

# world briefs

## AUSTRALIA

Sydney's famed annual gay Mardi Gras and Sleaze Ball parties have been overrun by fun-seeking heterosexuals and gay men are fed up with it, reported *Capital Q*.

More than 1,000 gay men have signed a petition calling on the Mardi Gras leadership to create a male-only dance space at the 1995 Mardi Gras party.

"With the increasing number of straights at our parties, they are becoming gay and lesbian unfriendly," said petition organizer Edmund Milts. "That's really sad."

Mardi Gras previously tried to fix the problem by becoming a membership organization, quizzing applicants about their sexuality, and allowing only members to attend the event, but a lot of straight people apparently said they were gay to gain admittance.

"It's a big issue, and we're taking it very seriously," said Mardi Gras president Rob Patmore. "Men-only and women-only spaces could be a possible solution."



awareness of discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Commercon, 30, is the first person under 40 to receive the Order of Merit. He has lectured extensively in schools on gay issues and wrote the book *AIDS: My Path in Life*.

Bruns, a retired Federal Court of Justice prosecutor, is a longtime gay leader and was a member of parliament's AIDS panel.

## NETHERLANDS

Dutch immigration officers Nov. 14 deported around 90 male-to-female transsexual prostitutes to Ecuador, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Brazil, according to the Internet Euro-Queer mailing list.

Amsterdam police blamed the prostitutes for a rash of fights, thefts and disturbances of the peace.

"We do not want this sort here just at the time we are trying to make prostitution into an ordinary business," a police media spokesman said. "There have been many complaints about fights breaking out when a customer finds out he's dealing with a man. The transsexuals are also aggressive to female prostitutes."

The transsexuals are believed to have relocated to Amsterdam after having been driven out of Paris' Bois de Boulogne park, a popular French cruising spot.

Police said the 90 individuals were in various stages of becoming female.

## SERBIA

On Nov. 16 Lepa Mladjenovic, of the sexual minority group Arkadia, became the first lesbian or gay man to discuss queer issues on Serbian television.

She appeared, along with a British lesbian, on the hour-long program *Incidentals* on the arts channel.

"So far, the reaction to the show has been positive," Arkadia said in a news release.

## TURKEY

A 22-year-old Turkish man living in Arlington, Va., was granted asylum in the United States on Oct. 18 because he was persecuted and raped by Turkish police due to his homosexuality.

"It has been determined you have established a well-founded fear of persecution were you to return to Turkey," the government wrote to Serkan Altan.

Altan is the second foreign gay or lesbian to win asylum in the U.S. since Attorney General Janet Reno declared in June that gay men and lesbians are a "particular social group" that is persecuted in some nations, according to *The Washington Blade*.

## ZIMBABWE

Members of Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe are raising money to sue the national daily newspaper, the *Daily Gazette*, over its refusal to run a GALZ advertisement.

"Our advert simply advertises our counseling service," a GALZ spokesman said. "The newspaper has said that it is a 'family' newspaper and will not carry our advertisement."

"There are many isolated and lonely gay people in Zimbabwe who we would reach via this advert."

In related news, members of GALZ are raising money to fight censorship laws that, according to the group, deem all gay and lesbian material pornographic.

"We once suffered a raid by the police, who were searching [unsuccessfully] for the GALZ library," the group said in a press release.

The Censor Board and the attorney general refuse to discuss the laws with GALZ, a spokesman said.

The government has also stalled for over six months on issuing a ruling on GALZ's video of the film *Maurice*, which the group submitted for a determination in an attempt to force the issue.

Compiled by Rex Wockner

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