

world briefs

ARGENTINA

An estimated 300 gay men and lesbians marched through the streets of Buenos Aires on the evening of July 3 in the culmination of the first-ever gay pride celebration in Argentina. Representing seven gay, lesbian and transsexual organizations, they paraded from the Government Palace to the Congress carrying pink banners and placards demanding equal rights.

AUSTRALIA

More than 10,000 people walked through Melbourne's chilly streets for the Ninth AIDS Candlelight Vigil in late July. Lord Mayor of Melbourne Richard Meldrum lit the first candle and Victoria state Premier Joan Kirner was the featured speaker.



The Anglican archbishop of Perth in western Australia has ordained a professed homosexual to the priesthood in a private ceremony. It is believed to be the first time an openly practicing homosexual has been ordained in the Australian Anglican Church.

Archbishop Peter Carnley, who ordained Australia's first women priests in a controversial service in March, performed the private ceremony in the chapel of his official residence 10 days ago. News of the ordination, which broke Thursday, immediately provoked controversy.

CANADA

The Ontario Court of Appeal last month upheld a ruling that the Canadian Human Rights Act is unconstitutional because it doesn't protect gays. The act covers federal employees, military personnel and people who work in federally regulated sectors such as air and rail transport and banking. The Canadian military bans gays.

Specifically, the court said the act violates Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which states that "every individual...has a right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination."

CHILE

The gay movement has come back to life with the birth of *Movimiento de Liberación Homosexual*. According to the International Lesbian and Gay Association, "the group has developed a strong structure and working basis and started setting up links with gay life in Santiago," the capital.

CHINA

An underground organization, the Sizhou Gay Group, has established contact with the International Lesbian and Gay Association, marking the first Western link with a Chinese gay group.

The groups said that although homosexuality is not illegal, gay men are taken to police stations, beaten, deprived of food and water, then sent to insane asylums.

Secret gay organizations meet in private homes, SGG reported, changing their meeting places regularly for safety.

SGG said AIDS does not seem to be a big concern. "Though most gay men know about safe sex, and condoms are very cheap and easy to get here in almost every drugstore, only very few put it into practice," the group noted.

ENGLAND

Twelve OutRage members invaded the Wimbledon residence of Vatican Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Luigi Barbarito in August, protesting Rome's new demand that U.S. bishops oppose equal rights for gays.

They carried signs reading: "Stop Crucifying Queers," "Papal Bull Shit" and "Vatican = Prejudice & Hate."

A week later, 15 OutRage members disrupted mass at Westminster Cathedral. Four protestors prostrated themselves in the sign of the cross while activist Martin Harrington delivered a sermon.

GERMANY

More than 250 lesbian and gay couples descended on city halls in 50 cities Aug. 19 and demanded marriage licenses. They were turned down.

The action set the stage for a Supreme Court challenge on the issue. Activists previously pressured Parliament without success.

Among the applicants were TV star Hella Von Sinnen and her lover, Cornelia Scheel, daughter of former West German President Walter Scheel.

Gay marriage is legal only in Denmark. In Holland, officials in about 40 cities perform gay weddings and keep a gay-marriage registry in hopes the weddings will be considered legal once the federal government OKs gay marriage, which it is expected to do soon.

ITALY

Rome Gay News Editor Massino Consoli has challenged leading composer Franco Battiato to a duel over his new opera, *Gilgamesh*.

The 4,000-year-old poem on which the opera is based contains what may be the oldest known depiction of same-sex love, but Battiato left it out of the opera, saying, "I don't care about it."

Lesbians and gays have loudly protested the omission, garnering a flurry of supportive news reports.

In other news, state television has bucked the Vatican and started running condom advertisements.

Outrage 9/92



City Councillor Paolo Hutter married nine gay couples and one lesbian couple June 26 in front of La Scala, Milan's famous opera house.

About 1,000 people attended the mass wedding.

Vatican spokesman Cardinal Silvio Oddi denounced the event as "open disrespect to God and to human dignity," and city officials are investigating whether Hutter broke any laws.

But Mayor Piero Borghini told *La Repubblica*: "If Hutter's initiative...draws attention to something we can no longer pretend doesn't exist, that's great. I just hope it doesn't lead to unnecessary exhibitionism."

LATVIA

The parliament of Latvia, which legalized sex between men earlier this year, is now considering domestic-partnership legislation, Denmark's gay paper *PAN-Bladet* reported last month.

