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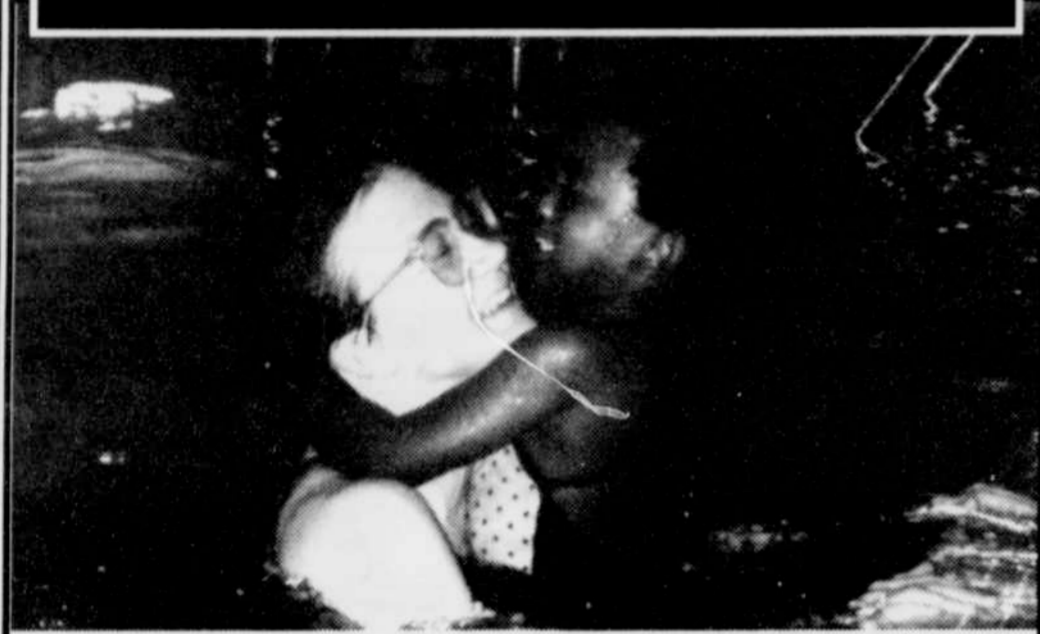
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REPORT HOMOPHOBIC VIOLENCE

796-1703

national news

ARKANSAS

Robert Wiley, an elementary school guidance counselor with the Smackover School District, was suspended without pay for the remainder of the school year after showing videotapes relating to HIV and AIDS to schoolchildren.

According to the Associated Press, Wiley, an employee of the district for 21 years, showed the videotapes to students in the fourth and sixth grades. The programs he showed had all been aired on the Arkansas Educational Television Network. After upset parents protested to the school principal and the district superintendent, Wiley was instructed not to show any more videos on HIV. Disciplinary action was taken against Wiley when he continued to show videos to students.

CALIFORNIA

The Sierra Club, the nation's oldest grass-roots environmental organization, announced in April that it will extend medical, dental and vision benefits to the domestic partners of employees. These benefits are available to both same-sex and opposite-sex partners. For insurance purposes, domestic partners will carry the same status as married partners.

The Sierra Club is a membership organization. Currently, over 2,500 members participate in its six regional gay and lesbian groups.



Plans by the California Institute of Technology to offer domestic partnership benefits to gay and lesbian staff members has opponents in the Pasadena area hopping, *Baltimore Gay Paper* reported. Critics oppose the plan, which was set to begin May 1, because both CalTech and Jet Propulsion Laboratories, CalTech's most famous facility, are the largest employers in the area. Additionally, JPL is very involved in government-related research and with the public schools.

Opponents don't want school children to think that gay and lesbian relationships are as valid as heterosexual marriage. They also don't want any of the federal tax dollars that go to CalTech and JPL to be used to provide domestic partnership benefits to same-sex couples.



Greg Louganis, Olympic gold medalist and now well-known author, will act as grand marshal in this year's San Diego Lesbian and Gay Pride parade. Louganis, formerly of nearby El Cajon, will lead the parade accompanied by his mother.

Earlier this year, Louganis revealed both his sexual orientation and his HIV status during a television interview with Barbara Walters. His book, *Breaking the Surface*, has turned Louganis into a very hot commodity on the gay and lesbian circuit.

DISTRICT OF COLOMBIA

Third Parties '96, a conference organized by progressive activists to develop a strategy for the 1996 elections, will be held June 1 to 4 at George Washington University. Spearheaded by "Green parties" from several states, the conference is expected to draw representatives from ACT UP, the Patriot Party of Virginia, the Maryland New Party, and Washington, D.C.'s Umoja Party and Statehood Party.

"Our goal is to seek agreement on a statement of shared principles—to promote this statement and the spirit behind it to stimulate third party discussions in the states," conference coordinator Linda Martin said, in a story in *The Washington Blade*. For information on the conference, call (703) 642-5710.

ILLINOIS

A hearings officer for the Cook County Commission on Human Rights ruled May 4 that a Chicago-area sports bar illegally discriminated against four gay men when it had them arrested for dancing together. In her decision, Joanne Kinoy ruled that the Sidelines Sports Bar had



discriminated on the basis of sexual orientation, a violation of Cook County's human rights ordinance. She recommended that the bar pay the maximum fine. Her decision will now go to the commission for review.

INDIANA

A group of Indiana gay men and lesbians has demanded the removal of an Indiana Civil Rights Commission member who spoke out against an Indiana General Assembly bill that would have prohibited employment discrimination based on sexual orientation. According to an Associated Press story, Ruth G. Benavente stated that she spoke out against the bill because of her religious belief that homosexuality is a sin and homosexuals should not have legal protections.

NEW YORK

Hoping to lead a unified economic campaign by the gay and lesbian community to encourage corporations to end discrimination in the workplace, the Wall Street Project introduced in April a set of "Equality Principles on Sexual Orientation."

Modeled after the "Sullivan Principles on Investing in South Africa" this voluntary eight-point code has been offered to major corporations in the United States and Canada.

The Wall Street Project is a program of the Community Lesbian and Gay Rights Institute Inc. Its goal is to eliminate discrimination in every workplace in the United States. For more information, write the Wall Street Project, 185 E 85th St., Suite 25A, New York, NY 10028-2147.

NORTH CAROLINA

A lawsuit filed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on behalf of a Campbell University teacher who was fired two years ago was settled out of court in late March. The teacher, who has AIDS, was fired because he was perceived to be a threat to the safety of the students. Under the terms of the settlement, he will receive \$325,000 and will get his job back.

According to an Associated Press story, this lawsuit was the first in North Carolina to apply the Americans with Disabilities Act to people with AIDS.

WASHINGTON

A special birthday party was held in Seattle last month for state Sen. Cal Anderson. The celebration raised money for the Cal Anderson House, a 24-unit apartment complex that will house low-income people living with AIDS. Anderson, a gay man, received personal letters of congratulations from President Bill Clinton and U.S. Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash). The letters were read at the Pioneer Square event by Murray's Seattle-based special assistant, Kennie Endelman.

The Cal Anderson House was established through local, state and federal dollars, as well as private donations. Of the \$2.6 million needed to complete the project, \$1.47 million came from a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Compiled by Kristine Chatwood