

# national briefs

## CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles talk radio station KLSX-FM has come under fire from the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation for repeated use of anti-gay slurs.

In response to two incidents during the early afternoon call-in show *The Regular Guys*, GLAAD drafted a letter to the station manager, and on Sept. 16 a GLAAD representative was invited to discuss the issue on the air with the show's hosts, Larry Wachs and Eric Haessler.



During that discussion, Wachs was unrepentant about his use of the word "faggot" as an insult and said that he would "continue to use words as I feel necessary."

## COLORADO

On Sept. 16 the Denver City Council voted 11-1 in favor of extending health benefits to partners of gay and lesbian city employees. Mayor Wellington Webb has said that he will sign the measure into law, reports *The Associated Press*.

Employees applying for benefits under the new ordinance must swear they are in a "committed and exclusive relationship" with a same-sex partner. They must notify the city if the relationship ends, and would then have to wait six months to be eligible to re-enroll with a new partner. The ordinance does not grant benefits to the unmarried partners of heterosexual employees.

## CYBERSPACE

There's a new way for Northwest queers to network: Pride NorthWest, a Vancouver, B.C.-based nonprofit group, has launched a Web site that provides a thorough listing of lesbian and gay businesses, organizations and events in Oregon, Washington and British Columbia.

Pride NorthWest offers free Web space to help nonprofit organizations get the word out and inexpensive advertising for "lesbigay businesses" throughout the region. Pride NorthWest is located at <http://www.pridenw.org>.

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

In the wake of the Defense of Marriage Act, the national advocacy group GenderPAC has called on Congress to enact a "Family Preservation Act" which would exempt existing legal same-sex marriages from nullification under the new law. At risk are couples, already married and often with children, in which a partner has legally changed their sex. Although the change of sex is legally recognized by the federal government, under DOMA the marriage is not legally recognized and, in the event of death or disability, the surviving spouse would not be eligible for federal benefits, such as Social Security.

GenderPAC has drafted corrective legislation and is looking for congressional sponsorship. The organization has also requested clarification from the Department of Justice on the fate of existing, validly contracted same-sex unions under DOMA.

## GEORGIA

A recently passed law granting health and other benefits to domestic partners of unmarried employees of the City of Atlanta is being challenged in court. The Southeastern Legal Foundation, a conservative public policy group, filed suit against the measure on the basis that the ordinance is fiscally irresponsible and that it contradicts the state's ban of same-sex marriage. Nick Gold, a spokesman for the mayor's office, said the fiscal effects of the ordinance were being exaggerated by its opponents.

## NEW YORK

Out gay figure skater Rudy Galindo, who won the U.S. championship in January and a bronze medal in world competition this year, has turned pro. He makes his debut at the U.S. Professional Figure Skating Championships in Albany on Oct. 26.

Galindo's amateur career includes two U.S. nationals wins in pairs skating with Kristi Yamaguchi in 1989 and 1990. He is currently working on his autobiography, *Icebreaker, The Rudy Galindo Story*, and a television movie about his life in the works.



In addition to new drugs that combat the human immunodeficiency virus, there may soon be a treatment available which would boost the body's immune response, according to a Reuters report. The research, conducted at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center and presented in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, is a six-month study of 16 patients using daily injections of small doses of interleukin 2 (known as IL 2), a naturally occurring immune-system hormone previously prescribed in large doses, and with large side effects, as chemotherapy for some types of cancer.

The subjects were all HIV positive but asymptomatic, with CD-4 counts between 200 and 500, and on average had been infected with the virus for seven years. After adjusting the dosage, scientists found that the patients' CD-4 counts rose steadily without side effects. Researchers are encouraged by these initial findings and are planning larger-scale controlled studies and tests of IL 2 in combination with antiviral treatments already available.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

Concerned Christians are claiming victory after the city council of North Charleston voted to revoke the business license of a gay health club before it even opened, reports the *Baltimore Gay Paper*.

City Attorney Brady Hair insists the closure is not a gay issue. He says the city became concerned about the club operating as a sexually oriented business after fliers were circulated that depicted two nude men embracing and promised private room rentals and a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week open door policy, in addition to the usual weight machines and steam room.

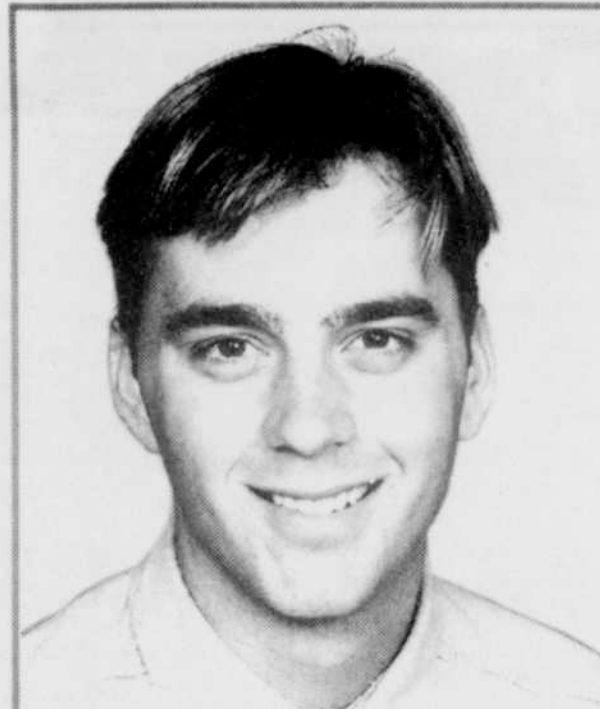
The club, Florida Fitness Facilities, will have 30 days to appeal the decision.

## WASHINGTON

After months of debate, the Bellingham City Council enacted a policy on Aug. 26 prohibiting the display of "controversial art," such as the Family, Friends and Neighbors exhibit. The photo exhibit, depicting gay men, lesbians and bisexuals, had drawn criticism from conservative groups in the area while on display at City Hall from June 20 to July 5.

Members of gay rights groups fighting the policy have cried foul, claiming that they were denied access to public records of letters sent to the council regarding the issue and that phone calls in support of the display were not recorded, while those in opposition were.

The city clerk in charge of the letters, as well as four of the five employees involved in documenting the phone calls, signed the petition in opposition to the art in question. The City Council has promised to reconsider the policy.



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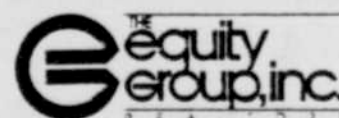
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