When it finally passed her inspection, she began to train the cooks in her special Vietnamese dishes.

Nhan is especially fond of members of the LGBT community and supports our issues. She keeps Sarus open until 2 a.m. on Friday and Saturday nights so people leaving the downtown bars have a safe gathering place before heading home.

"They can have healthy, good, tasty food and get home safe," she says. "I love to introduce my culture and I'm so excited when I see these young people come in and order my food — Chinese or Vietnamese food — I give them the best of both worlds."

Leave your business card in the jar on your way in or out and it may get picked in a drawing that will get you a free lunch.

Starting a business, particularly a restaurant, in these economic times, is a big gamble. But Nhan has a dream — an American dream — and she's working hard to make it become a reality. However, there's one thing we disagree about. There is absolutely nothing — *nothing* — "ordinary" about this American lady. She truly is a dynamo!



Just An "Ordinary" American

BY M.R. COVINO
PHOTOS BY NATHAN FELDMAN





Agnostic Isn't a Dirty Word

BY JENIFFER WERTZ

It's scary to come out of the closet as an Agnostic, but I guess this is probably as safe of a crowd as any to come out to. For anyone who doesn't know what Agnostic means, it's really not the dirty word that it sounds like. The dictionary defines it as "One who believes that there is no proof of the existence of God, but does not deny the possibility that God exists."

So many people are so deeply convinced that they absolutely know their religious beliefs are correct, but all of the various religious beliefs cannot be correct, because many of the various religious groups' ideas directly conflict with each other. I tend to see things from a more logical perspective, and I believe the fact is, none of us really know — we are just looking for answers and something to believe in.

There are many things that make me skeptical of organized religion. I once had a friend tell me that I could be a good person and follow all of the Commandments, but I would burn in Hell for eternity if I did not believe in God. On the other hand she said, I could be a bad person and believe in God, and I would go to Heaven and live in peace and harmony. The reason why: "The Bible says so". I wondered to myself though, who wrote The Bible? Anyway, that's quite a scare tactic, which only served to make me suspicious. So many people seem to be religiously brainwashed though. I think out of fear in some ways, or possibly a need for something to provide guidance and the support and acceptance of others who believe the same things we do.

Hypocrisy deserves to be called into question. Various religions preach things like acceptance, peace, and ethical values, but at the same time promote things like oppression toward homosexuals and others, engagement in religious wars, child molestation and/or polygamy as a way of life, etc. There are the mega-churches making so much money that they appear to be driven by profit, acting like wealthy corporations rather than genuine faith-based organizations. There is the Catholic Church,

which is riddled with pedophilia and cover-ups, not to mention their lack of belief in birth control and reputation for male chauvinism. Churches claim non-profit tax exemption, and then throw money behind political candidates. Some seem to have gone as far as to have apparent goals of taking over the World through militant force. I could go on forever pointing out the obvious flaws in some of the ideals that are being promoted in the name of religion.

All of that said, at times I find myself feeling comfort in the idea that there is a God. In times of sadness or fear, the idea that there is a God out there somewhere looking over me makes me feel some relief. I pray from time to time, to myself, out of hope that maybe there is someone there listening. When something goes well, sometimes I feel thankful to God. I try to live by the "Golden Rule" in how I treat others, and follow the "Commandments" for the most part, but I tend to think in terms of Karma rather than The Bible.

But, when I look out into the sky and wonder where it ends, and where it started, the only answer I can come up with is ... that I don't know, probably never will, and I find it hard to believe that anyone else does know for sure. I do not mean to criticize anyone that does truly believe in God. On the contrary, I am happy for them. I only wish that those that do believe in God, Buddha, Allah, or whatever, could recognize the right of others to believe what they believe as well.

I would like to see all of the insistence, hypocrisy, and oppression in the name of religion end. I would like to see a true separation between Church and State. Freedom of religion is a fundamental right, but we also all need to recognize the rights of others who do not believe what we would like them to. Wouldn't having harmony among all people no matter what they believe be like ... Heaven?

Send comments or questions to womensvoices@momguesswhat.com.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR WOMEN

- Adventure Out Women: Business networking, social activities, special events and recreational adventures throughout California year-round. adventureoutwomen.com
- Lesbian Cancer Support: Meets third Monday of each month at 6:30pm. Bring partners or support people with you. ROXANNE1040@aol.com
- Rainbow Womyn (Sac.): Online social group for Womyn. groups.msn.com/RainbowWomynofSacramentoCA
- Sac NOW: Feminist news, actions, and opportunities. Meets monthly on the 3rd Thurs., 7pm, at the Hart Senior Center at 915 27th Street (27th & J St.). sacnow.org
- Sacto Girls: Lesbian social group for women in the Sacramento and surrounding areas. members.aol.com/sactogirls/index.html
- Sisters of Scots Women's Motorcycle Club (SOSWMC): A tightknit sisterhood on women motorcycle riders who plan social events and raise funds for various charities. SOSWMC@hotmail.com, soswmc.org
- Sac. Area Lesbian Health Resource Guide: A guide to help lesbians in the greater Sac. area identify and obtain services from providers who are sensitive to the needs of lesbian, bi and trans women. saclesbianhealth.com
- Single Lesbians of Sac.: A community of single lesbians in the Sac. area interested in meeting other lesbians for the purpose of dating. groups.msn.com/SingleLesbiansofSacramento
- Women On Wednesdays: Social discussion/activity group meets each Weds. at the Gay & Lesbian Center, 1927 L St. 7-9pm. Open to lesbian, bi and trans women. saccenter.org
- Womyn Over the Rainbow: A group open to lesbian womyn over the age of 40 for the purpose of building friendship. groups.msn.com/WomynOverTheRainbow



SALLY SHEKLOW, AWARD-WINNING WRITER, PLIES HER CRAFT IN EUGENE, OREGON.

Fragile Bread: One Writer's Humble Homage To Gertrude Stein

An acrid smell hits first. A jarring, jostling, jolt. At home alone my nose picks up the odd aroma. Sharp and foul.

I scowl.

Dedication at my work station. I must resist distraction to gain satisfaction from my current exercise. This exercise to utilize, like certain spices, literary devices, to better tone and hone my writing style. All the while this morning's trial is to use alliteration, repetition, and a well-timed rhyme to set a certain rhythm to my work. My work is to write, to get it right, so I ignore this early morning warning of some distant senseless scent. I'm too busy for a tizzy.

My domestic partner not in the house, no one to grouse to, no friend to send on an investigation into this odd olfactory sensation. I need this morning moment to work at forming words, unhurried, unworried about the whirling world beyond my desk. Words I craft to fill a need, to feed readers who are hungry for recognition, for a spark of ignition

into action. I offer in my meager monthly column but a fraction of reparations long overdue for lack of reflection of queer lives, dear lives, too long ignored by the hordes.

Distracted from my task I ask, why the acrid air? The brain a sleepy question mark gropes drowsy dark synapses, as time elapses, to draw meaning from the odd aroma. What the hell? What's that smell?

Yes, yes, the brain confesses, a memory of buttered toast. Toaster oven set on high to melt cold pats upon my morning bread. Bread too fragile to withstand hard yellow squares too stiff to spread. Spread on bread placed in oven to soften, to relax, to be rendered spreadable. Edible. Placed and left, as I undeftly struggle with my task.

Acrid scent now brings me there. Into the kitchen where smoke is in the air. The brain, this moment sane enough to grab a hot pad first. A burn would only make worse this error. This error of timing, of judgment, of home economics. Nothing comic. Judgment out the

window. Like so much smoke.

Smoke clouds billow past the window sill. Bright orange flames leap out the toaster oven door. It's a fire. Fire! Flames leap higher. Put it out! No one to shout to. I huff then thrust one strong gust. My breath only a fan to the flames. No longer ignored, I reach toward the socket to unplug the cord. Flames oddly soft against my arm. No harm. The same as the game finger-through-the-candle-flame. Unplug. Some relief. But brief.

Now, what? An activist must act. Face the fact that I need water. Water sitting pretty in the Brita pitcher from last night's dinner might not be enough. Tough. Splash. Then crack.

Hot glass bursts, hurls black shards, scatters hot wet blackened charred bits. The water sizzles. Then sits. That's it. The fire is out. Doused. Two black slabs now soaked, forlorn, lie there exposed, in charcoal repose. When crafting prose, I suppose I should follow my nose.

I am not sure exactly when Jesus became "hip", but lately I am inundated with phrases such as "Jesus is my homeboy" and "WWJD" plastered on the front of t-shirts. Some have gone as far as to wear designs with the savior flipping the bird. Which makes me wonder, have we gone too far? Is it really cool to throw an F-bomb together with the face of such a sacred soul?

I am a spiritual being and I do believe in God, as I have witnessed far too many instances that could constitute tiny miracles in my life. What I don't "believe" in is organized religion. It is the ultimate weapon used to separate human beings from one another — moreso than racism.

I understand why organized religion has become such a turn off for so many people, as it has been often used to suppress and abuse those who are different or believe differently. Religions have been used as organized fronts for groups of people who usually believe that the rules that they have set forth or claim to have interpreted from Holy Scripture should be followed above all others.

Throughout history, many religious people have committed atrocities against others, disguised in robes and claiming righteousness in the name of one religion or another. As far as I know, Jesus never attended any Church, nor did he flip anyone off. However, according to biblical teachings Jesus did walk into a church and call the leaders hypocrites. Jesus did not preach

in a church, but instead went to those who were seeking salvation. Jesus taught us to "love thy neighbor". The concept seems so simple, yet so far from attainment even today — or perhaps especially today. If we were simply kind to one another, the rest of the commandments would fall into place and we wouldn't need further instruction.

To be nice to one another is not as easy as it sounds, especially with all the assholes we are surrounded by ... kidding! In fact, that is why we love Jesus so much, because he recognizes our human condition and his heart knows that we struggle with not so much the theory, but the act of kindness.

Jesus knows we are flawed, he doesn't expect perfection, whereas many organized religions demand, order, and preach to such high — and often wrong — standards that the ideologies are impossible to attain for most human beings.

Jesus wants us to attempt to be good, and when we fall from grace, recognize this and keep on trying. Jesus did not separate people into categories. He went out to everyone and especially those seeking hope. He instilled faith into our hearts by promising salvation and everlasting life for those who not only believe, but apply that faith through good deeds.

Faith is something you believe in even when you cannot see, feel or touch it. You certainly cannot prove faith, just as you cannot prove love. Yet we do believe in love. We know when love is present; it is

something that you know in your heart.

You can attempt to explain it to another, yet you cannot allow anyone access to share what it is you are feeling inside. You cannot see my soul, only what my personality reflects on the outside. One can "feel" a certain way and yet react in another. I may "love" you, but my actions may not always show you that fact. So when you believe that I love you, it is based upon "faith". God is love and I have faith in that love.

"Within every man is his own temple," The Lord says. I believe it is what you carry in your heart and how you treat others that makes the difference in the world. I have faith that when I am doing good deeds that the Lord is smiling down at me, whether anyone else sees this or not. I am certainly far from perfect, and have and will continue to go through the trials and tribulations of life. I will embarrass myself; feel shame, jealousy, greed, and cause others harm.

But I hope — and yes I do pray — that I can tip the balance with a life full of goodness and kindness towards others. Even if He is not watching and there is no promise to be fulfilled, it will not change my attitude toward my treatment of others, for my reward is in the knowledge that I have had a peaceful heart and I will sleep easy when that day arrives. Or perhaps I'll dance! After all, Jesus is my homeboy.

Send comments or questions to womensvoices@momguesswhat.com.



BY NIKKI

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BY MICHAEL R. GORMAN

Thoughts on the Annual PantheaCon Conference

It was a transformation worthy of the old Celtic lore that tells of men and women lost and wandering in faerie land and infused with the magical seduction of the world behind the mists. Where usually men and women in business suites are found walking between the cocktail bar and the color-coded PowerPoint presentations on corporate profits and tax liability, there were instead men and women and children dressed in magical robes and carrying wands and staves, wearing wreaths in their hair and torcs around their necks, and hurrying off to workshops with such names as "Practical Shapeshifting" and "History of the Tree of Life: Babylon to Modern Judaism" and "Heathery For Families" and "Pagan Prayer Beads For Fun and Profit!" The PantheaCon Conference had come again to the Doubletree Hotel in San Jose, California, transforming the hotel into a kind of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry for adults. On the cover of the program for the conference was a drawing of the sexy European God of the Greenwood, Cernunnos, the Stag Horned God of the Forest, protector of the natural world and bestower of fertility, a God much in need in these times of global warming. For four days in the middle of February the hotel was filled with workshops and Celtic music and dancing and drumming and processing, and flamboyant rituals and after-parties featuring Absinth and Mead and unabashed celebration of all things Pagan and natural, including enough intimate celebrations of sensuality to fill any ancient fertility festival.

There were vendors in the marketplace selling jewelry, books, clothing, ritual tools, psychic readings, massage, gems and minerals, henna tattoos, and crafts found nowhere else in such quantity and variety.

Despite the fun and frivolity that was in abundant supply, there were also the lectures and workshops presented by some of the best neo-Pagan scholars in the world, teaching everything from archeology to new schools of earth philosophy to green living to anthropological re-examination of ancient Celtic Europe, to women's spirituality in the troubled regions of the Middle East. Leading authors gave talks and signed books. Writers networked with publisher and musicians with producers. Creativity and out of the box thinking permeated the conference rooms and cafes, and even the staff of the hotel engaged in lively discussions of alternative religious belief and the ways that they connected to their own ancestors. There was the hotel clerk who tentatively brought out a bag of stones given to her by her Philippino grandmother for her protection, handing the sacred and previously secret gift to the Druid who had just asked for a new room key so that he could explain to her the significance of the stones her grandmother chose to give to her before she died. There are few things more wonderfully unique than hearing a polite uniformed bell hop politely say, "Yes Ma'am" to a woman wearing a pointed hat and a pentacle necklace and carrying a ritual staff. Equally jarring and fabulous was the hospitality clerk offering a baggage cart to the Native American man struggling with his many drums.

