



Illustration by E. Ann Hinds

## No shirt, no shoes: You're under arrest!

If you are a hang-loose kind of woman, especially when you're on vacation, one place you might want to skip this year is the Massachusetts Cape Cod National Seashore, where it is currently illegal for females to bare their breasts in public. The region is reputed to be the only federal seashore which imposes anti-nudity regulations on visitors.

In case you are one of that endangered species, a true untravelled west coast person like me, here's a quick geography lesson: Cape Cod is a peninsula twenty-five miles long and only a mile or two wide, which curls back toward the mainland like the tip of Peter Pan's shoe and is by all reports a very wonderful place to be on a New England summer's day.

Nearby Provincetown, Massachusetts is a large gay population, with the result that many of the park's local patrons (and their summer guests) are gay. As might be expected, considering the quasi-military National Park Service and the personality profile of the typical tenured Park Service employee, there is apparently not a lot of love lost between the park rangers and the gay sunbathers. They just don't have a whole lot in common.

In December, twelve women of varying sexual preferences and lifestyles filed a class action lawsuit in the local U.S. District Court, seeking to have Cape Cod's anti-nudity regulation declared unconstitutional as a violation of several of their constitutional rights, including freedom of expression, freedom of association, privacy, due process, and perhaps most appropriately, equal protection under the law (men are allowed to bare their breasts 'til the cows come home, right down to their whats-its).

This is the first lawsuit filed to challenge this particular regulation, according to the plaintiffs' lawyers, Jaffrey Denner. In fact, one allegation made by the plaintiffs is that there exists a regional prosecutorial practice of arresting women for exposing their breasts, harrasing them generally, but then dropping the charges before trial, to avoid giving those charged a forum in which to attack the regulation under which they were arrested.

A lesbian named Gabriel Brooke, Cape Cod inn owner who was arrested in August with nine other women for airing her upper torso at Herring Cove Beach, has given up. She no longer frequents the beach, "sick of having to be paranoid about rangers . . ."

One imagines the dutiful rangers in their aviator glasses, badges glinting in the sun, scuffing down the sand dunes in their hot uniforms toward the soft, warm, naked offenders, all within a twenty mile sea-view of Plymouth Rock where by some accounts "it" all started.

American novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864), who had a special interest in what we would now call the religious psychology of his Calvinist forebears, described the early Massachusetts Puritans as "panting and praying in a single breath" in their zeal to nab, grab, shake, and sometimes kill, the women in their communities who dared to be different, dared to be themselves. What do you bet some of them were prosecuted for simply slipping out of those black dresses on a warm day to feel the sun and salt breeze on their skin?

Sometimes, if you didn't know better, you might think things hadn't changed a whole lot in three hundred years. •

— Nancy R. Walseth

## Alaskan adventures

Providing a comprehensive overview of travel to and in Alaska would take more space than this or any editor would allow, but touching on a few points, especially of interest to gay and lesbian readers should provide a start.

Alaska is about seven times larger in area than Oregon with a total population of about half of Portland. Ketchikan, the Southernmost town, is nearly 900 air miles from Portland and its only true city, Anchorage (pop. 250,000), is 900 air miles further northwest.

Cruise ships, mostly from Vancouver BC, travel mid-May to mid-September providing brief 5-7 day luxury views for \$1,000 plus per person. The BC Ferries travel from northern Vancouver Island to Prince Rupert where an Alaskan Ferry can be taken to ports further north. There are one or two Alaskan ferries leaving Seattle per week but at twice the price. Of courses, air travel is an option and super saver rates to Anchorage are quite attractive. Car rentals abound, and you can drive to many (but not all) areas of the state. From Portland allow at least 30 days since it is 5,500 miles round trip to Anchorage.

Lodging isn't much costlier than in Oregon (read expensive). There are hostels in Ketchikan, Juneau, Anchorage, Fairbanks, Nome and a few other communities where communal lodging and cooking is available for \$5-10 per person plus your groceries. Restaurants are rather expensive although Big Mac types abound in major communities. Groceries will run from 25% more in Anchorage to 100% more in Nome, compared to Portland prices. Bed and Breakfast places are available in most major communities, but no currently gay oriented ones.

The only gay bars are in Anchorage where three cater to a mixed (male/female/native/non-native/young/old) crowd. *The Village* at 225 East 5th. is Alaska's gay disco and has the largest lesbian patron-

age. There is a lesbian owned bookstore at 9th and A streets worth a look, too. *The Raven* at 6th and Gambell is cruisy and is Alaska's version of a Levi/leather bar (but only a hint); pool tables used by men and women are in constant use there. *The Jade Room* at 7th and I streets is a small, somewhat tacky, but cozy place that has within its employ an ex-Empress from Eugene — Charisse.

There is an active court group in Anchorage. Their Labor Day weekend Coronation Ball draws over 1,000 attendees and is probably the grandest Ball in Alaska — AAAA. A very active AIDS organization, four gay AA meetings per week, and a monthly newsletter help add to the community. A social service organization, Identity (PO Box 200070, Anchorage, 99520) can provide various information of a political, social, and general nature during weekdays at 276-3919. They operate a helpline Fridays and Saturdays from 7 p.m.-11 p.m. at 276-3909.

In Fairbanks you could call 456-3353 to find out what activities the Arctic Gay and Lesbian Association may have going on in that interior community, and there are Gay groups in Kodiak, Sitka and Juneau. Check with Identity for details. Although not a "gay bar," the bar in the Summit Hotel in Juneau welcomes gay and lesbian customers.

Outdoor activities abound throughout the state, such as fishing, canoeing, hiking, camping, skiing, whitewater trips, and hunting. Long daylight summer hours allow for many photographic adventures. To obtain up-to-date information, the best single volume is the *Milepost*, available in most Oregon bookstores. The Portland Central Library keeps current copies of Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau newspapers.

You might not want to live there, but few visitors have ever complained about their Alaskan vacation. It may not be Hawaii, but you'll never regret going. •

— Charles Eggen

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