

national briefs

FLORIDA: In a rare joint meeting, held at Tampa's performing arts center and attended by more than 2500 citizens, governing councils of Tampa and surrounding Hillsborough County approved amendments to their respective human rights ordinances that will add "sexual orientation" to the list of protected characteristics.

ILLINOIS: Although comprehensive domestic-partnership legislation never made it out of committee this year, the Illinois legislature has sent two bills to Gov. Jim Edgar that would protect gay and lesbian couples.

The first measure would allow patients in hospitals and nursing homes to choose their visitors.

The second bill would allow old people and persons with disabilities, including HIV-positive people, to live in government-subsidized housing with the partner of their choice after the couple registered with the county clerk.

Chicago has its first publicly lesbian cop. Dorothy Knudson, 28, says she hopes to convince police officers and gays and lesbians to discard stereotypes of each other. She also wants to be a role model for other police officers who might want to come out of the closet.

The department rewarded Knudson for coming out by selecting her as one of its three representatives to the new police Gay and Lesbian Advisory Council.

The Gaylactic Network announced the acceptance of four panels in the final cut of the mini-programming series at this year's annual World Science Fiction Convention, Chicon V in Chicago.

These panels cover: Gay Male/Lesbian/Bisexual Characters and Themes in Science Fiction and Fantasy; Gay Male/Lesbian/Bisexual Characters in the Comics; Screaming Queens: Gay Male/Lesbian/Bisexual Characters and Themes in Horror; and Pair Bonding in Literature.

MARYLAND: Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke, in response to a *Gay Paper* survey question regarding domestic partnership, earlier this week committed himself and his administration to "drafting a comprehensive city domestic partnership ordinance and will introduce that ordinance as an administrative bill."

Gay Paper

NEW YORK: In a powerful legal ruling, the Chief Administrative Law Judge of the New York Commission on Human Rights held that a dentist's refusal to provide dental services to a patient with AIDS violated the City Human Rights Law. Finding that the use of universal precautions against HIV transmission eliminates any alleged need to discriminate against HIV-positive people, the judge rejected the dentist's claim that his fear of AIDS and his professed lack of certainty about infection control procedures justified his refusal to treat the patient. Equally important was the judge's determination that a dental office is a "place of public accommodation" subject to the Human Rights Laws prohibition on discrimination against the disabled.

Gay Paper

NORTH CAROLINA: After being sued by the American Civil Liberties Union, the North Carolina Department of Transportation has reversed its decision to prohibit the Southern Appalachian Lesbian and Gay Alliance (SALGA) from participating in a highway beautification program. The state will install a sign with SALGA's name on it—including the words "lesbian" and "gay"—on the portions of highway that the group will maintain.

PENNSYLVANIA: In a significant victory in its decade-long campaign against discrimination in television and radio, the Philadelphia Lesbian and Gay Task Force announced last week that four local radio stations had agreed to sign anti-discrimination contracts.

WASHINGTON, D.C.: U.S. Rep. Steve Gunderson, (R.Wis.), was outed by the media in July after Michael Petrelis, a founder of Queer Nation/D.C., threw a drink in Gunderson's face June 30 at a suburban Washington gay bar. Activists want Gunderson to come out publicly and speak up for gay rights, and to sign on as a co-sponsor of the federal gay rights bill.

Gunderson acknowledged that he had been in the suburban Washington gay bar and that he has

visited other gay bars. However, "Nothing in my personal life is legitimate discussion unless I am breaking the law or using my position for it," he said. In the past two years, Gunderson has often voted pro-gay in Congress.

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force has joined the Breast Cancer Coalition, a national advocacy group, to increase awareness of and response to lesbian breast cancer and other health issues.

African-American AIDS activists pressured black lawmakers recently in an unprecedented Congressional lobbying and briefing campaign aimed at sparking increased action around the growing crisis of AIDS in the African-American

community. In the first-ever AIDS briefing to the Congressional Black Caucus, the activists are challenging the Caucus to take a greater leadership role in securing HIV funding, treatment, care and education for minority communities.

U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Dr. Louis Sullivan denounced ACT UP after the group zapped him in Wisconsin. "They're a nuisance," Sullivan said. His comments echoed recent remarks by President George Bush. During a meeting with journalists from the religious press, Bush termed ACT UP "totally counterproductive," "outrageous," and "offensive," and called the group's tactics "an excess of free speech."

SOMETIMES IT'S HARD.