Druids and Witches and Goddesses oh my! PantheaCon is a yearly celebration of the many earth-centered spiritual paths that gather under the general heading of Neo-Paganism, modern men and women returning to the earth honoring ways of their ancestors around the world. (The word Pagan, by the way, was originally not at all pejorative and comes from the Latin word "Paganus" which means "country dweller.") PantheaCon, sponsored by the Ancient Ways Magical Store in Berkeley is the largest gathering of its kind, drawing practitioners from around the world to teach workshops, perform, network, celebrate rituals, sign books, and generally leave the mundane world of the muggles behind for four days. The staff of the hotel has come to love this most unique conference, because the atmosphere is such fun, the people are so friendly and open, and because the constant parade of magically dressed people leaves no time for waxing conventional. It becomes the norm to see a group of witches in the foyer performing a drill with brooms and comical marching chants that satirize and skewer conventional society, all in outrageous fun.

PantheaCon is a weekend when people of all shades and sexualities come together to celebrate their common earth-centered heritage. A group of Druids performs an annual ritual infused with the arts. The Orisha folks draw from their African heritage to honor the spirits of their ancestors and their African deities. The Witches cast circles and welcome others to join their European celebrations of earth, air, fire, water, and spirit. And one of the must-attend events of the conference is the LGBT sponsored ritual that celebrates same gender love, and non-

same gender love in a raucous and powerful ritual of bridge building, social commentary, satire, and sexy fun.

This year's LGBT ritual was centered around deities from around the world who were/are androgynous, hermaphroditic, gay, lesbian, or bi. Each deity was represented by actor/ritualists speaking and acting as that deity. A very queeny Dionysus led the ritual, constantly making sardonic comments and haughtily introducing his "family" of alternatively loving divine relatives. There was the wonderful woman-man with dreadlocks who was painted green from head to foot, whose beautiful breasts hung over the green phallus protruding out of a small grass skirt which was her/his only clothing. He/she teased the folks attending about our fears of the genders between the genders. There was Athena who talked about her many lovers, male and female, as she pulled three folks from the crowd, spoke to them as lovers as she stripped them, and then led us all in a lyrical chant of "You are so beautiful" to which the naked ones sang back, "I am so beautiful" as others quietly traced the curves of their bodies with long stemmed roses. The large bodied woman among the three was weeping and could hardly whisper out the "I am so beautiful" at first, but as the chanting of those gathered intensified and strengthened her, she began to stand tall, lift her breasts to the sky and sing with a strong voice, "I am so beautiful!" Later in the ritual a magnificently handsome Pan strutted out to describe the love he has for men and women both as he touched and teased the men and women in the front row speaking in a poetic narrative of sacred sexuality. The folks in the front row (actually the inner circle in the characteristically Pagan ritual in the round) had been warned before the ritual began that the Gods and Goddesses might just sit on their laps or stoke their hair or splash them with libations if they sat in that front/inner row of chairs, at which point a number of gay and straight men moved from the back rows to the front. Pagans aren't shy!

Although that ritual began with a purely same-gender focus, the words and music and visuals began to grow in both intensity and intricacy until the ceremony enveloped and celebrated everyone in the room and every sexuality, gender, body, and spirit. Those who attended spoke of being breathless at the magnitude of the ritual and it's embrace. Once again, the two-spirits showed themselves to be incredible shamans and walkers between the worlds.

Everywhere during the weekend was the central symbol of the earth paths, the all embracing circle. There were women only events and men only events, not so much because of exclusion but rather for the joy of focused energy that celebrated all things feminine or all things masculine, but in the coffee shop, in most events, and in the hallways and the parties and the workshops, all came together again to marvel at the joy of deep spiritual exploration in all its manifest forms. In the Doubletree Hotel for those four days, such things as judgment, sexism, homophobia, and religious intolerance were relegated to the distant status of a fading dream. For one magnificent, magical span of time, we were a village, a tribe, a sacred people in all our incredible diversity.

This is the MGW issue that examines religion and spirituality. I will start right off by saying all religion is the enemy of humanity, especially the Abrahamic religions, i.e., Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The Abrahamic religions are even more dangerous to those of us who happen to be gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, invert, or questioning because there is no doubt the Old Testament and the Koran call for our deaths.

As many readers know I am a graduate of the Baptist Bible College (BBC)* where I attended school with the late Jerry Falwell and I am a former licensed minister with the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC) and for those of you who do not know, I no longer consider myself a Christian.

*Author's note: When I founded the MCC congregation in Des Moines, Iowa in 1974 the Des Moines Register ran a front page story about the BBC demand that I return my diploma because I was gay. But that is another story.

As young theologian at BBC we were taught very little about the origin of the Bible, only that it was the inerrant word of God, even down to the Authorized King James translation.

We were not taught how church councils voted on what was to be included in the book we call the Holy Bible nor did we talk much about the differences between the Authorized King James Version and the Douay Version recognized by the Roman Catholic Church. We were not told how "The Revelation of Saint John the Divine," the last book of the New Testament which records the Last Days, made it into the collection by one vote.

Nor were we taught that most of the stories in the Bible were actually tales Jewish writers (Dr. Luke was the only non-Jewish writer in the canon we call the Scripture) who lifted them from Egypt and other civilizations surrounding Israel. We were not told that the 10 Commandments and the 622 Laws of Moses were lifted from the likes of the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi and the Code of Ur-Nammu.

I don't think the average adherents of the Abrahamic religions have taken the time to learn these facts about the laws of their religion.

Having been raised as a Christian Fundamentalist it took me many years of study to peel away all the garbage I had been taught and to understand Christianity was a copycat religion with very little original in its teaching and content.

It took many years to understand no historical proof exists to verify the man portrayed as Jesus ever lived but it is evident he is a compilation of many "saviors" who were portrayed in religions of the Middle East regions of the Mediterranean, who died for "Man's sins."

For instance take a look at these stories from the regional religions:

THE EGYPTIAN GOD HORUS:

Was born in a cave although descended from royalty as an only begotten virgin-born son of a deity whose birth was announced by angels and heralded by a bright star in the sky. He was baptized by a man who was beheaded. He performed miracles such as healing the

sick, walking on water and raising the dead. He was crucified, laid in a tomb, descended into Hell, and his resurrection was announced by women. He is to have a 1000 year reign.

THE PERSIAN GOD MITHRA:

Who was worshiped more than 600 years before the alleged birth of Jesus and whose story includes all of the above Horus myths. In fact, the Vatican is built on a site on which sat a temple dedicated to the worship of Mithra.

Horus, Mithra, and later, Jesus, were called the Light of the World, the Good Shepherd, the Way, the Truth and the Light, Redeemer and Savior, and many similar appellations.

All three traveled with 12 male companions.

And these are just a few of many illustrations from ancient religions that correspond to the story of Jesus and Christianity.

I will not bore you with the horror stories of death and destruction the major world religions, Abrahamic, Buddhist, and Hindu, have caused for millennia right up to the writing of this column and which, unfortunately may continue for future millennia.

We Americans pride ourselves on being independent and questioning authority and I think we do that quite a bit except when it comes to religion. We attend our churches, synagogues or temples and sit quietly and listen unquestioningly to everything the cleric says. We open our spiritual mouths wide and say yum, yum, to whatever he/she spoons out.

We rarely question the inconsistencies found in the Bible where we have a God who authored a commandment against murder but demands human sacrifice to satisfy it when its rules are broken.

We rarely think about a God who is attributed to be omnipotent but does not seem to be able to "save" some of its human creation, which is supposed to be its image, from a burning hell. An omnipotent God would be unable to lose any of its creation or otherwise it is not omnipotent.

And every time Christians sing "Holy, Holy, Holy," do they ever think the "God in Three Persons" thing is just a little schizophrenic?

I am not saying these things to belittle anybody's belief but hopefully to start some of the readers' gray matter stirring a little.

In this country, thank you, we have the ideas planted by Roger Williams and Thomas Jefferson which James Madison codified in the First Amendment of the Constitution to guarantee every citizen freedom of/from religion.

Madison also further wrote into the Sixth Article of the Constitution there should be NO religious test to hold public office.

I found it most alarming during this last election cycle the candidates for the top office of the land submitted themselves to what amounted to a "religious test" by appearing at the Saddleback Community Church to be questioned about matters of faith by homophobic pastor Rick Warren on national TV.

It is nothing new that religious folk want to get their religious beliefs enacted into law. They have done it many times with little effort

like getting "In God We Trust," inscribed on our coins during the Civil War or in the 1930s when they brought us Prohibition, or the 1950s when they injected "under God" into the Pledge of Allegiance.

Prohibition gave us the problem of organized crime, a problem we still have with us seventy-seven years after the end of this "noble experiment," which legislated one group's religious beliefs into public policy.

Biblically sanctioned slavery as a public policy has given us the convoluted issues of racism which endure to this day.

Life would be so much more pleasant for us g/lbt folk if we were not constantly forced to justify our existence to the adherents of the Abrahamic religions nor to those who are supposed to be of the "progressive" persuasion.

In this 21st century one would hope the stranglehold of religion would begin to wane. Thankfully there is a growing number of people who are beginning to come out of the closet as non-theists. Several books concerning non-theism recently have been on the best seller list.

The profound philosophy found in "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" should be enough for all humanity.

Here are several groups that try to stimulate thinking toward a natural/humanist point of view:

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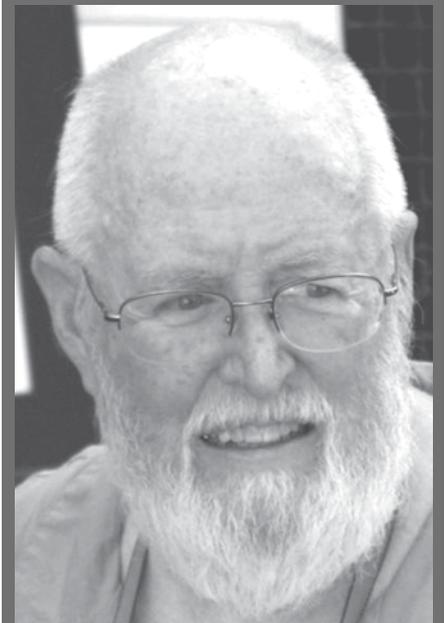
- ATHEISTS & OTHER FREETHINKERS OF SACRAMENTO (WWW.AOFOFFLINE.ORG)
- HUMANISTS OF THE GREATER SACRAMENTO AREA (WWW.HAGSA.ORG)
- SACRAMENTO FREETHINKERS, ATHEISTS & NONBELIEVERS (WWW.MEETUP.COM/SACFAN)
- THE BRIGHTS (WWW.THE-BRIGHTS@THE-BRIGHTS.NET)

NATIONAL

- CENTER FOR INQUIRY (WWW.CENTERFORINQUIRY.NET)
- FREEDOM FROM RELIGION FOUNDATION (WWW.FFRF.ORG)

ONLINE

- PAGAN ORIGINS OF THE CHRIST MYTH (WWW.POCM.INFO) (WHYWONTGODHEALAMPUTEES.COM)



BY JERRY SLOAN

Religion Is The Enemy of Humanity

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Scrumptious, a silly word that reminds me of my childhood. It's normally one of the first "big" words you learn and when you learn it, you say it over and over as it sounds so funny rolling off your tongue. It's the word I would use when my mom would give me the cake mixer beaters to lick clean after she made homemade cake frosting. It's the word I would use when my Granny prepared a batch of chocolate pudding that she poured into those pastel colored Tupperware bowls. It's such a descriptive word and one you will be using over and over as you spoon the many different desserts into your mouth from Rick's Dessert Diner.

From either direction on K Street you can't miss Rick's Dessert Diner. It's a glowing pink single story building on the south side of the street with a warm and welcoming façade. To get to the front door you have to go through a fenced off outdoor dining area full of chrome tables and chairs. In the winter months as you pass through this outdoor dining area, you will yearn

for the warm weather so that you can take advantage of the area, the sun, and the aromas that escape from the restaurant each time the door is opened.

The entire restaurant is very reminiscent of a diner that existed way before chain restaurants with their frozen desserts and frozen prepared foods. Bright colors, Deco style front door, neon lights, a clock over the entrance, everything you would expect to see if you were going to a Diner and the year was 1950.

Each time the door swings open as you approach the Diner, you get a smell of sugar heaven. This delectable smell is sure to put Diabetics into a coma! You enter into a brightly lit room and come face to face with a refrigerated case full of 20 plus desserts. Look them over, but wait, go around the corner to the register and you are now faced with an additional 20 plus desserts. The choices are endless and each one appears better than the last. The restaurant has been #1 on many lists in the Sacramento region since 1986. Not #2, always #1. There is a reason.

I frequent this place often and have made my friends tag along. After the first visit, they are converts and insist on going. Once you taste one of the desserts here, you too will be a convert. Each dessert is made fresh daily only using the finest quality ingredients. The recipes for all the deserts have been handed down to the owner, Ahmed Eita by the grandmothers of

the original owners. Ahmed is the current owner and primary Pastry Chef. He takes great pride in what he presents to his guests. Not a single item is made in advance. Cakes, pies, tarts, cheesecakes, mousse tarts, brownies, and cookies are made daily.

