

AIDS test equals big bucks

Following Food and Drug Administration approval in March of two blood tests to detect antibodies to the HTLV-III virus, Wall Street analysts projected a \$175 million worldwide market for the tests.

Chemical Week magazine reported that the tests are manufactured by Abbott Laboratories of North Chicago and Electro-Nucleonics of Columbia, Md. The Red Cross contracted with Abbott to supply a minimum of 6 million tests per year to its 57 regional blood services. Electro-Nucleonics was expected to begin distributing about 150,000 tests immediately to many of the country's 2,300 blood banks, plasma centers and laboratories.

Gay leaders have expressed serious concern over the tests, which supposedly detect antibodies to the virus believed to be associated with AIDS. The accuracy of the tests is being questioned, along with its psychological effects on those testing positive. Leaders warn that test results could lead to compilation of a blacklist on those testing positive.

For information regarding the tests, please contact Cascade AIDS Project, 223-8299.

Supreme Court stymies gay rights efforts

The U.S. Supreme Court March 6 reached a 4-4 split decision on an Oklahoma law a Federal Court of Appeals had ruled violated the free speech provision of the First Amendment.

The tie vote, made possible by the absence of ailing justice Lewis F. Powell, Jr., automatically upholds the lower court decision. It cannot be used as a precedent for other cases.

At question was an Oklahoma law allowing dismissal of teachers who "advocate, encourage or promote homosexual activities." It was passed in 1978 at the urging of Anita Bryant and was the only law of its kind in the country. The legislation was immediately challenged by the National Gay Rights Advocates (NGRA).

Both sides claimed victory following the decision. Leonard Graff, NGRA legal director, said, "Whatever the vote, the bottom line is that the court affirmed the rights of individuals to discuss homosexuality. This is a landmark victory for every gay man and woman in America."

Larry Lewis, attorney for the Oklahoma City Board of Education, said, "We also consider it a victory. I am quite sure that what will happen is that the legislature will simply seek

to pass a new law."

In March, the Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal of a lower court order banning the Detroit Metropolitan Community Church from holding group worship services in Michigan prisons. Despite a strong dissent from Justices Brennan and Marshall, the court also refuses to hear a case brought by an Ohio guidance counselor who lost her job after admitting she was bisexual.

Libel suit nets perjury conviction

Two Columbia, S.C., women have been sentenced to three years in prison for perjury for testimony that they were not lesbian in a libel suit against *Sports Illustrated* Magazine.

The *Columbia Record* reports that Pam Parsons and Tina Buck had all but four months of their sentences suspended by a U.S. District Court judge.

Parsons, former University of South Carolina women's basketball coach, sued *Sports Illustrated* for \$75 million after the magazine alleged that Parsons resigned following the discovery that she and Buck were having an affair. Buck was a USC basketball player.

The women testified they were not lovers or lesbians. *Sports Illustrated* attorneys introduced testimony from a disc jockey at a Salt Lake City lesbian bar who said he saw the women dancing and kissing in the bar several times in the summer of 1983.

The perjury investigation was ordered by U.S. District Court Judge Clyde Hamilton after a jury found the magazine not guilty of libel in May, 1984. Parsons and Buck pled guilty to perjury charges in November.

Survey on Social Security benefits for persons with AIDS and ARC

National Gay Task Force, (NGTF) has completed a survey of AIDS service organizations and their social service advocates which indicates that, overall, it is now easier for persons with AIDS and AIDS-related complex (ARC) to gain expeditious access to the benefits the Social Security Administration provides to disabled persons than was the case in the spring of 1984.

However, NGTF's AIDS Program Coordinator, John Boring, commented that "though many of the problems and inordinate delays have been alleviated, in some parts of the country persons with AIDS are still experiencing unacceptably long waiting periods and in most areas those who suffer from AIDS-related complex that is severe enough to be disabling are not consistently being allowed benefits."

The NGTF survey elicited 18 responses, including comments from social service advocates working for 12 AIDS service organizations: The Gay Men's Health Crisis of New York City, Health Education Resource Organization of Baltimore, The Pitt Men's Study of Pittsburgh, AID Atlanta, Health Crisis Network of Miami, AIDS Education Programs of Key West, The Dallas AIDS Project, Howard Brown Memorial Clinic, The AIDS Support Group of Seattle, Cascade AIDS Project of Portland, Oregon, San Francisco AIDS Foundation, and the Los Angeles AIDS Project. In three localities, respondents were working in association with but not directly for the following organizations: The New Haven AIDS Project, and the Boston AIDS Action Committee. Also included were representatives of three health departments who were acting as advocates: Ohio Department of Health, Cincinnati Dept. of Health, and the New Jersey Dept. of Health.

NALGAP slates first annual conference

The National Association of Lesbian and Gay Alcoholism Professionals (NALGAP) will hold its first national conference September 26-29, 1985 at the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza in Chicago. General sessions will discuss such topics as gay spirituality, reaching out, establishing relationships, alcohol and drug problems in the gay and lesbian community.

Conference workshops will be held in the areas of gay and lesbian adult children of alcoholics, sexuality and homosexuality, assessment and treatment of addictions and the business end of treatment and private practice.

NALGAP is an association of alcohol and drug therapists, program directors, doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals who have a particular interest in the special needs of the lesbian and gay client in treatment. Membership in NALGAP does not indicate a person's sexual preference, many of the association's most dynamic members are non-gay.

NALGAP publishes a quarterly newsletter which includes news of activities throughout the world designed to enhance the treatment of gay and lesbian alcohol and drug clients. It also presents articles and papers of special interest to those who are concerned about the particular needs of these clients. The association also makes available to treatment facilities and other organizations educational and training programs and seminars on the nature of homosexuality and how it affects treatment.

For further information on the association or membership write to NALGAP, 1208 East State Blvd., Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805. For a bibliography on gay and lesbian topics write to NALGAP, 204 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011.

Information on the first national conference or registration forms can be obtained by writing to Trove of Treasures, PO Box 381, Valparaiso, Indiana 46383.

Abstracts for papers to be delivered at the conference will be considered by the committee. They would be sent to Bob Kajdan, Co-chair, Memorial Hospital ATC, 527 W. South St., Woodstock, IL 60098.

Unless otherwise indicated, Out Across the Nation was compiled by Rosanne King from sources including Gay Community News, Washington Blade, Coming Up, Chemical Week and Seattle Gay News.

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