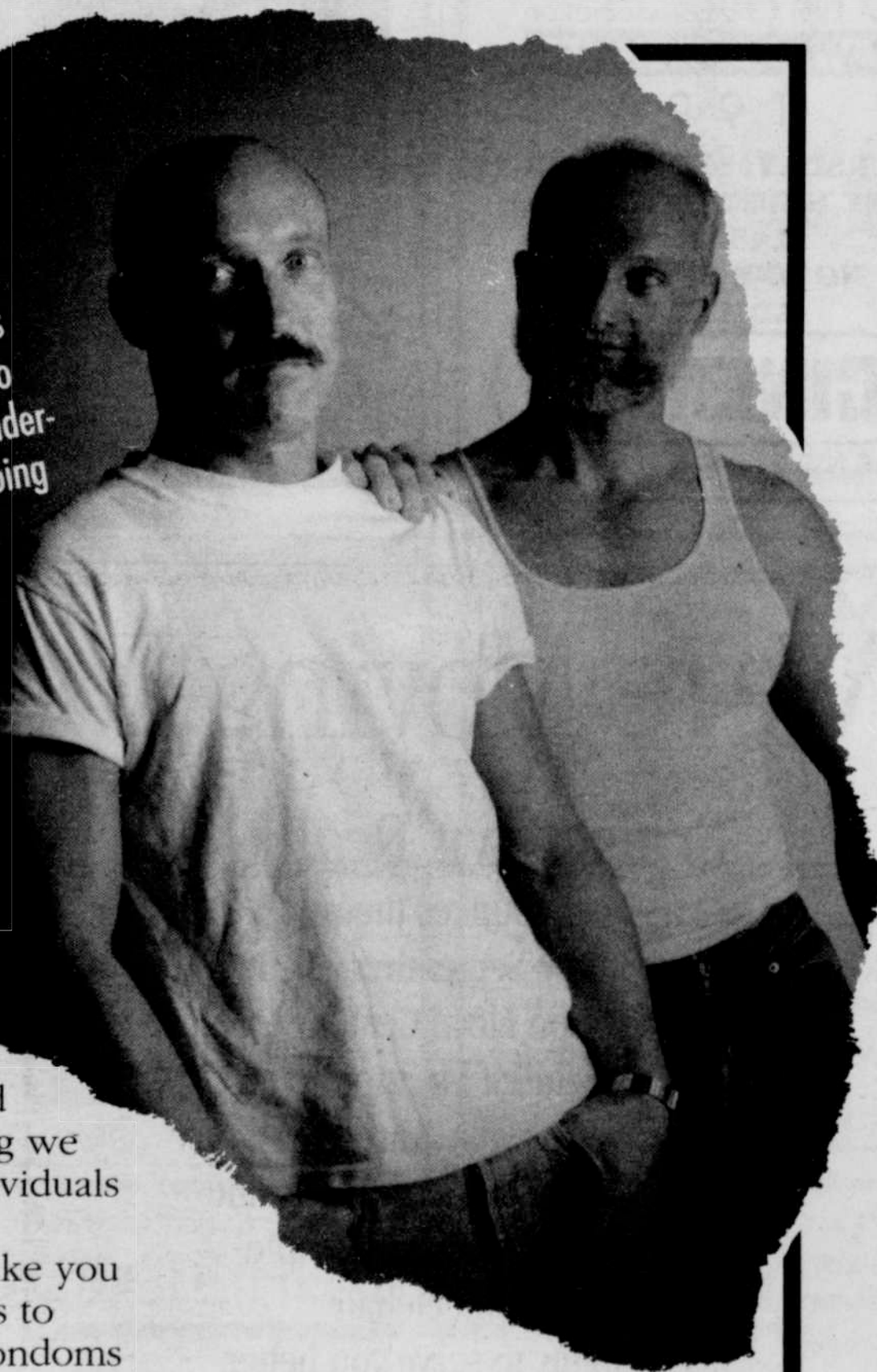
"At first I thought safer sex was just a hassle I was going to have to put up with for a while. Now I understand this is really the way it's going to be for a long time.

I made a personal commitment to safer sex. Sometimes it's not easy, but I'm keeping it up. I owe it to myself. I owe it to all of us."

The AIDS epidemic hasn't gone away. That's a hard reality, and it's something we have to deal with as individuals and as a community.

More and more men like you are making commitments to staying safe. Use latex condoms every time you have anal or oral sex. Don't share needles if you do drugs.

Staying safe may be difficult for you, but it can save your life.



"Keep It Up" Playshop
Tuesday, September 24
HIV+ Tea Dance
Sunday, September 15
For more information, call
CAP (223-5907) V/TDD



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