The names alone of the over 285 plus desserts will make you salivate. Coconut cake, Chocolate Fudge Torte, Death by Chocolate cake, German Chocolate Cake, Lemon/Lime Poppy Seed Diva cake, White Chocolate Strawberry Champagne cake, Berry Bombe', Nut Berry Torte, Tiramisu, German Chocolate Tart, Lemon Blueberry White Chocolate Tart, Chocolate Marble Grand Marnier cheesecake, Turtle Cheesecake, Blackout cheesecake, Walnut pie, Apple pie, Apple Green Tomatoes pie, Apple pie with double crust, Key lime pie, Chocolate Peanut Butter Cream pie, the list goes on and on and I could use the entire column to list only half of the offerings. Carrot cake is their number one seller and is outstanding. Trust me.

As you can tell, I am partial to anything Chocolate. On my last visit my sweet daughter Lauren and I shared the Death by Chocolate tall cake. Ahmed says that his tall cake is 8" tall, but when you see these colossal masterpieces in the case, you swear they are 12" plus (or maybe that is just the gay man in me). Anyway, this huge mound of cake was outstanding. I still remember it. The frosting sheer perfection. The cake moist and delicious. Combined together they create the most perfect pairing around, that is until you see the German Chocolate cake, or maybe the Lemon cake, and then there is the

.... This place has desserts down. They follow my simple rules for life. K.I.S.S. Keep It Simple Stupid! They know desserts and they do them right. There is no other food here. Desserts, they have it nailed so why expand on perfection?

Along with desserts they have plenty of beverages to compliment your dessert of choice.. Coffee, espresso, lattes, Italian sodas, milk, teas, and milkshakes keep your mouth wet so you can savor that extra bite of your dessert.

There is not a lot of room in the diner, maybe 5 booths and a dozen or so stools around the front of the window so you can look out onto K Street on our stormy days. There is one large table in the front that seats maybe five of your closest friends. I recommend ordering 3 or 4 different desserts and play "pass that dessert over here". This way you get to experience something different. With 285 desserts you would have to frequent this place over and over to taste each one, and while not a bad idea, sharing with your friends and loved ones is always so much more fun.

Rick's Dessert Diner makes custom cakes for special occasions including birthdays, showers, anniversaries, graduations, and weddings. Give them a call a few days in advance to place your order, or better yet, go to Rick's and sample their tasty offerings before you decide on what to order. While this is going to be fun, trust me it's going to be a real challenge as everything they make is truly scrumptious!

REVIEW BY ROBERT APPLIGATE
PHOTO BY NATHAN FELDMAN

Rick's Dessert Diner

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Wow, what a month so far! This month has been a busy month for me and I enjoy being busy. This month I hosted the "King & Queen Of Hearts" Contest at Club 21 on Feb. 8 and what a great turn out it was!

There were ten contestants who competed and the winner for "King" was Gary Moore, "Ms." was Royal Essence, "Queen" was Mahle and the winner for "Stud King" was DW. All contestants were fabulous in the talent and evening wear competitions and I applaude everyone one of them for stepping out in front of the panel of judges.

It was a great night with a good amount



of money raised for charity and I just wanted to thank everyone who helped out that night — even the drunk doorman. Ha ha!

After the "King & Queen" contest everyone headed over to FACES for the infamous "Dragalicious" show where I had the winners of the contest perform to showcase the event people who didn't attend that these fabulous people were winners!

This month I also stepped foot into church. Yes, I said church! I decided to go be more in touch with God. I was born and raised Catholic, but when I got older I lost my faith and a lot of my love for God. I have decided to reconnect with my faith and love for God.

Sunday morning I got up and went to the A Church For All, located at 721 North B St. in Sacramento (See their ad on page 38). The pastor was Rev. Dorthea Williams and she made me feel so welcome.

I remember church being very boring and going with my family I had to hide my sexuality and guard the way that I looked or acted in church. At A Church For All, I could be who I want to be and that is fantastic! I rejoiced in the hymns the choir was singing and I could feel my soul being lifted. Of course, going to church one time isn't going to cleanse this sinner (wink) — but I will be attending every week from now on.

How many of you have been watching "RuPaul's Drag Race" on LOGO on Monday nights? I love it! I could kick myself in the ass for not trying to be on this show when they were casting it months ago on MySpace. Oh well, maybe next time.

A friend of mine "Jade" who I used to work with while I lived in Chicago is on the show and is doing very well. She's survived three weeks so far. This past Monday I started hosting "RuPaul's Drag Race" at FACES in the front bar with Absolute Vodka.

The Absolute boys come out and we view the show in the front bar and have drink specials all night.

The first showing was fabulous and I was surprised there were quite a few people who came out in the rain to come watch it. Even the editor of MGW, Matthew Burlingame, was out and took a "porno" pic with me (below left). Bartenders were in drag for the promotion and even Large Marge made a reappearance! (see pictures on page 10). Wow they were some lovely booties — I mean beauties!

It was great to see Marge out and about again. That old gal still looks flawless, but don't tell her because it will go to her head.

I will be hosting the show every Monday night at 9 p.m. and again at 10:30 p.m. until a winner gets crowned. So make sure you come on out on out and have some fun with us on Monday nights!

Also don't forget to come out to see Sacramento's fiercest drag show "Dragalicious" on Sunday nights at 9 p.m.

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CONFESSIONS OF A SHOPAHOLIC THE INTERNATIONAL

Swanner: Once again, there are so many good things coming out that Brian and I had to see different movies this week. Brian saw the new Clive Owen movie *The International* while I went to see *Confessions of a Shopaholic*. Brian got to spend two hours with sexy Owen, but I got to see the better movie. *Confessions of a Shopaholic* was such a cute show and you know how I love my romantic comedies! Isla Fisher plays Rebecca Bloomwood, a young woman who pretty much can't walk pass a store without buying something. She works as a journalist who is trying to work her way up the corporate ladder from a finance magazine to a fashion rag.

Judd: Who can trust you anymore? You go see any rom-com and it automatically starts at three stars. In fact, I'm willing to bet our readers don't even read what you have to say when it comes to romantic comedy reviews, they just read my insults. You're fat. In the meantime, while I won't say you saw the better movie, it couldn't have been much worse than *The International* starring the adequate-looking Clive Owens and the ever-forgettable Naomi Watts. The movie is a routine good cop/bad cop duo trying to bust an arms dealing international bank.

Swanner: Did he take off his shirt at all? Any movie is worth seeing if Clive takes off his clothes. Was this one as bad as *Children of Men*? Mine was really fun. Isla Fisher was cute and funny in movies like *Wedding Crashers* and *Definitely Maybe* where she played a supporting role, but here she is the lead and the whole movie centers around her. She has nothing to worry about, this should open well and make her a bona fide movie star. You'd probably like her love interest Hugh Dancy. He's cute enough, but he's too skinny ... just the way you like 'em.

Judd: I don't remember if Clive took off his shirt, he does nothing for me. My movie was not fun in the least. It suffered from a meandering plot, huge inconsistencies, and a wholly unsatisfying ending. Every character in the movie, except for Clive's was superfluous. Even the bad guy turned out to be pointless. Watts' character disappeared in the last quarter of the movie. The only thing worth seeing in the movie was a gun fight in The Guggenheim. Hugh Dancy looks like a young Tom Everett Scott. I approve.

Swanner: I figured you would. If I see a guy and think "he needs a sandwich" I figure you would approve. He was good, but the movie really belongs to Fisher. It was funny and never took itself too seriously. The one thing I think you would hate is that it never goes too far as they wanted to keep the PG rating. It was a good film for young girls — like myself — who need to learn the lessons of life. We learn that "you shouldn't buy it if you can't afford it". Which has always been my motto. That and "he needs a sandwich".

Judd: Oh, God, a PG rom-com? Not even PG-13? That is just plain sad. *The International* was rated R for violence, but that didn't help it any. I would not recommend *The International* even as a rental, and even though I didn't see *Shopaholic*, I wouldn't recommend it to anyone, either.

Swanner: *Confessions of a Shopaholic*

was a bit cliché but what rom-com isn't? It was really funny and there were good performances all around. It moved well and the script was great.

Confessions of a Shopaholic 3 stars
The International: 1 star

NEW IN TOWN

Swanner: This week I saw two new movies and I'm beginning to think Brian may be right. (Words I never thought I'd say.) The first movie I saw was *New in Town*, a romantic comedy with Rene Zellweger and Harry Connick Jr. After seeing the lame ass preview I went in expecting the worst but what I got was a charming little comedy. Last night I saw *Paul Blart: Mall Cop*, another



slapstick comedy about a fat loser that finally becomes a hero — and instead of hating it, I liked it. It was funny ... it was rated PG. What has happened to me? When they first teamed Brian and I up, it was because I was the harsh critic. I was the "subtitle" movie guy. This week someone asked me if I saw any of the nominees for the best foreign language films and I told them, "I don't read movies".

Judd: Is it dementia? At your age, it could be dementia.

Swanner: They were both good. I liked *New in Town* better. It's the story of a company downsizing their Minnesota plant and Zellweger is the executive sent to put the plant back in order and of course she falls in love with the town and the people and can't stand to see anyone lose their jobs. *Paul Blart* is more of a silly comedy about a lovable loser who saves the Mall on Black Friday (the busiest shopping day of the year). I must tell you that Kevin James is a looker and that's not to say Harry Connick, Jr. is any slacker. I read other reviews on both these

movies and everyone hated them. Apparently I am now Jeffrey Lyons of Sacramento ... I like everything.

Judd: You just implied that Kevin James is better looking than Harry Connick. It's dementia!

Swanner: I was promoting Kevin James' looks since most people make fun of fatties. I was trying to make him feel better. Still, with that being said I wouldn't say one was better looking than the other. I'm sure that you couldn't even consider a larger man ... because you're a self-loathing fatty yourself. I really did like that they gave the town in *New in Town* a "Capra" feel and I thought the romance progressed nicely without being forced. Some people will say it's all been done before, and it has, but what romantic comedy is truly original? It's the

path we travel to the end that makes our time special and I had a good time with this film. *Paul Blart's* romance in the film is pretty forgettable but that's not what this movie is about. Here we have a physical comedy with a medium sized conflict and a crowd pleasing performance for Kevin James. Without James you'd have no movie. I think this should prove his bankability and give him a shot at better films.

Judd: I would never consider a larger man because fat-on-fat love is an abomination.

Swanner: Only in your book, Hater. *New in Town* is a simple sweet romantic comedy with good performances and some very funny scenes. *Paul Blart: Mall Cop* is a PG film that is comedy for the whole family that should make Kevin James a real movie star. There are better movies out there, but if you end up seeing one of these you won't be disappointed.

New in Town: 2 1/2 stars
Paul Blart: Mall Cop: 2 stars

Advice From a Shrinking Fat Man

As every fat person knows, there is a dark, dank, terrible place we all may sometimes find ourselves in. A place of pain, of agony, of blood, of hot sweat and cold tears where we suffer and struggle to pay for our sins.

This place is called "The Gym".

I joined the gym partially because I'm trying to lose weight and, to be honest, because I'm a gay man and they threatened to take away my toaster if I didn't. The thin or the merely-chubby may never grasp the horrors that a gym holds for the truly fat, like myself. Not only do we have to go there to huff, puff, sweat, get dizzy, wheeze, chafe and occasionally vomit, but we have to do it in front of an entire room of fit people grinning at us while we do it.

"What is HE doing here," Muffy and Buffy whisper as I wonder if I'm having a heart attack on the life cycle, "I'd never be caught DEAD looking like that at a gym!" Ah,

yes, the dubiously named "life cycle", the stationary bike for those who like to recline like Cleopatra while working out. I, for one, have never felt more alive than when I'm pumping my chubby little legs furiously and not actually moving anywhere while staring at Fox news or, preferably, a bare wall.

Not yet being a peak physical specimen I chose to go with a straight gym, for now. Straight gyms are considerably more kind to their more "substantial" customers than their gay cousins. Well ... to be honest, I've never actually been to a gay gym, but I've heard the stories. Well, not HEARD, exactly, but read them in articles that usually start with the lines "Dear editor, I never thought this would happen to me..." While there's a lot less eye candy for me in a straight steam room at least I don't need to bring along latex and three flavors of lube. It's much more economical, really.

Like every newbie lost in the gym, I'm likely to hurt myself on the equipment if left alone for any length of time. I consider myself brighter than the average bear (no offense to our Silverlake readers), but let's face it — with my fitness record over the past 30 years I'm more likely to accidentally fall into a three way with Brad Pitt and Johnny

Depp than actually use one of the Nautilus machines correctly.

The first trainer they introduced me to was Grimhilde. She was a former marine drill sergeant with spiked hair you could cut glass on, a no nonsense attitude, and a physique that would make most of the American Gladiators say "oh, now, that's a bit much, don't you think?" I strongly suspected she wasn't working at the gay gyms because they, like me, were scared of her. Still, I must say she seemed like a lovely person, and I'm not just saying that because she has access to my address. Since Grimhilde and I didn't hit it off, though, the gym assigned me a new trainer: Johnny Angel.

No, really. Let's pause to digest this. Johnny Angel. I saw his driver's license. Apparently personal trainers buy their names from the same places as porn stars and 50's rock ballad personalities.

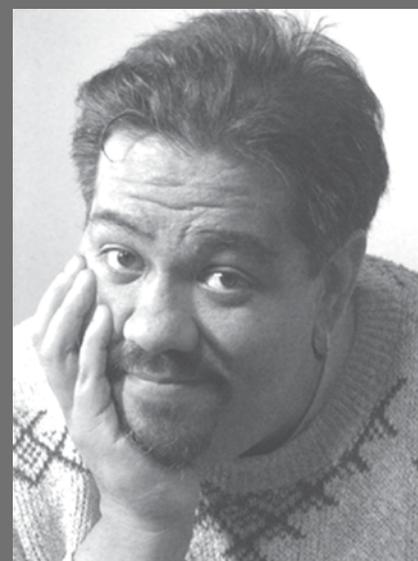
Johnny Angel is soft spoken, has a shy smile, dark eyes that twinkle beneath a mop of wavy black hair, a killer physique and perfect stubble that he apparently had surgically transplanted from Don Johnson's face from the mid-80s. He reminded me a lot of all the beautiful, athletic people I knew in high school. Needless to say, I hated him instantly and prepared for him to throw me in a locker. Johnny Angel then proceeded to lead me through a series of strange, medieval torture devices which he promised me would work on a series of muscles that he assures me I have somewhere. Then the workout began.

