

national briefs

CALIFORNIA

A transsexual woman who was held in solitary confinement in a Ventura jail for 40 days, charged in a shooting in which she was the victim, was finally released from jail last month.

On Christmas Day, 1995, Candy Walker told her parents she is a transsexual. Her father had the police remove her from the house. Three days later, when Walker returned home to gather some belongings, her father shot her twice.

District Attorney John Vanarelli charged Walker with first degree burglary. She was also charged with carrying a concealed weapon when it was discovered that her cane contained a small blade. Vanarelli originally requested and was granted a bail of \$250,000. Bail was later reduced to \$20,000. All charges except the weapons charge were eventually dropped at the request of Walker's mother.



In July 1995, members of ACT UP-San Francisco invaded the county's Republican headquarters to protest Sen. Jesse Helms' delaying tactics with the reauthorization of the Ryan White CARE Act. Four demonstrators were arrested and charged with vandalism, burglary and conspiracy. Two of the defendants tentatively accepted pretrial diversion settlements; ill health forced one defendant to drop his court defense; and the fourth defendant, David Pasquarelli, is proceeding to trial.

Pasquarelli intends to fight the charges using the "necessity" defense. Pasquarelli intends to show that the possibility that the CARE Act would not be reauthorized created an atmosphere of fear and crisis in the AIDS community, and that the attempt to block reauthorization was an act of hostility toward the AIDS community that threatened the collapse of San Francisco's health care system.



The San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to approve an ordinance that authorizes the county clerk or a deputized representative to perform a civil ceremony with "marriage-like vows" for couples who register with the city as domestic partners.

The ceremony carries absolutely no legal weight. It will be available to both heterosexual and homosexual couples.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

A letter requesting full funding of the Ryan White CARE Act through fiscal year 1996 was delivered to Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) in late January. The letter was written by Reps. Steve Gunderson (R-Wis.) and Rick Lazio (R-N.Y.) and signed by 29 House Republicans.

The CARE Act is being funded at fiscal year 1995 levels under a continuing resolution.



The Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest lesbian and gay organization, is objecting to a part of the plan to overhaul Medicaid put forth by the National Governors Association.

HRC is concerned about a provision that would allow each individual state to define who is "disabled" in determining Medicaid eligibility. HRC believes this measure could jeopardize the benefits of people living with HIV and AIDS. Nearly half of all Americans with AIDS receive Medicaid benefits, including more than 90 percent of children with AIDS.

"This proposal opens the door to states to exclude people who have expensive or politically unpopular disabilities, including AIDS and HIV," said Winnie Stachelberg, HRC's senior health policy advocate. "In the name of giving 'flexibility to the states,' the governors appear willing to endanger lives. We can't risk the possibility of 50 different definitions of disability."



Members of a gay and lesbian anti-abortion group were rejected by the organizers of the annual

March for Life in January. Nelli Gray, march president, ordered the Pro-Life Alliance of Gays and Lesbians to turn in their convention badges and not carry their banner, which included a drawing of a fetus inside a pink triangle.

Gray told *The Washington Post*, "Homosexuality is sinful by anyone's definition, and there was no way I was going to have a banner promoting sinful acts."

NEW YORK

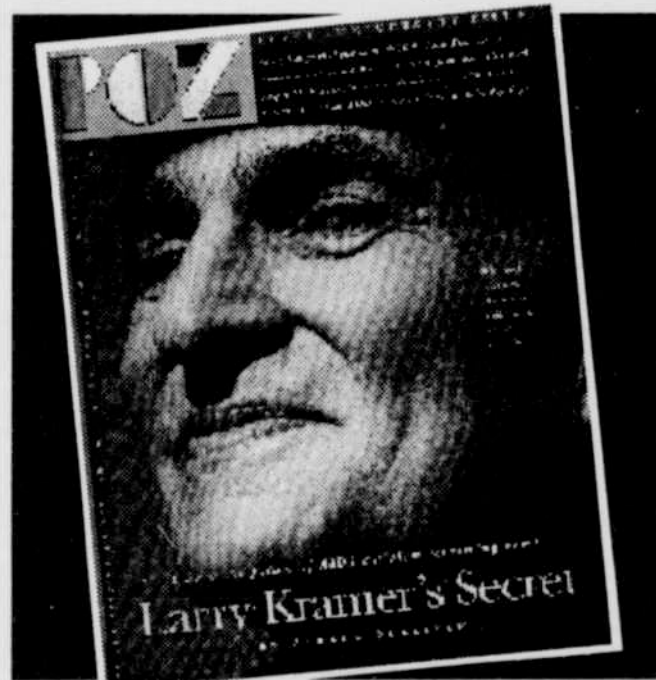
Ms. magazine is suing *Ms. Behavior*.

Lang Communications, L.P., the corporate owner of *Ms.* magazine, has filed an opposition proceeding before the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board to prevent lesbian author Meryl Cohn from obtaining a registered trademark for her name, *Ms. Behavior*.

Cohn is the author of *Do What I Say: Ms. Behavior's Guide to Gay and Lesbian Etiquette*. She also writes a newspaper column of gay advice and etiquette.



POZ, a national magazine for people affected by HIV/AIDS, and a coalition of AIDS organizations have decided it's time to stop complaining about the things President Clinton has not done to fight AIDS. Instead, the group, which includes the National Association of People with AIDS, Housing Works, PWA Coalition/New York, and several ACT UP chapters, developed a list of 50 actions that Clinton, or his successor, could take to fight AIDS.



The list, called "Fifty for the Future," appears in the current issue of *POZ*. It contains recommendations in a number of areas, including health care delivery, housing, education and prevention, research, immigration and advocacy. Each of the recommendations could be enacted by the use of executive orders and the presidential veto.



The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation has announced the nominees and some recipients of its seventh annual GLAAD Media Awards. Winners will be announced at ceremonies to be held on March 7 at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York, and on March 10 at the Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles.

Special award recipients have already been announced. They include Sid Sheinberg, former president of MCA, who will be given the Vanguard Award; Barbara Walters, of ABC News and *20/20*, who will receive the Excellence in Media Award; *The Celluloid Closet*, a film based on Vito Russo's book on the images of lesbians and gay men in the movies, which will receive the Vito Russo Film Award.

Other announced winners and their categories include: *The Incredibly True Adventure of Two Girls in Love* for Outstanding Independent Film; *Serving in Silence: The Margarethe Cammermeyer Story* for Outstanding Television Film; *All My Children* for Outstanding Daytime Television; *Ballot Measure 9* for Outstanding Film Documentary.

Compiled by Kristine Chatwood

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