A representative of the Latvian parliament told gay activists that legislators are considering following the example of neighboring Scandinavian countries by introducing the legislation.

MEXICO

Gay and AIDS activist Martin Balesca Domínguez, 22, is the latest victim in a wave of anti-gay violence sweeping the southern state of Chiapas. He was beaten, stabbed and left for dead last month near the town of Arriaga. At last report, he was in critical condition.

At least 12 Chiapan gays and nine prostitutes have been assassinated in the past year, most with high-caliber rifles, in or near the capital, Tuxtla Gutiérrez. Police have not solved any of the killings and have described them to the press as mere crimes of passion or vengeance. Gay leaders report police harassment as a result of publicity about the murders.

Leaders of Mexico City's *Círculo Cultural Gay* have given the National Human Rights Commission documentation on the assassinations and have demanded an investigation of the "systematic and often silent genocide" of Mexican gays.

Increased violence against gays and transvestites has also been reported in Mexico City and the states of Oaxaca and Jalisco.

NETHERLANDS

Lesbian Irene de Kok, 26, of the Netherlands won the bronze medal in judo on July 28. She was competing in the 72 kilogram (159 pounds) weight class.

John Blankenstein, an openly gay Dutch man, took part in the Olympic soccer tournament, serving as a referee. According to the *British Gay Times*, Blankenstein said the Dutch soccer federation always invites his male partner to dinners and other functions.



Consumerboard, a consumer-advocacy group, tested condoms from Brazil, Indonesia and Thailand—popular Dutch tourist destinations—and recommended travelers not use them.

Indonesian condoms scored a one out of a

possible 15 points in the test, Thailand's a three and Brazil's a five. Condoms less than one-half millimeter thick were automatically rated "poor."

Consumerboard favors the Dutch condom Duo.

PUERTO RICO

About 300 people marched for gay pride, many representing gay bars or one of a dozen community groups.

Despite what *Caribbean Heat* termed "a torrential downpour of rain," the group gathered afterward in Quíñones Park for speeches, music and other entertainment.

RUSSIA

Eleven gay groups from around the former U.S.S.R. met in Moscow recently and formed an information center that will publicize the repression of gays in the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic nations.

SCOTLAND

Two thousand queers from around the country turned out for Lark in the Park, Edinburgh's pride celebration, at Princes Street Gardens.

The day was long on live music and short on political speeches, according to *Gay Scotland*, whose reporter took special note of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence's exorcism of the demons of homophobia, sexism and racism.

SOUTH AFRICA

Soweto's Township AIDS Project holds its first regional AIDS Conference for Lesbians and Gay Men Oct. 8-9 in Johannesburg.

Leading gay activist Tseko Simon Nkoli invites foreign groups to fax greetings to (011) 27-11-982-5621.

The Gay and Lesbian Organization of Witwatersrand, founded by Nkoli, is also busy organizing South Africa's third gay pride march on Oct. 10.

SWEDEN

Commissioned to draw a cover for the regional phone book for Ystad, in south Sweden, artist Stig Sjölund sketched himself and his buddy Jan Sörman talking on the phone wearing full leather. And he threw in a German safe-sex poster in the background.

VATICAN CITY

Keven Calegari, president of the U.S. gay Catholic group Dignity, was vacationing in Europe when word broke of the Vatican's new demand that American bishops declare war on gay liberation.

So Calegari got a copy of the directive, marked it "Return to Sender," went to Rome and nailed it to the Vatican's front door—taking inspiration from Martin Luther, who launched the Protestant Reformation in 1517 by nailing "95 Theses" to the Catholic Cathedral in Wittenberg, Germany.

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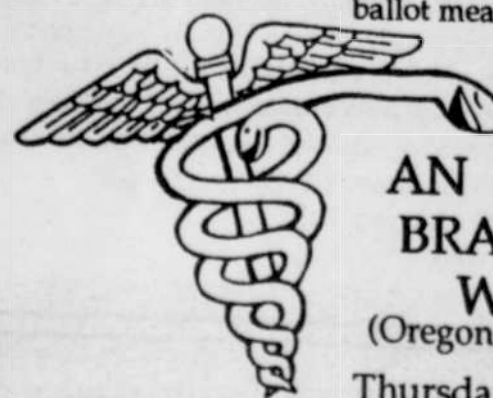
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