Have any of you noticed that your ability to count seems to go down proportionately to how fit you are? You can always see this in aerobics instructors and anyone counting your reps when lifting weights. "And 4 more ... 3 more ... 2 more ... 12 more..." If gyms allowed people to beat math skills into their trainers, they might sell a lot more memberships. And baseball bats.

Move 6 weeks forward and tune into the present. I'm still going to the gym, I've lost 27 more pounds since joining, and I can go longer than I ever thought was possible on the elliptical machine without dying. Johnny Angel is now a solid ally in my weight loss rather than a reminder of all the people who helped me become the size I am now. Sure, he still throws me in the locker now and then, but sometimes he's even willing to admit he knows me in front of the other trainers.

My favorite thing, though, is that I've been there long enough to see other people, like me, setting foot into this fat person's purgatory and start working towards a healthier, happier self. Knowing what it was like for me, I can take the machine behind them while they pump their little legs and jiggle like crazy on the dreaded life cycle. I can glare at Muffy and Buffy until they go away and start dishing on the juice bar attendant. But most importantly I smile at this new person with their hopes for a better future, and I nod at them with respect as they walk on by. Sometimes that's all it takes to keep trying.

**ADVICE: WEAR FLIP-FLOPS.
THAT PUDDLE IS PROBABLY NOT WATER.**



HUMORIST AND SATIRIST DONALD E. MARSHALL IS A 35-YEAR-OLD GAY MAN LIVING IN HOLLYWOOD, CA WHO RECENTLY MADE SOME CHANGES IN HIS LIFE. OVER THE PAST YEAR, HE'S LOST 130 POUNDS BETWEEN DIETING, EXERCISE AND GASTRIC BYPASS SURGERY. HIS LIFE IS CHANGING QUICKLY, AS IS THE WORLD I LIVE IN. THE LOCAL ALL YOU CAN EAT CHINESE BUFFET HAS GONE OUT OF BUSINESS. TRAINERS AT THE GYM NO LONGER HIDE UNDER THE DESK WHEN HE WALKS BY AND HE'S EXPLORING THE WHOLE NEW WORLD OF FASHION, DESPITE THE PROTESTS OF LOCAL SALESGIRLS. BEST OF ALL, HE'S LOVING LIFE IN A WAY HE HAVEN'T IN YEARS!

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TIP #1 "SCHEDULING YOUR EXERCISE". WHEN MAKING AN APPOINTMENT TO EXERCISE, WRITE IT DOWN. THE STRUCTURE OF MAKING AN APPOINTMENT SERVES AS A COMMITMENT. A STRUCTURED EXERCISE PROGRAM MAKES FOLLOW-THROUGH EASIER AND IS ONE OF THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF DISCIPLINE. THE FIRST STEP IS TO SET A TIME TO EXERCISE, WRITE IT DOWN, AND FOLLOW-THROUGH. SOMETIMES IT'S AS SIMPLE AS THAT. THINK ABOUT IT — OR BETTER YET, SCHEDULE YOUR EXERCISE NOW AND FOLLOW UP WITH NEXT ISSUE'S TOPIC OF "BE CONSISTENT".

FEEL FREE TO CONTACT MICHAEL A. COOK, AT 916-813-9009 WITH QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS. MICHAEL IS A 15-YEAR CERTIFIED PERSONAL FITNESS TRAINER AND OWNER OF FITNESS-HAPPENS.COM AND THE EAST SACRAMENTO TRAINING STUDIO.





SONYA COX HAS BEEN MGW'S HIV/AIDS EDITOR SINCE 1986 (22 YEARS). SHE BEGAN AT MGW AS A VOLUNTEER PROOFREADER BEFORE BEGINNING THE HIV NEWSWIRE COLUMN. SHE ALSO BEGAN THE "IN LOVING MEMORY" COLUMN IN EARLY 1993 (15 YEARS AGO). THE JUNE 1993 COLUMN CONTAINED 6 NAMES; JUNE 2008 CONTAINED 77. THE ENTIRE YEAR'S LIST NOW CONTAINS OVER 1000 NAMES—MOST BEING DEATHS FROM HIV.

BREAKING BARRIERS: PROVIDES A WIDE RANGE OF SERVICES FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV. 2200 21ST ST., 916-447-2437, BREAKINGBARRIERS-SACRAMENTO.ORG

CAPITAL CITY AIDS FUND: RAISES MONEY FOR HIV/AIDS SERVICES IN THE SAC. AREA. CAPCITYAIDSFUND.ORG

CARES: HIV/AIDS HEALTH CLINIC, OUTREACH, EDUCATION AND PREVENTION. FREE, RAPID HIV TESTING M-F 9AM TO 5PM. 1500 21ST ST., 916-443-3299 CARESCLINIC.ORG

GOLDEN RULE SERVICES: A MINORITY BASED ORGANIZATION THAT RESOLVES HEALTH, EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE DISPARITIES IN PEOPLE OF COLOR. 4433 FLORIN ROAD, SUITE 760. 916-427-GOLD, GOLDENRULES.INFO

NORCAL AIDS CHALLENGE: (MAY 15-18, 2009) A 4-DAY, 330 MILE BIKE RIDE TO RAISE FUNDS AND AWARENESS FOR HIV/AIDS NORCALAIDSCHALLENGE.NET

SACRAMENTO VALLEY AIDS RUN/WALK: SEPT. 916-448-1110, SACVALLEYAIDSRUNWALK.ORG

SAC. VALLEY POZABILITIES: HIV+ SOCIAL GROUP. SACVALLEYPOZABILITIES@YAHOO.COM, PO BOX 161871, SACRAMENTO, CA 95816-1871

SIERRA HOPE: PROVIDES SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH HIV & AIDS. SIERRA HOPE, 1168 BOOSTER WAY, P.O. BOX 159, ANGELS CAMP, CA, 95222, 209.736.6792, SIERRAHOPE.ORG

SUNBURST PROJECTS: PROVIDING SUPPORT TO FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS. 1025 19TH STREET, SUITE 1A, 916-440-0889, SUNBURSTPROJECTS.ORG

CASTRO TB SCARE CLEARED...

In January, health officials found that a Castro bartender and several neighborhood bar patrons had TB, and set out to screen all Castro bar workers. The results of the screening, says San Francisco's Dept of Public Health, show no additional cases, and a clean bill of health for all.

PRISON CONDOMS — A GOOD IDEA IS WORKING ...

The condom-access program at the California State Prison in Vacaville is going smoothly after a year, prison officials say. Concerns that condoms would be used as weapons or as a hiding place for drugs have not come to pass. The Governor approved the pilot program because the HIV rate among inmates is five times higher than that of the general population, and it costs about \$25,000 a year to provide medical care to each HIV-positive inmate, while the provision of condoms costs a fraction of that.

The condoms are dispensed through seven machines throughout the prison, and prisoners are allowed one package at a time. The Center for Health Justice is funding the pilot program and purchased the condom machines, which are re-stocked once a week.

PALIN PUTS CONSIGNMENT STORES IN TOUGH SPOT ...

An Alaska consignment shop was forced to change its name after Gov. Sarah Palin announced the boutique's name during the discussions last year about the price of the clothes she wore during the campaign. The Out of the Closet shop in Anchorage was served a cease-and-desist letter by the Los Angeles-based chain of HIV thrift stores with the same (trademarked) name.

A spokesman for the AIDS Healthcare Foundation, the owner and operator of the Out of the Closet thrift store chain, said if it weren't for Palin's interview, the duplicate name issue would probably have never been brought to light. But, he said, "We've invested a lot of time, energy and money branding Out of the Closet, tied specifically to our HIV/AIDS mission to provide care and advocacy regardless of a person's ability to pay." The Alaska shop owner, he added, "was very gracious and agreed to change the name of her store." It's now called Second Run.

The shop owner said Palin has since sent her a note that "apologized for all the flak we took, so that was really thoughtful of her." While it's not clear what became of the \$150,000 wardrobe purchased by Republican contributors for Palin and her family, the AIDS Healthcare Foundation says that if the campaign duds haven't been distributed yet, the charity would be happy to take them.

FDA APPROVAL SOUGHT FOR NEW DRUG ...

Johnson & Johnson is requesting full Food & Drug Administration approval of its HIV drug Intelence, a non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NNRTI) designed for people who have stopped responding to other treatments. The drug already has preliminary approval under FDA's accelerated approval program, allowing the company to market it.

In order to gain full approval, FDA will require the company to supply follow-up data on the drug's effectiveness. According to data submitted so far, 60 percent of those taking Intelence for four months had undetectable HIV levels in their blood, compared with 39 percent of those taking a placebo.

BAD ECONOMY LEADS TO UPTURN IN CONDOM SALES...

One of the results of more people staying home as they watch their finances is a surge in condom sales. Condom sales increased by 5 percent in the fourth quarter of 2008, and by 6 percent in January, compared to the same time periods the previous year.

In addition, more couples are using condoms to avoid unintended pregnancies. The vice president for Trojans noted that, "in a down economy those costs are even more burdensome to bear."

Marketing of condoms is up as well. A LifeStyles spokesperson said their company is "trying to determine what kind of products and marketing strategies we can come out with that will help people during these recessionary times." Durex recently put free condom samples in newspapers and is making more coupon offers available on its Web site.

WHILE YOU'RE WAITING...

People waiting in the emergency room at one Illinois hospital are routinely offered free HIV tests, and most say yes to screening. More than 5,000 people have been tested since the program began last May. The hospital received a grant from the Centers for Disease Control because it's in an area with a high HIV prevalence.

Fewer than 20 percent of those who are approached decline to take the oral HIV test, said the HIV coordinator for the Southeast Side hospital's emergency department. "We don't wait for patients to come to us," she said. "Instead, our health educators go to each person awaiting treatment and provide them with a wealth of information -- everything from how the virus is spread, to who is at risk, to what they need to know about the test." Testing is done in a private area and is offered to anyone ages 14-64. Results are available in 20 minutes, she added.

RESEARCHER WANTS HEP B SHOTS FOR BABIES ...

A Canadian researcher is calling for that country to adopt universal hepatitis B immunizations for infants, based on a new

analysis of studies that indicate a vaccination program for infants has been successful. And the chairman the Canadian Liver Foundation said chronic hepatitis B affects about 300,000 Canadians. Although seventh-graders are routinely vaccinated in Ontario, infants are not.

Many people, said the researchers, mistakenly believe that hepatitis B is transmitted only to infants during pregnancy and to adults via injected drugs or unprotected sex. However, children can contract hepatitis B in other ways -- for instance, the virus can be transmitted from an infected person's saliva if they kiss a child on a cut.

Additionally, children have a much more difficult time recovering from hepatitis B infection, with as many as 90 percent having it for the rest of their lives, said the scientists. This increases their risk of complications, such as liver failure and liver cancer, and can result in a more complex treatment regimen should the person later become infected with HIV.

PROGRESS IN CONSERVATIVE STATES ...

***Last month, government officials in Georgia indicated that, even if the federal government's stance were to reject Bush's abstinence-only philosophy and begin to lean toward comprehensive sex education for students (teaching safe sex together with abstinence), they were determined to keep the abstinence-only programs going on their own. This month, however, one Georgia county school board announced it is ending its long-standing policy of offering abstinence-only sex education, and has adopted two new programs that will be in place beginning with the upcoming school year.

Clark County, Georgia, says that "Great Body Shop," which begins in kindergarten, includes information on expressing affection, relationships, and how germs are spread. By fifth grade, the curriculum will discuss anatomy and puberty. In middle school, topics will include the effectiveness of contraception and condoms in preventing pregnancy and STDs. The lessons will continue to stress abstinence from sex. Parents will retain the right to opt their children out of the classes.

***In Utah, one brave legislator has introduced a bill that would allow state educators to teach about birth control options "without fear of reprimand." Rep. Lynn Hemingway says, "It is very difficult to do something like this, but if nobody tries, nothing will ever get done."

Current Utah Office of Education rules allow educators to instruct students about contraception, but with the stipulation that teachers should not "advocate or encourage the use of contraceptive methods or devices." The bill proposed eliminates this restriction. While it's clear to all that complete abstinence is the only certain way not to become pregnant or acquire an STD, birth control options should be explained, said the legislator.

Planned Parent of Utah noted, "Research shows the majority of Utah's high school students become sexually active before graduation, but they aren't making healthy and responsible decisions." The result is that "we're seeing an increase in sexually



transmitted diseases in young people and an increase in teenage pregnancies.”

***In Alaska, Bristol Palin, teenage daughter of conservative governor Sarah Palin, told Fox News, in her first interview since giving birth to a baby boy in December, that teaching abstinence in an effort to avoid disease or pregnancy is “not realistic at all.”

FLORIDA SENIORS RE-FOCUS ON SAFE SEX ...

In 2005, 15 percent of all new HIV/AIDS diagnoses were among people age 50 and older, according to CDC, and the many retirees in Florida are among those targeted to receive information about STD risks and the realities of unprotected sex among seniors.

Warming up the audience at a recent seminar was a guest from the Miami Zoo, who presented candid photos of various animals having carnal knowledge of one another, which elicited laughter. “We’re from the old school. You never talked about sex. It’s taboo,” said one 85-year-old gentleman from North Miami Beach. “It’s more wide open now – it’s good.”

