

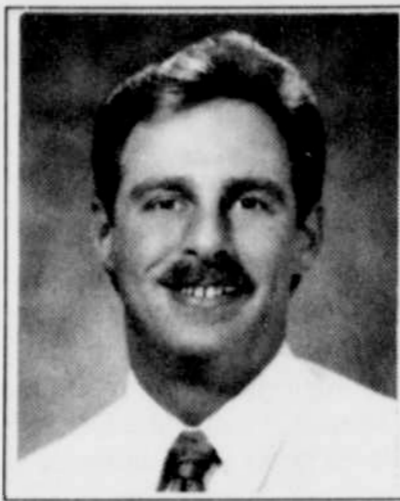
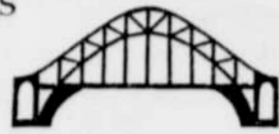
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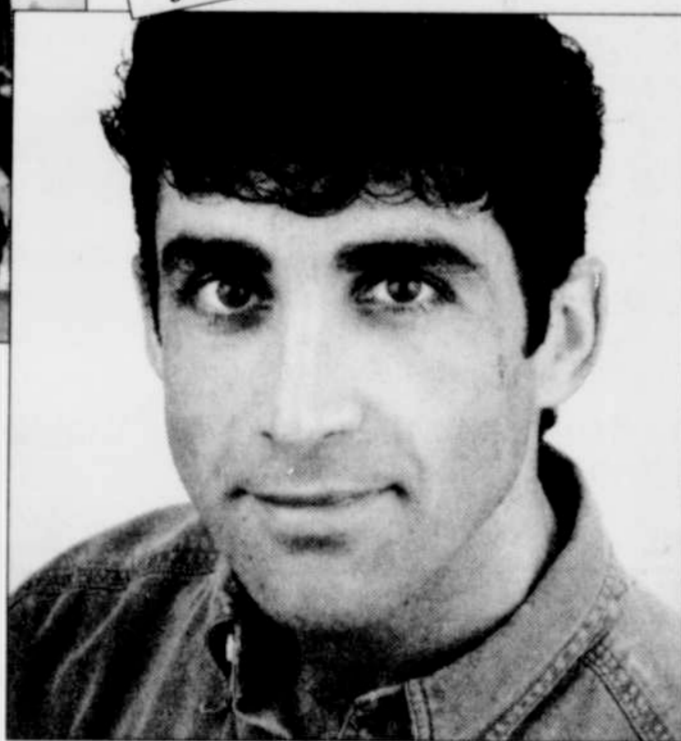
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national briefs

CALIFORNIA

The University of California at San Francisco has released the results of a study that shows daily injections of human growth hormone reversed the loss of weight and muscle common in people with AIDS. The findings, which were published in *The New York Times*, may have important implications in the treatment of other chronic diseases.

The study included a two-year trial on 178 AIDS patients at 12 medical centers nationwide. Weight gain among those who received the injections averaged about 3.6 pounds. All participants had lost about 10 percent of their body mass before the test, according to Dr. Morris Schambelan, director of the study.



Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros announced that 5,000 housing vouchers will go to low-income people with AIDS, according to the Boston gay and lesbian newspaper *Bay Windows*. The vouchers will be distributed through a new national HIV/AIDS housing office.

"Persons with HIV/AIDS face great challenges every day in obtaining housing, health care and other basic needs," Cisneros said. "The establishment of this...office and the increase in funding will help move our nation forward in addressing the needs of those with HIV/AIDS."



Victor Rohana was harassed and shot in the chest by two young men after he and his boyfriend exited a San Francisco restaurant holding hands, according to the Atlanta gay and lesbian newspaper *Southern Voice*. Rohana underwent surgery and was in stable condition three days later.

"We were gay, and they didn't like that we were holding hands," said his friend, Steven Damron. Police have developed a composite sketch of the men and are offering a \$10,000 reward for information about them.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The Human Rights Campaign Fund has been asked to join the board of directors and executive committee of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, according to a report by *Southern Voice*. The Leadership Conference is a coalition of 185 national organizations representing women, people of color, older people, people with disabilities, and labor and religious groups.

"We recognize the persistence of widespread discrimination against lesbian and gay people, and understand that the elimination of such discrimination is a fundamental civil rights issue," said LCCR Executive Director Ralph G. Neas. "We also welcome the contributions of the gay community to furthering equal rights for all people."

FLORIDA

John Wayne Bobbitt was scheduled to appear on the bill at The District, a gay bar in Fort Lauderdale, according to *The Washington Blade*. The performance—Bobbitt's first at a gay bar—was slated to include a strip tease, jokes and audience interaction.



One day after being taken down, a billboard ad that featured a nude man was put back up, reported *Southern Voice*. The billboard was an

advertisement for Page & Associates, a company which specializes in viatical settlements—a means of turning life insurance policies into money for people with terminal illnesses.

The billboard read "Terminally ill...there are options," and listed an 800 number. The nude is from an 1836 painting by French artist Hippolyte Flandrin which is on display in the Louvre.

The ad was removed when Harold Reichert, owner of a sports bar next to the billboard site, complained. According to Jane Grant of Page & Associates, once Reichert learned what the ad was about, he said, "OK, put the billboard back up."

GEORGIA

The Rev. Fred Phelps—known for picketing the funerals of gay men who have died of AIDS—and his daughter Margie, were found in contempt of court for preaching against the judge in a case against them. They also sent out a fax portraying District Court Judge Michael Barbara as a snake.

According to *Southern Voice*, the judge is presiding over a lawsuit in which St. David's Episcopal Church is seeking to keep the Phelpses and their Westboro Baptist Church followers away from St. David's parishioners. The contempt charges carry fines and an order to pay for court proceedings.



Debra Denise Reid, convicted of stabbing her lesbian lover to death in 1989, has been approved for release after serving five years of a 9- to 14-year sentence, *Southern Voice* reported. Reid was one of the "Framingham Eight"—eight women inmates who petitioned to have their sentences commuted on the grounds that they killed their husbands, boyfriends or lovers in self-defense.

Reid claimed she had suffered years of abuse at the hands of her lover, Jacqueline Gary. The state's Advisory Board of Pardons had ruled at that time that Reid was not a battered woman and did not kill Gary in self-defense.



A campaign to convince the Chatham County Commission to pass a resolution condemning the "gay lifestyle" has been pronounced "dead and gone" by the commission chair, Joe Mahany, reports *The Washington Blade*. Supported mainly by the Independent Presbyterian Church of Savannah and the Mustardseed Faith Center, the idea was opposed by three Chatham County Commissioners. None of the commissioners was willing to introduce such a resolution.

When questioned about pursuing the matter, Arthur C. Broadwick, the associate pastor of the Independent Presbyterian Church, said, "We passed the resolution on and encouraged them to announce the heterosexual pro-family lifestyle. We will not go beyond that. We are not going in front of the commission."

The commission's hesitancy to support such a resolution may be a concern about risking the chance to host the 1996 Olympic sailing competition, according to *Southern Voice*. Three months ago, the volleyball competition was withdrawn from Cobb County, during protests over that county's discriminatory resolution.

KENTUCKY

An official of the Presbyterian Church canceled a prayer service scheduled to be led by the Rev. Jane Adams Spahr at the church's Louisville headquarters, according to reports in *Southern Voice*. The Rev. James D. Brown also canceled a reception for Spahr and restricted staff from meeting with her without prior approval.

According to Spahr, the cancellations seem to contradict the church's stated wish to have "dialogue" about the roles of gay men and lesbians in the church. "I thought why I was coming...[was] so a dialogue could happen," Spahr said.

Compiled by Jann Gilbert