A Miami psychiatrist spoke with the group about sexuality and aging. The group also watched a 12-minute video which featured “Morty” and “Ethel,” two senior characters made of clay who find romance and then consider having sex. Neither, however, has thought about the need for condoms. Ethel tells a friend over the phone, “I just read an article about infectious diseases, STDs and all that stuff – I read that the number of seniors with STDs is increasing.”

IN LOVING MEMORY OF FRIENDS LOST IN MARCH

MARCH 1987:
TED VAN MEETER

MARCH 1988:
CYRIL TOMASKO

MARCH 1989:
GARY DEE CARAWAY

MARCH 1990:
KENT MCGEACHY
DAVID BERNT
STEVEN HEAD
LARRY PORTER
RAYMOND AVELS
THOMAS MARVILL III
TERRY DUARTE

MARCH 1991:
SEAN MCGINNIS
FRANK CREAM
JOHN GENTILE
CLINT HOCKENBERRY
VINCENT BLADES

MARCH 1992:
JOHN HILLERNS

DANNY BUHLER

MARCH 1993:
ERNIE MADERO
RONNIE GASSON
FREDDIE VARGAS
MARTY ARLIN
MICHAEL GREELY
ADAM CROY
RICHARD STEWART
RANDY HOPPER

MARCH 1994:
PAUL SILVA
DANIEL PATRICK
O'SHAUGHNESSEY
KENNY HOFF
JERRY F.
MILES FREEMAN
ROD MARZAN, JR.
MANUEL J. TORRES

MARCH 1995:
ROBERT DICKSON
GORDON STEPHENS
SCOTT (SKEETER) LINN
PAUL SHEPHERD

PHOENIX
SCOTT BELL
RANDY BOWERS
GARY VISMARA
BEN GOLDSTEIN
MIKE NEWMAN
EUGENE (GENE) REYNOLDS

MARCH 1996:
JAKE STEUBLE
JIM MAXWELL
STEVEN SWART
MARC DEAN POSTMA
BILL MYERS
TERRY BRADFORD
BOB WILLIAMS
JAMES KENNEDY
RANDY WHIDDEN
DAVID SPADA
PABLO SOTO
WILBUR J.
TIM BUTTERFIELD
TRACY “TOD” DUSTMAN
JIMMY WATTS
RICHARD FOUGERE
RAND LAURENT
ALBERT C.

JORGE RAMIR BACA
CHUCK MUNTS III

MARCH 1997:
ALEX MEJIA
KAY CHRISTIAN
DON LAMBERT

MARCH 1998:
RALPH MCCLAIN
MICHAEL LINDEY

MARCH 1999:
LEONARD RILEY
WALTER CAVALIER

MARCH 2001:
CURTIS HALTERMAN
GLORIA SLOAN (MOTHER
LAMBDA)

MARCH 2003:
MICHAEL KIMBRELL
RANDY HALTER
MIKE LEMON (SAF)

MARCH 2004:
JOE THOMPSON

MARCH 2005:
MACK LAWSON

MARCH 2006:
LEE SCARBOROUGH

MARCH 2007:
BOB HATTOY

YEAR UNKNOWN:
GENE DEVINE
BUCKLEY FRANCIS
GENE FREEMAN
STEVE GIBBS
TERRI HANNA

IF WE ARE TO WEAR THIS MOURNING CLOAK, LET IT BE MADE OF THE FABRIC OF LOVE,
AND WOVEN BY THE FINE THREAD OF MEMORY.

TO ADD THE NAMES OF LOVED ONES TO MGW'S REMEMBRANCE COLUMN, OR CLARIFY YEAR UNKNOWN, CALL 737-0309.



An Artistic Vision Quest

There is a moment of critical decision that faces every artist of any kind at some time in his mature years, a moment that affects the legacy of that artist, and very often also affects such temporal issues as income and reputation. It is the time when a creative person experiences a profound change in thinking and understanding, a time of soul searching and transition that marks a person questing for enlightenment, and that births a surge of personal growth. Everyone agrees in the abstract that growth is good, wisdom is a worthy goal, and change is healthy, but that sentiment often clouds a bit, becomes murky, if that artist has gained fame and fortune based on an older understanding of the world and now wishes his art to reflect both his history and a new and broader understanding, a new direction. From the patronized artists of the Renaissance to the best-selling authors of today, weaving a new thread into a comfortable reputation

butts up against the surety of financial and critical success born of a revered body of work already established. It's the same phenomenon that makes an audience at a concert reject the "new sound" of a favorite band or singer. We want our artists to remain fresh and vital and provocative . . . sort of.

Some performers flaunt the changes, or even manufacture them. (Think Madonna.) Others run from change into the secure arms of the tried and true . . . and the profitable. The truly great artists, the artists with the most integrity and courage and vision, simply surge ahead with the same enthusiasm to speak their truth as they had when they started as unknowns. Such an artist is Kurt Edward Fishback.

Fishback has a heritage of creativity as the son of photographer Glen Fishback. He grew up in the fertile artistic community of Northern California in the 1940s and 50s. Photographer Edward Weston was a good friend of his father's and the source of Kurt's middle name. Ansel Adams was no stranger to the Fishback home, and he shared that honor with many talented artists and photographers of the time. Young Kurt grew up in this atmosphere of creative California bohemia, and though he would later gain fame as an artistic portrait photographer, his initial artistic focus was sculpture.

He began his formal training at Sacramento City College, and also studied at The San Francisco Art Institute and the University of California, Davis. He began photographing sculptors he worked with in school as a kind of photographic journal of his studies, and ten years later when he went to teach at his father's school, The Glen Fishback School of Photography, he began to expand his photographic images of artists and others, a change of focus that led to fame as a photographic artist and chronicler of the arts crowd with whom he grew up. That fame continued with a one man exhibit at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and put him in the permanent collection of the Crocker Museum and in public and private collections around the world.

No one could accuse Kurt Fishback of being static or conventional. From teaching at an all Black college in North Carolina, to teaching at the college of the Siskiyou in Weed California, to becoming an instructor at his father's school of photography, to running a commercial photographic studio, to a five year stint in Utah, Kurt's journey has been a peripatetic one that might have left a lesser artist fragmented in his vision, but he cherished and nurtured each thread of his weaving, undaunted by what others might consider too many colored strands, too much diversity. This skill would become even more integral to his life and work in later years.

As for his art, Fishback's early work in sculpture was whimsical in temperament, colorful, and abstract, yet seductive as well, and imbued with a kind of satiric edge that cautions the viewers to not be so quick to find comfort in the abstract shapes before them, like children's fairy tales with archetypal rumblings below the anthropomorphic fun. Some images, like the ropes tying the earth in place below the cloudy sky in the piece called "Earth Bound" or the house inside a pie crust in "Home Made Pie" or the kid's alphabet building blocks arrayed across a road in "Road Block" might elicit a chuckle at

the initial pun, but upon further observation create a dissonance not so easily dismissed. In some of his work, like the brown gauze covered form in "Mummified Cloud" present the dissonance more directly. "Mummified Cloud" is an early work, but in this age of global warming, it might just be more powerful now than it ever was. His drawings during this time carried the same sensibility, though perhaps in more muted tones.

Kurt's photographic portraiture is a veritable pantheon of artistic genius of the past fifty years or so, but these are not images of fickle, manipulative, or angry gods. His lens reveals a familial bond in his revered subjects that most people can only feel vicariously in the works created by the likes of Ansel Adams, Fred Dalkey, Robert Maplethorpe, Julia Couzens, Annie Murphy-Robinson, Stan Padilla, and so many others. In a Fishback photographic portrait, the art and the artist converge into a beloved relative you want to sit with and whose stories you want to hear, or rather, see. The artists themselves become art.

Examples of Fishback's work can be seen on his web site at fishbackphotography.com.

Of all the stages of Fishback's artistic life, the photographic period is the one with which most people are familiar. These portraits define him in the minds of many. Indeed the skill and brilliance of the images seem to be the culmination of his years of training and experience, a body of work the likes of which any artist would be proud. These might have been, in a lesser man, the deserved laurels upon which to sit for the duration. Kurt is rightfully proud of his extensive body of work, but he is not at all ready to finish the journey. You see it in the sparkle of his eyes when he speaks of the possibilities yet to come. The surety of age and the excitement of youth are side by side there in his artist's eye.

Fame has a way of locking an artist into the kind of work for which he gained fame. Life has a way of shaking up such surety. Three years ago his beloved wife and companion for decades passed away. As so often happens when tragedy strikes, Kurt began to ask some of the big questions about meaning and the realm of spirit and his place in the world given what he knew and where he had been. How was he to weave such a profound loss into his life and art? He had always been drawn to the nature based spirituality of Native Americans, and his healing journey took him to places associated with those ancient paths. At one such place he met the woman, Cassie, who would become his second wife.

As with a Native seeker on a vision quest, Fishback was no casual observer of the ancient beliefs and philosophy, but rather an active participant who requested to whomever might be listening to be given a fuller vision of his identity and his direction. He dreamed one night of a Miwok woman who called herself Two Crows Woman, and she told him that in another incarnation he had been her brother, a Miwok known as He Who Wanders Well. It was then that the crow and the crow's larger cousin the raven began to find their way into his artwork. Both Crow and Raven are seen in many indigenous cultures to be guardians and messengers between the world of the living and the world of the dead. The Raven quickly became the central symbol for Kurt of the

need to integrate in his art and his life, an understanding of the relationship between life and death, joy and sorrow, light and shadow. It was then also that the inclusiveness of the circle began to displace the line as a symbol of his own belief and philosophy. A third element, the quest, the journey, also became central to his new and deeper understanding of his place in the world.

As Kurt's newfound spiritual exploration began to inform his art, he circled back around to his artistic roots in the colorful and abstract, but with elements of the representational as well. He found himself using the circular form of the mandala to express the quest he was on, the circle being a symbol of the nature of life in almost all early agrarian cultures.

"The last three years have been a journey back to wholeness," Fishback explains. What better image of that wholeness than the circle?

Not everyone in the arts understood the transformation in Fishback. As he put it: "When you do 250 portraits of artists over 30 years that becomes who you are to the public. They don't know you for anything else, and that's been difficult."

But the seeds of this growth were always there inside him waiting for the spring rain that follows winter to quicken them into sprouting.

"I've always been willing to change and shift."

By way of example, he explained that he was offered a studio in Manhattan in 1968 as a grad student in sculpture, and a chance to be introduced to major players in the art world, and though he knew it was a great compliment and an incredible opportunity, something didn't feel right, so he came back to UC Davis to try and find out what it meant. Looking back, Kurt can see so much that led him to this stage in his life, and though the implications of his decisions, like not staying in New York, were hidden at the time. Looking back, he can see the elegance of the pathways that led him to today.

In our conversation about his past work and his present passion, Kurt revealed that the Smithsonian National Museum has requested his old photographic negatives and the papers associated with his work, now that digital photography has replaced most film photography. The museum wants to guarantee that this behind the scenes process that led to his great works will be preserved.

Although he was honored by the national museum's interest in his "papers," Kurt pondered whether accepting The Smithsonian invitation would be tantamount to accepting his art as history and the doorway to a comfortable and settled retirement, but as we talked, writer to artist, and both with a vision of the circle and the cycles of life, he realized that shedding of the autumnal leaves may be an ending, but it also clears room for beginnings in new growth of springtimes still ahead, and while the leaves of yesterday crumble and fade into the soil, or are pressed, framed, and stored in a museum vault, they are reborn as the sustenance of the bright new leaves of vernal inspiration. Perhaps the letting go of remnants of the past might be the best avenue toward truly incorporating them into something new. That is the promise of a life

that honors all of the seasons of the year, and all of the seasons of our lives. Would that the baby boom generations had more such artists. They have much to teach us about the joy and promise of our mature years, about the weaving together of wisdom and vision that is possible only after decades of living with eyes wide open.

As for the new art that is erupting from Fishback's three years of transformation: his "Nature Spirit Mandalas" are visual mantras, as simple as a child's kaleidoscope image, as profound and luminescent as a high church stained glass window, as intricate as a Celtic knot. His "Raven Mandalas" are all of this and more. These are not the ravens of a biology textbook, but rather the Raven of a shaman's dreamscape. These are the totem birds of the ancients, spinning at the threshold of life and death, darkness and light. These are the dream weavers. These are the carrion birds who pick away at the bones of our linear consciousness then take wing into the great circle of life. Always the circle.

These new visions are no departure from the Kurt Fishback whom so many have come to know, admire, and love through one or another season of his art making. These are the weavings of a mature artist who knows that, while media and imagery may change, nothing is lost in the ever-changing landscape of a journey well traveled, only transformed, only brought back around to the beginnings and at the same time imbued with the greater consciousness born of the journey. In the vibrant color, abstract whimsy, and searching consciousness of Kurt Fishback's early sculptural work, a careful observer can see foreshadowing of his recent work — work that has spiraled back around in his own personal circle of life, back to his beginnings yet somehow greater, higher in the spiral of his growth as a man and as an artist. Any child who has sat at the knee of a beloved grandparent knows that whimsy and wisdom are wonderfully compatible, two sides of a single, shining, gold coin of elderhood. And when they meet in the great circle that is life, then magic is afoot. And what is art if not magic?

This writer would encourage all lovers of art to find a show of Kurt Fishback's newest work. Check his web site for dates. Go. Observe. Remember. One day critics and academics will look back and see the magnificence of Kurt Fishback's Raven Years, or Circle Years, and ask, "How did he know? Where did he find the vision?" And you will be able to say, "Yes, I was there. Many who were uncomfortable with change were skeptical, but I had the joy of seeing at its inception a visionary growth of a great American artist. For a moment I flew in the spiraling flight of the Raven, and I knew that the journey into today would be good."

And for Kurt Fishback, the here and now is a new territory that should be exciting to anyone familiar with his past work. Those who have known him before will best appreciate the new dimensions to his art. Those who are just meeting him will have layer upon layer to explore and enjoy, works of technical maturity yet sparked with excitement as if he were newly graduated from art school. The man is a vibrant testament to life and art forever renewed.

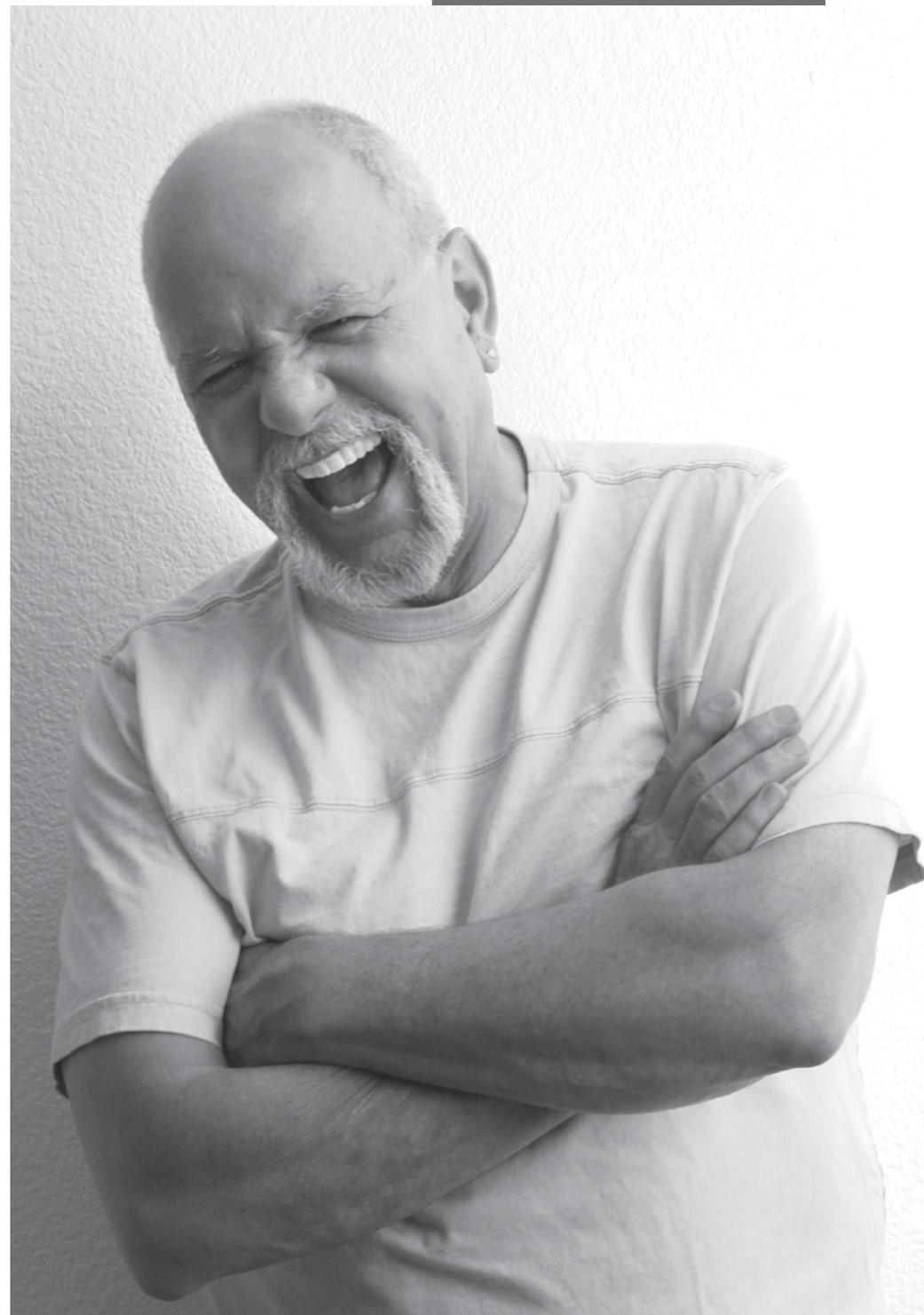
The lovers of art who truly understand the artistic process as it is played out over

an artist's lifetime are the people who leave their favorite artists free to move into new artistic territory. The rest will find themselves slapping their foreheads years after the visionary artist is gone. No artist ever loses anything of his soul and passion by reinventing his medium or exploring new styles and subjects. The careful observer, the wise observer of a Kurt Fishback Raven Mandala can see in the colorful depths of the work a profound history that a casual observer never has the privilege of experiencing. Look into the shining eyes of the Raven, that most enigmatic, archetypal creature flying between the world of light and dark, embodying chiaroscuro even among the bright leaves of autumn, and you will find there a love of artists photographed that stretches over a lifetime of love for art and its practitioners. You will see a soul unwilling to accept any limitations to his passion to see, even the limitations of his own success. You will find Kurt Fishback.

The New Work of Kurt Edward Fishback

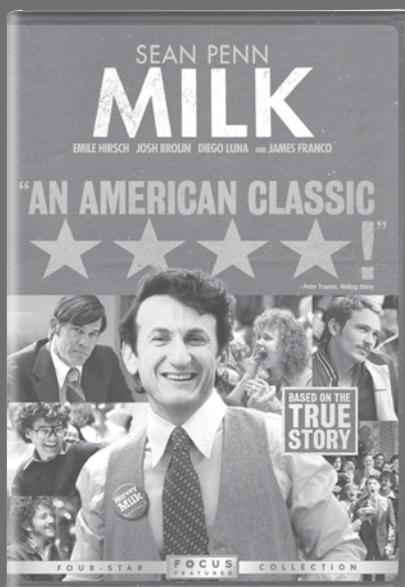
BY MICHAEL R. GORMAN

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Milk



Based on the powerful and inspirational true story, Harvey Milk — a true man of the people — was a fighter for human rights and a hero for all Americans. Oscar® winner Sean Penn (*Mystic River*) and an all-star cast including Josh Brolin (*W, No Country for Old Men*), Emile Hirsch (*Into the Wild*), Diego Luna (*Y tu mamá también*) and James Franco (*Spiderman* trilogy) star in this remarkable and triumphant story of an ordinary man whose life changed history and whose courage changed lives.

Nominated for eight Academy Awards® including Best Picture, Best Director (Gus Van Sant), Best Actor (Sean Penn), Best Supporting Actor (Josh Brolin), Best Original Screenplay (Dustin Lance Black), Best Costume Design (Danny Glicker), Best Film Editor (Elliot Graham), and Best Original Score (Danny Elfman). Over 200 critics rave — “One of the year’s best pictures!”

Academy Award® winner Sean Penn stars in this stirring celebration of Harvey Milk, a true man of the people. Based on the inspiring true story of the first openly gay man elected to major public office, this compelling film follows Milk’s powerful journey to inspire hope for equal rights during one of the least tolerant times of our nation’s history. With a stunning ensemble cast, it’s the emotionally charged story that was proclaimed the winner of the New York Film Critics Circle Best Picture Award!

The DVD will feature: Deleted scenes, Remembering Harvey: Film clips and photos from the set of Milk illustrate stories and reflections from people close to Harvey: Cleve Jones, Daniel Nicoletta, Frank Robinson, Carol Ruth Silver, Anne Kronenberg and Allan Baird. Hollywood Comes To San Francisco: Cast and crew discuss the development of the script, making of the film and share stories from the set.

Marching For Equality: People on hand for the shooting of the march sequences (including Gilbert Baker, Cleve Jones, and Daniel Nicoletta) discuss the shoot and remember the marches of the 1970s.

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Rick & Steve Complete Second Season

The Happiest Gay Couple In All The World Return this March! LOGO, the nation’s leading 24/7 channel and source of entertainment for the LGBT audience, and Paramount Home Entertainment will release *Rick & Steve: The Complete Second Season* on DVD. The happiest gay couple in all the world is back with all eight episodes from the sophomore season of this delightfully sweet and cleverly raunchy hit animated series. The DVD also contains brand new special features including bonus shorts, cast

interviews, and more!

In Season One you met Rick, the brainy bottom, Steve, the brawny top, and the other citizens of West Lahunga Beach. Season 2 begins with pregnant lesbian Dana still in labor with Rick’s baby, Dixie. During the eight hilarious and hectic episodes of Rick and Steve’s second season, you’ll see inside Steve’s Trick Box, tag along on a gay parody of *The Wizard of Oz*, discover San Francisco’s secret Straight Underground and come face-to-face with the terror of Lesbian Bed Death.

As Rick and Steve deal with overprotective parents, lesbian gangs, and Christmas, the questions remain: Can gays and lesbians ever get along? Who is really Dixie’s father? And why do weird things happen whenever she’s around?

Created, written and directed by Q. Allan Brocka, *Rick & Steve: The Happiest Gay Couple in All the World* hit LOGO in the summer of 2007 and was an instant success. The original animated series stars the voice talent of Wilson Cruz (“Noah’s Arc,” *He’s Just Not That Into You*), Alan Cumming (*X-Men 2*, *Reefer Madness: The Movie Musical*), Peter Paige (“*Queer as Folk*”) and Will Matthews (“*Punk’d*”). Special season two guest stars include Mark Hamill (*Star Wars*), comedian Margaret Cho and many more!

LOGO is the world’s leading ad-supported cable, satellite, online, mobile and digital entertainment network for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) audience, from MTV Networks, a unit of Viacom (NYSE: VIA, VIA.B). Launched in 2005, LOGO’s cable channel is in more than 35 million homes across the United States and is complemented by a federation of online properties, including LOGOonline.com, AfterEllen.com, AfterElton.com, 365gay.com, DowneLink.com and NewNowNext.com. LOGO’s content is distributed across all leading download-to-own, streaming and mobile services. The most influential brand for the most influential audience, LOGO provides a mix of original and acquired entertainment as well as news, social networking and community building that are authentic, smart, fun, entertaining, and inclusive. LOGO joins MTV Networks’ roster of popular and highly targeted brands, which include MTV, Comedy Central, VH1 and Spike TV.



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BY ERIN VON OHLSEN

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Proposition Freedom

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A recent article in the Sacramento News and Review talks about the churches support of Proposition 8. Although this is no surprise, its bitter reality still tends to shock me. The life my partner Victoria and I have created desires to contradict all forces opposed to love. This world we live in is jam-packed with systems that are opposed to consciousness.

Throughout history there seems to be a repetition of minority revolution. It is almost as if history itself is cyclical. Our view of time is linear, but I think we just go around in circles. From the discovery of the planet being round and not square, to each generation's patriarchy oppressing its minorities, it is only the face of those crying out for freedom that changes.

The power of the church that imposes itself on society is dominated by the patriarchy. Here is another repetitious pattern of control...one of the mind and spirit. From the wars fought on behalf of religion, to the burning of witches. From the take over of Native cultures by Christians, to the slavery of African Americans that can all be justified through biblical scripture. From the lack of women's rights to the lack of the rights afforded to Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender (GLBT) people, it is the influence of the church that perpetuates the oppression of the marginalized.

I believe the unconscious Christians in these places of power take their interpretation of biblical scripture and use it for control. Most of these churches are male dominated because they believe "this is what the bible says". Too often their goals are contradictory to love. By this I mean, acceptance, inclusion and connection. Instead, their focus is a fear-based, sin aware, law-abiding prison with little room for God. A true Christian understands that God is the lover and transformer of all that is...not the church.

The churches job is to love, to serve, and to reconcile people to God. It is God that does the rest. It is God that created GLBT's. Who are we to say that His creations aren't perfect? Humans have always tried to separate the good from the bad, but everything that is, belongs. Constricting the freedoms of those who differ from us is so outdated. Really, could we just learn from our history of mistakes, of oppression, of control, and of fear?

To the churches that stand for Proposition 8...wouldn't it be more biblical to let God have the control? Did you forget that our Creator gave us free will? To the Pastors that have studied in seminary, I too am a seminary student. How can we

possibly ignore all that is taught about interpretation, historical context and *the New Testament*?! Jesus did not say anything about homosexuality, let alone the covenant of marriage between two homosexuals in a committed relationship? The traditional church's stand on Prop 8 actually pushes GLBT's, along with many others, away from the knowledge of God's love. So what is the goal? Is the focus the love of God or the rigidity of religion? Didn't Jesus come to set us free? If so why not allow us be free to find our own way to the God of the universe.

Churches supporting Prop 8 as well as those who continue to oppress, demonstrate behaviors that contradict their message. The message of love is confounded by actions driven by fear; the promise of freedom is bound by the temptation to control; the hope of inclusion is dashed by the power of rejection. All of which results in an "us vs. them" mentality. This may be human nature; but, as I see it, it is not God's original plan. God's plan is for us to recognize each other as equals and likewise as loved. I believe most people's intentions are good, but pain and rejection have blinded us all in some form or another.

Most church's intentions stem from a passion and love for God. Yet it is their lack of consciousness about their true nature that continues the historical cycles of hurt and oppression. In the Bible, Jesus sends a warning to those who are blinded by their need for superiority...

"To those who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else," Jesus told this parable. "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed: God I thank you that I am not like the other men - robbers, evildoers, adulterers - or even like this tax collector. The tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his chest and said, "God have mercy on me, a sinner." Jesus said, "I tell you that this tax man, not the other, went home made right with God." -- Jesus Christ, The New Testament

We are all connected. It is human nature to divide and categorize due to a

need to feel superior. Being made in the image and likeness of God, we are all superior. Yet we are all inferior because we lack consciousness. That makes us all equal.

To any person opposed to marriage equality, I challenge you to truly seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit by listening to your hearts, by praying and by surrendering all your burdens to God. Contemplate the issue with the living God. Put God above the Bible and remember that it is an inspired work of God, but written by men. Jesus being both God and man evolved in His message of salvation when He included all people, not just the Jews. Gay and Lesbian people are the next group of people to be dropped from the "exclusion from salvation" list.

We all have characteristics of both God and humanity. It is our responsibility to discern whether or not we are acting out of God's love or our limited human understanding. In the Bible each prophet, as well as Jesus, had moments of awakening...of enlightenment where their beliefs and truths shifted. In each case the shift is interpreted as a closer alignment with the Spirit and will of God. We too must search for our own shift. If we are to fulfill the greatest commandment which is to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, minds, souls and strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves, we must follow this pattern. Search for enlightenment. Listen to the Spirit. Yield to the shift!



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What's happening with wild populations of cheetahs, the fastest land animals on Earth?

Due to its plight in recent decades, the cheetah, which can reach speeds of 70 miles per hour, is considered one of the world's most endangered species by the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

A hundred years ago some 100,000 wild cheetahs inhabited 44 or more countries throughout Africa and Asia. According to the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF), a Namibia-based non-profit organization, today the species exists in only two dozen of those countries—including areas of North Africa, the Sahel, East Africa and southern Africa—with worldwide population numbers now between 12,000 and 15,000 individuals living in small groups. In addition, about 150-200 of the fast cats live in the wild in Iran (where they are known as the Asiatic Cheetah), their forebears having been brought in from Africa in the early 20th century.

The chief threats to the cheetah's existence are loss of habitat, poaching and hunting (their hide and trophies can command top dollar), and getting shot by livestock farmers. Decline of gazelles, wildebeests, impalas and other preferred prey species (also due to hunting and habitat loss) is a factor, too.

According to CCF, throughout Africa cheetah numbers are dwindling even within protected wildlife reserves due to increased competition from other larger predators like lions and hyenas. As a result, most protected areas are unable to maintain viable cheetah populations, so individual cats tend to fan out beyond wildlife reserves, placing them in greater danger of conflict with humans. Those cheetahs that do survive in the wild come from a smaller, less diverse gene pool, leaving them susceptible to disease and predation in their own right. Furthermore, captive breeding has proven tricky, and wildlife biologists are not optimistic that such efforts can have a measurable positive impact on the cheetah's future.

Cheetahs have lean bodies, long legs, a large heart and expansive lungs. And with these features come additional speed; perhaps this is why the cheetah is often referred to as the "greyhound" of the cats. In fact, some say a cheetah looks like a "dog with a cat's head." But with weaker jaws and smaller teeth than other large predators, cheetahs have difficulty protecting their kills, let alone their own cubs. This has meant that population numbers for wild cheetahs are falling faster than for other big cats.

The cheetah's future may look dim, but conservationists have been working to lessen the decline in some areas. For instance, CCF began educating livestock farmers around Namibia in the early 1990s about how to prevent cheetahs from preying on their livestock without resorting to the rifle. As a result of these education efforts, along with stronger enforcement of endangered species and anti-poaching

laws, cheetah populations in that country stabilized—now some 2,500-3,000 cheetahs make their home in Namibia—after having fallen to half that the previous decade. Clearly more such efforts are needed.

Contacts: Cheetah Conservation Fund, cheetah.org; Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), cites.org.

Don't all these huge snow and ice storms across the country mean that the globe isn't really warming? I've never seen such a winter!

On the surface it certainly can appear that way. But just because some of us are suffering through a particularly cold and snowy winter doesn't refute the fact that the globe is warming as we continue to pump carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

According to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the 10 warmest years on record have occurred since 1997. And the National Atmospheric and Oceanographic Administration (NOAA) reports that recent decades have been the warmest since at least around 1000 AD, and that the warming we've seen since the late 19th century is unprecedented over the last 1,000 years.

"You can't tell much about the climate or where it's headed by focusing on a particularly frigid day, or season, or year, even," writes Eoin O'Carroll of the Christian Science Monitor. "It's all in the long-term trends," concurs Dr. Gavin Schmidt, a climatologist at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies.

Most scientists agree that we need to differentiate between weather and climate. The NOAA defines climate as the average of weather over at least a 30-year period. So periodic aberrations—like the harsh winter storms ravaging the Southeast and other parts of the country this winter—do not call the science of human-induced global warming into question.

The flip side of the question, of course, is whether global warming is at least partly to blame for especially harsh winter weather. As we pointed out in a recent EarthTalk column, warmer temperatures in the winter of 2006 caused Lake Erie to not freeze for the first time in its history. This actually led to increased snowfalls because more evaporating water from the lake was available for precipitation.

But while more extreme weather events of all kinds—from snowstorms to hurricanes to droughts—are likely side effects of a climate in transition, most scientists maintain that any year-to-year variation in weather cannot be linked directly to either a warming or cooling climate.

Even most global warming skeptics agree that a specific cold snap or freak storm doesn't have any bearing on whether or not the climate problem is real. One such skeptic, Jimmy Hogan of the Rational Environmentalist website writes, "If we are throwing out anecdotal evidence that refutes



global warming we must at the same time throw out anecdotal evidence that supports it." He cites environmental groups holding up Hurricane Katrina as proof of global warming as one example of the latter.

If nothing else, we should all keep in mind that every time we turn up the thermostat this winter to combat the cold, we are contributing to global warming by consuming more fossil fuel power. Until we can shift our economy over to greener energy sources, global warming will be a problem, regardless of how warm or cold it is outside.

Contacts: NASA, nasa.gov; NOAA, noaa.gov.

Earth Talk

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SACRAMENTO LGBT NON-PROFIT AND COMMUNITY SERVICE DIRECTORY



GAYSACRAMENTO.ORG



GAYSACRAMENTO.ORG IS AN ALL-INCLUSIVE, INTERACTIVE INFORMATION AND RESOURCE HUB FOR LGBT SACRAMENTO.

THE SITE OFFERS A SPRING BOARD TO ALL OTHER LGBT WEBSITES IN SACRAMENTO AND KEEPS OUR COMMUNITY INFORMED ON THE LATEST NEWS AND EVENTS AND WHERE TO FIND THE COMMUNITY RESOURCES THEY NEED.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS



ACTIVISM

Equality Action NOW, a Sacramento based grassroots organization dedicated to mobilizing concerned citizens to promote equality for all. Formed in the wake of Prop. 8 the group works to see that LGBT voices and concerns are represented in the larger community. 916.446.1082, equalityactionnow.org

BARS

Badlands Dance Bar: Mon - Sat 4pm to 2am, Sun 2pm to 2am, 2003 K St., 916.448.8790, sacbadlands.com

BoJangles: 18+, 1119 21st St. (Moving Next To Headhunters Soon)

Bolt Bar: Leather/Cowboy/Bear, Open 5pm-2am Mon - Fri, 2pm-2am Sat and Sun, 2560 Boxwood St., sacbolt.com

Club 21: 1119 21st St.

Depot Video Bar: 2001 K St., 916-441-6823, Mon - Fri 4pm - 2am, Sat and Sun 2pm - 2am, thedepot.net

FACES Nightclub: 2000 K St., 916-448-7798, faces.net

Mercantile Saloon: 1928 L St., 916.447-0792

Headhunters/ROK: Restaurant, Bar Service until 2am, 1930 K Street, headhuntersonk.com

BUSINESS

Rainbow Chamber of Commerce: Business association promoting networking within the gay and lesbian business community and its supporters. rainbowchamber.com

Valley Rainbow Pages: A directory of GLBT-owned and GLBT-friendly businesses in the Greater Sacramento Valley. vrp.info

FAMILY

Camp it Up: (August 3-10) A family camp known for one-of-a-

kind gay family vacations, we respect and celebrate all unique families. www.campitup.org

Camp Lavender Hill: A week-long summer camp for children, ages 9-14, of LGBT families. (2008 camp date has passed). camplavenderhill.org

Lesbian Families: A forum for Lesbian couples with children. geocities.com/lesbianfamilies/index.html

Sacramento PFLAG: Promotes health and well-being of LGBT persons, families and friends. Meets the third Tues. of each month at 7:30pm, St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 2391 St. Mark's Way. 916-978-0410, pflagsacramento.org

FESTIVALS

Sacramento Pride: (June) Annual Pride celebration for Sacramento, hosted by the Sacramento Gay & Lesbian center. sacramento pride.org

Rainbow Festival: (Aug. 29 - 31, 2008) Annual LGBT street faire over Labor Day Weekend. Rainbow Festival is Run by CGNIE and takes place at 20th & K Sts. rainbowfestival.com

Sac. International Gay & Lesbian Film Festival: (Oct. 9-11, 2008) Annual LGBT film festival takes place over 5 days. siglff.org

Sac. Earth Day: Annual Festival coordinated by Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS), 909 12th Street, Suite 100, 916-444-0022, sacramentoearthday.net

GALLERIES

Crocker Art Museum: The longest continuously operating art museum in the West founded 1885. crockerartmuseum.org

Kennedy Gallery: 2110 K St. Tues.-Sat. Noon to 6pm and by Appointment. mmkgallery.com

HIV | AIDS

Breaking Barriers: Provides a wide range of services for people living with HIV. 2200 21st St., 916-447-2437,

THIS MONTH'S COMMUNITY DIRECTORY SPONSOR IS: GAYSACRAMENTO.ORG
THE SACRAMENTO LGBT NON-PROFIT AND COMMUNITY SERVICE DIRECTORY IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY GAYSACRAMENTO.ORG PROVIDING THE LATEST UP-TO-DATE LGBT INFORMATION ONLINE. TO BECOME A COMMUNITY DIRECTORY SPONSOR PLEASE CONTACT SALES@MOMGUESSWHAT.COM. TO CORRECT INFORMATION LISTED CONTACT EDITOR@MOMGUESSWHAT.COM

breakingbarriers-sacramento.org

Capital City AIDS Fund:
Raises money for HIV/AIDS services in the Sac. area. CCAF's activities include Oscar® Night (Feb. 22, 2009), NorCal AIDS Challenge (May 15-18, 2009), and Sacramento Valley AIDS Run Walk (Sept. 14, 2008). capcityaidsfund.org

CARES: HIV/AIDS health clinic, outreach, education and prevention. Free, rapid HIV testing M-F 9 am to 5 pm. 1500 21st St., 916-443-3299, caresclinic.org

Golden Rule Services: A minority based organization that resolves health, education, employment and criminal justice disparities in People of Color communities through culturally competent programs and resources. 4433 Florin Road, Suite 760. 916-427-GOLD, goldenrules.info

NorCal AIDS Challenge: (May 15-18, 2009)
A 4-day, 330 mile bike ride to raise funds and awareness for HIV/AIDS norcalaidchallenge.net

Sacramento Valley AIDS Run/Walk: Sept. 14, 2008. 916-448-1110, sacvalleyaidsrunwalk.org

Sac. Valley Pozabilities: HIV+ social group. sacvalleypozabilities@yahoo.com, PO Box 161871, Sacramento, CA 95816-1871

Sierra Hope: Provides support for people with HIV & AIDS. Sierra HOPE, 1168 Booster Way, P.O. Box 159, Angels Camp, CA, 95222, 209.736.6792, sierrahope.org

Sunburst Projects: Providing support to families with children who are living with HIV/AIDS. 1025 19th Street, Suite 1A, 916-440-0889, sunburstprojects.org

IMPERIAL COURT

Court Of The Great Northwestern Imperial Empire (CGNIE): Parent organization for Sacramento's Court, La Kish Hayworth Memorial Fund, Fairy Godfathers' Fund and Rainbow Festival. myspace.com/cgnie

LAW | POLITICS

California Communities United Institute promotes the social, economic, and human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex individuals, couples, and families; people affected by HIV/AIDS; people of color; women; and people of low economic status. We urge elected officials to enact and support legislation that accomplishes this goal. calcomui.org

SAC Legal: Association of attorneys, legal professionals, and legislative advocates, affiliated with the Sacramento County Bar Assoc. that promotes equality the LGBT community. saclegal.org

California Capital Political Action Committee (CAP/PAC): A non-partisan, political action committee formed to provide a voice for the LGBT community in the political process. cappac.net

Green Party of Sacramento County: P.O. Box 2082, Sacramento, CA 95812, 916-484-4000,

sacgreens.org

Libertarian Party of Sac.:
P.O. Box 3003, Orangevale, CA 95662, lpsacramento.com

Log Cabin Republicans:
logcabin.org/logcabinca/sacramento_chapter.html

Stonewall Democrats of Sac.: Helping elect qualified, openly LGBT people and Democratic candidates who support equal rights for LGBT. P O Box 161623 Sacramento, CA 95816-1623, 916-441-1787, sacstonewall.org

MARRIAGE - PENDING

Sacramento County Clerk Records Office, 600 8th St @ F St., ccr.saccounty.net

NEW MEDIA

Being Gay Today: Sacramento's oldest, still-running GLBT TV show. Comcast Cable. Access Sac, channel 17. Thurs. 10pm, Now on myspace and youtube. beinggaytoday.com

Checkered Nation Video Show: A gay-focused internet chat show in and around Sacramento. checkerednation.com

Transponder Radio: Internet radio show covering many transgender issues. transponder.com

PERFORMANCE

A Small Difference Women's Choral Ensemble: Women, under the direction of Sage Brown, dedicated to performing music with a message. smalldifference.org

Sac. Gay Men's Chorus: Produces up to three concerts a year, and performs throughout the year at events in and around Sacramento. sgmchorus.org

Sacramento DanceSport: The Largest Same-Sex Dance Program in the United States. Classes, performances and competition. sacdancesport.com

True Colors Women's Chorus: Women building a community through their love of music. 877-758-7827, truecolorschorus.org

RELIGION

A Church For All: Fosters an all encompassing spiritual community. 721 North B Street, Sacramento, CA, 95816-2073, 916-502-5603, spirit@achurchforall.org. achurchforall.org

Atheists and Other Freethinkers: Promoting the civic understanding and acceptance of atheism in our community. aofonline.org

Atonement Lutheran: Welcomes all people, regardless of race, language, previous denominational affiliation, gender, or sexual orientation. at-one.org

Grove of the Oak: An eclectic group of Druids, Wiccans, and other Pagans who gather twice a month and on the eight annual Celtic seasonal festivals, to share community, perform

ritual, create magic, and support each other in our chosen earth-honoring pagan paths. groveoftheoak.org

Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer: LGBT affirming and supports the Lutheran Lesbian & Gay Ministries. lctorsac.org

Pioneer Congregational Church: LGBT open and affirming. 2700 L Street, 916-443-3727, uccwebsites.net/pioneercongsacramentoca.html

St. Mark's United Methodist Church: A Christian community welcoming a diverse congregation. stmarksumc.com

St. Paul's Episcopal Church: A Christian community that embraces one and all to worship together at God's table. 1430 J Street, 916.446.2620, stpaulssacramento.org

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral: LGBT affirming. Christian worship, life and ministry. 2620 Capitol Ave., 916-446-2513, trinitycathedral.org

Valley Ministries: Existing to communicate God's love and accept all people. 4118 Coronado Ave, Stockton. 209-464-5244, valleyministries.com

Westminster Church Sacramento: A community of faith accepting all people solely on the basis of their affirmation of faith in Jesus Christ. westminsac.org

RESOURCES

GaySacramento.org: Interactive online resource for LGBT Sac. news, events and community resources. gaysacramento.org

Lavender Library: Serves the LGBT community as a lending library and archives as well as houses LGBT activities. Loans books, periodicals, DVDs (general and erotica), to members. lavenderlibrary.org

outsacramento.com: Internet links, photos, message board and news for LGBT Sacramento. outsacramento.com

Sac. Gay & Lesbian Center: Serving the LGBT of Greater Sacramento and surrounding counties, providing facilitated discussion groups for LGBT youth and adults, counseling, legal services, HIV prevention and education services and programs for LGBT seniors, families and people living with HIV/AIDS. saccenter.org

SENIORS

Senior Gays: A resource for the senior LGBT and friendly community. SeniorGays.org

SOCIAL GROUPS

Capital City Squares: A square dance club for LGBT people who want to learn and enjoy Modern Western Square Dancing. iagsdc.org/capitalcity

Males Au Naturel Sacramento (MANS) - A gay/bi male naturist organization for men who enjoy social naturism in positive. groups.yahoo.com/group/malesaunaturesacramento
Natomas LGBTQ: A group to connect Natomas area queers for in-person social activities. An

alternative to the bar scene. natomaslgbtq.wordpress.com
Sac Woof Society: A social group for bears and bear lovers. sacwoofsociety.net

Gay Men's Book Group: A literary group for Sac. gay men. Meets once a month (usually 3rd Wednesday). groups.yahoo.com/group/sacgaybookgroup

Pink Pistols - LGBT group with an interest in shooting sports and self defense. pinkpistols.org/local/sacramento

Sacramento Professional Men's Group: Alternative lifestyle men who get together for networking and social gatherings with other professional men. groups.yahoo.com/group/SacramentoProfessionalMensGroup

Sac. Valley Bears: A social and charitable organization for bears and bear admirers. sacvalleybears.org

Sac. Valley Knights: Northern California motorcycle club whose membership consists solely of those who own and ride motorcycles. valleyknights.org

Sac. Valley LeatherCorps: Gay men's and women's organization seeking to educate and mentor members of the Leather/BDSM communities through classes and other club activities. svlclub.org

SPORTS

CHEER Sacramento: Volunteer cheerleading squad now cheering at games for West Sacramento Wolverines. cheersacramento.org

Frontrunners of Sacramento: Social group inclusive of all types, sizes, dispositions, and levels of activities with running and running events as a main focus. frsac.org

Gay & Lesbian Sierrans: Lesbians and gay men who enjoy outdoor adventures and camaraderie. motherlode.sierraclub.org/gls

Gay Sport Bike Riders of Sacramento - Gay sport bike enthusiasts who meet, post rides and related links. Serious enthusiasts 18+ are welcome. autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/SAC_GSR

River City Bowlers: Gay and Lesbian Bowling league. Winter league runs from Sept.-May and averages 22 teams per season. Summer league lasts 12-13 weeks beginning in June. rivercitybowlers.homestead.com/about.html

Sac. Capital Crossroads Gay Rodeo Association (SCCGRA): Sacramento's gay rodeo chapter. capitalcrossroads.org

Sacred City Derby Girls (SCDG): Sacramento Women's Roller Derby team. sacredcityderbygirls.com

THEATRE | FILM

Lambda Players: LGBT theatre company now in its 19th Season. 1028 R Street, 916-444-8229, lambdaplayers.com

24th Street Theatre: Hosts Runaway Stage which does musicals and larger well-known

plays. Facilities for large meetings, lectures, film screenings and performances Sierra 2 Center, 2791 24th Street, 916-452-3005, sierra2.org

Capital Stage - Capital Stage, Delta King: 1000 Front Street, www.capstage.org

Mondavi Center - 530-754-ARTS, One Shields Ave. Davis, mondaviarts.org
Shiny Object: Weekly showings of independent films and Rocky Horror Picture Show. 600 4th St. West Sacramento, shiny-object.com

The Crest Theatre: 1013 K St., 916-44-CREST. Shows independent and GLBT films. Often hosts Sacramento Gay & Lesbian Film Festival. thecrest.com

TRANS SUPPORT

Sac. Gay & Lesbian Center Trans Support: Counseling services available for transgender people. 916-442-0185, Ext. 102. 1927 L St., saccenter.org

Kings of Drag: Performance troupe of women dressing in male drag. kingsofdrag.com

Sac. Gender Alliance: Provides recreational and educational needs of the trans community, their spouses, family members and related professionals. 916-442-0185, Ext. 141, saccenter.org

Sigma Delta Gamma "Sac. Delta Girls": A chapter of Tri-Ess, an educational, social and support group for heterosexual cross-dressers, their spouses or partners and their families. 916-359-2328, geocities.com/Sigma_Delta_Gamma

WOMEN

Adventure Out Women: Business networking, social activities, special events and recreational adventures throughout California year-round. adventureoutwomen.com

Lesbian Cancer Support: Meets third Monday of each month at 6:30pm. Bring partners or

support people with you. ROXANNE1040@aol.com

Rainbow Womyn (Sac.): Online social group for Womyn. groups.msn.com/RainbowWomynofSacramentoCA

Sac NOW: Feminist news, actions, and opportunities. Meets monthly on the 3rd Thurs., 7pm, at the Hart Senior Center at 915 27th Street (27th & J St.). sacnow.org

Sacto Girls: Lesbian social group for women in the Sacramento and surrounding areas. members.aol.com/sactogirls/index.html

Sisters of Scotia Women's Motorcycle Club (SOSWMC): A tightknit sisterhood on women motorcycle riders who plan social events and raise funds for various charities. SOSWMC@hotmail.com, soswmc.org

Sac. Area Lesbian Health Resource Guide: A guide to help lesbians in the greater Sac. area identify and obtain services from providers who are sensitive to the needs of lesbian, bi and trans women. saclesbianhealth.com

Single Lesbians of Sac.: A community of single lesbians in the Sac. area interested in meeting other lesbians for the purpose of dating. groups.msn.com/SingleLesbiansofSacramento

Women On Wednesdays: Social discussion/activity group meets each Weds. at the Gay & Lesbian Center, 1927 L St. 7-9pm. Open to lesbian, bi and trans women. saccenter.org

Womyn Over the Rainbow: A group open to lesbian womyn over the age of 40 for the purpose of building friendship. groups.msn.com/WomynOverTheRainbow

YOUTH

CSUS Pride Center: Open to Sac State LGBT students. Lassen Hall 3011, 6000 J Street, 916.278.8720, Email: pride@csus.edu, csus.edu/pride

Delta Lambda Phi: A non-secret, non-hazing, national social fraternity founded by gay men for all men. dlp.org/iota/DLP.htm

Lambda Delta Lambda: Queer-friendly Sisterhood/Sorority social network on campus, accepting of all social identities and backgrounds. ldlducdavis.org/about.htm

Modesto LGBTQ Youth: GLBTQ Youth in Modesto and surrounding areas. mspace.com/lgbtqmodesto

Rainbow Club Of American River College: LGBT students on the American River Campus. geocities.com/arc_lgbtqclub

Queer Straight Alliance CSUS: Social/Activist group on campus. mspace.com/queerstraightalliance

RESPECT Sacramento: A grassroots organization dedicated to creating safe schools for all sexual minority people in Sacramento area schools. Meets the second Weds. of the month, 6:30pm at Lavender Library, 1414 21st St. 916-733-2135, RespectSacramento.org

Sac Youth Yahoo Group: Forum for LGBT and friendly youth under 21 years old. sacyouth.net groups.yahoo.com/group/sacyouth

City College LGBT Club: 3835 Freeport Boulevard, 916-558-2111 Advisor: Gayle Pitman, Behavioral & Social Sciences, PitmanG@scc.losrios.edu, wserver.scc.losrios.edu/~glbt/index.html

U.C. Davis LGBT Resource Center: Campus Center for LGBT students. 530-752-2452, lgbcenter.ucdavis.edu

REGIONAL

Amador County GLBTQQ Support Group: Amador County Mental Health - call Mary Pulskamp at 209-223-6412

Central Valley Stonewall Democratic Club: Helps elect qualified, openly LGBT people

to public office, as well as Democratic Party candidates that support equal rights for the LGBT community. cvstonewall.org

Diversity R Us: Support group for Yuba City-Marysville GLBT. groups.yahoo.com/group/diversityrus

Foothill Lesbians and Gays Social Network (FLAG): An organization for the LGBT community in the Sierra Foothills of No. Cal. flagamador.webs.com

Gaysonoma.com: Online Guide to events, personals, gay businesses, community organizations, classifieds, for Sonoma County LGBT. gaysonoma.com

"If The Shoe Fits": Gay/lesbian organization in the Foothills of El Dorado County that provides social/recreational activities for members. itsfnews.org

Nevada County Pride: Social network of gays and lesbians in western Nevada County in California. nevadacountypride.org

Out In The Mother Lode: Social network for fun/support among the LGBT in the central sierra foothills. outinthemotherlode.org

PFLAG Sonora/Mother Lode Chapter: Meets on the third Tuesday of Jan., Apr., July, and Oct., 6:30pm, at the Tuolumne County Library. Other events scheduled through the year. pflagsonora.org

Rainbow Frontier: A website for LGBT adults in rural/frontier areas of Northeastern California funded Plumas County Public Health Agency, 1-800-801-6330 or 530-283-6358, rainbowfrontier.org

Sierra Gay Men's Network: A newsletter & blog with news for Gay Men and their friends in the Sierra Foothills of California. sgmnet.org

Sisters of Scotia Foothills Chapter: Women's Motorcycle Club who rides mostly in the foothills. soswmcfoothills.org

Solano Pride Center: Support for LGBT of Solano County. Solano Pride Center, 1125 Missouri St., Ste. 203-D, Fairfield, CA 94533, 707-427-2356, solanopride.org

Stanislaus Pride Center: Resources and support for LGBT persons in Stanislaus and surrounding counties. stanpride.org

Stonewall Alliance of Chico: Services and support for LGBT people in Chico and surrounding areas. stonewallchico.org

Western Slope Men's Social Group: Online forum for gay/bi men on/near the Western Slope of the Sierra Nevada's (between Sac. and So. Lake Tahoe). groups.yahoo.com/group/WesternSlopeMensSocialGroup

Yuba-Sutter Unity: Social, education & community involvement. gayyubasutter.com, groups.yahoo.com/group/Yuba-Sutter-Unity

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Look Whats New & Upcoming!

Upcoming Events

Friday, March 20th - Club Octopussy Returns!

Friday, April 3rd - Live Performance By Kat Deluna

Coming Soon

BOLT Flashlight Party In **FACES** VIP Lounge

Watch For Updates on www.myspace.com/facessac



FACES

Nightlife Built For You!

Weekly Schedule!

Monday

Win Cash - Give-Away @ Midnight
Next 7 Weeks Watch RuPaul's New Show DragRace
With Your Host Monique Moore @ 10:00pm
Karaoke @ 9pm

Tuesday

Latin Night Featuring Live Shows & Hot Go Go Dancers
Drink Specials Throughout The Night!

Wednesday

75¢ Well Drinks & 75¢ Draft Beers 8pm -Midnight!
Featuring 80's Music, Country, Top40 & R&B

Thursday

All New SEXXX Thursdays Features All Male Strippers,
Erotic Shadow Dancing, Weekly Contests, Hot Go Go Dancers
And Drink Specials All Night Long!

Friday

Furlough Fridays
"NO COVER" With State I.D. (special events excluded)
75¢ Well Drinks & 75¢ Draft Beers 7-9pm
Featuring 70's Music, Country, High Energy, Top40 & R&B
Hot Go Go Dancers Entertaining You All Night!

Saturday

75¢ Well Drinks & 75¢ Draft Beers 7-9pm
Featuring 70's Music, Country, High Energy, Top40 & R&B
Hot Go Go Dancers Entertaining You All Night!

Sunday

\$2.00 Double Well Drinks - \$1.00 Draft Beers
Dancing 3-9pm -Dragalicious Show @ 9pm



The 5th Annual NorCal AIDS Challenge

is a 4-day, 330 mile charity cycling event to benefit HIV/AIDS service providers in the inland Northern California region. This volunteer based event focuses on giving as much back as possible to those that depend on us.

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