

STUDENT PAPER CANNED AFTER PRIDE PARODY

Celebrating Heterosexuality," a parody of queer pride month published in Amherst College's conservative student newspaper, *Amherst Spectator*, prompted the student government association to pull the periodical's funding, reports Boston newspaper *Bay Windows*.



Spectator founder and editor Ross Cohen said, "We rewrote the gay propaganda...as straight propaganda and they didn't like it."

Student government officer Paul Rieckhoff, meanwhile, told reporters the *Spectator* is "a poorly organized, poorly run organization that engages in irresponsible activities," and explained that the paper was already on probation for other reasons when the parody controversy arose.

College administrators have distanced themselves from the affair.

VETERANS GROUP SETTLES DISCRIMINATION SUIT

A predominantly gay American Legion post has won a settlement in its discrimination lawsuit against the California American Legion, lawyers for the San Francisco branch said.

The Associated Press reported March 3 that under the settlement the state organization and its War Memorial Commission paid an undisclosed sum to the Alexander Hamilton Post in San Francisco. The group also agreed to prohibit homophobic actions and statements in its offices and meetings.

The legion accepted no blame for alleged acts of discrimination, said the post's judge advocate Arch Wilson.

California Legion Controller Wilson Wu had no comment on the settlement or any policy changes prompted by the Alexander Hamilton Post's \$50-million lawsuit.

The suit, filed in 1996, accused the California American Legion of a homophobic campaign that began in 1983 in response to gay veterans' attempt to establish a post in San Francisco.

DUELING RULINGS IN LESBIAN CUSTODY CASE

The Sharon Bottoms saga continues: Legal wrangling between the lesbian and her mother over custody of her son, Tyler Doustou, revisited the courtroom of Buford M. Parsons, the judge who forbade interaction between Doustou and Bottoms' lover, April Wade.

In early March, following an appeals court order to "reconsider visitation rules on the grounds that it was wrong to bar contact solely because of Ms. Wade's homosexuality," Parsons granted Bottoms more visitation time. But contact between Wade and Doustou is still banned, according to The Associated Press.

The 1993 ruling of a Richmond, Va., juvenile court awarded custody of Doustou to the maternal grandmother, citing Bottoms' intimate relationship with a woman, April Wade, and the state's sodomy law. The ruling was overturned on appeal and later reinstated by a divided state Supreme Court.

PROMISE KEEPERS CAN'T KEEP PAID STAFF

A financial crisis has led the Promise Keepers, a Christian men's movement, to lay off all 345 staff members effective March 31, Reuters reports.

The group previously generated most of its revenue through a \$60 admission fee to its all-male stadium rallies, but declining attendance throughout 1997 prompted the group to stop charging admission. It now relies solely on donations.

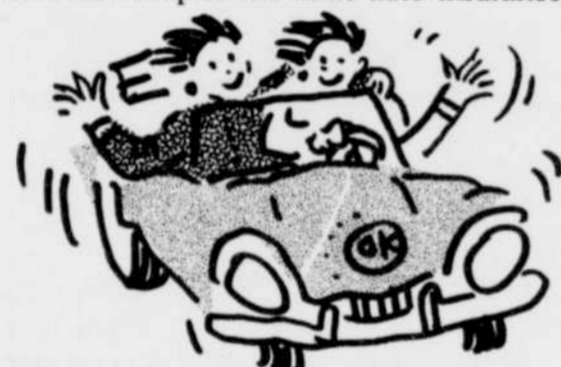
The move to an all-volunteer staff is a result of the funding policy change and costs associated with an October 1997 rally in Washington, D.C.

Despite these financial problems, 19 rallies are planned for 1998, organization founder Bill McCartney says.

OUT OF THE CLOSET AND INTO THE DRIVER'S SEAT

There weren't any rallies, public debates or ballots to mark one of the latest steps the queer community has made toward the mainstream—just a little advertising.

The Hartford Financial Services Group is offering gay male, lesbian and unmarried heterosexual couples the same auto insurance dis-



count it gives to married couples, according to a March 4 article in the *Boston Globe*.

The decision is being promoted in advertisements that announce: "The Hartford offers auto insurance discounts to gay couples. We also offer discounts to lesbian couples. Heck, we even offer discounts to heterosexual couples. (Not that there's anything wrong with that.)"

The ad is scheduled to appear first in gay publications, followed by signs at bus stops and subway stations in San Francisco.

SAY IT ISN'T SO

Some queer gals may need to pencil in extra time with their therapists. Why? *TV Guide* reported in February that Lucy Lawless is headed to the chapel.

Lawless, who plays the title character in the television show *Xena: Warrior Princess*, will be taking vows at an undisclosed place and time with Rob Tapert, executive producer of both *Xena* and *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*.

The lack of wedding specifics is no mistake. Lawless reportedly asked the publication not to publish even the month of the upcoming wedding.

"You don't know some of my fans," she lamented. "They'd travel anywhere to be there."

While Lawless' marriage might disappoint some of *Xena's* most devoted fans, not all is lost. *TV Guide* reported that k.d. lang might make an appearance in *Xena's* mystical world, and the poet Sappho, played by Lawless, will put the moves on Gabrielle in an upcoming episode.



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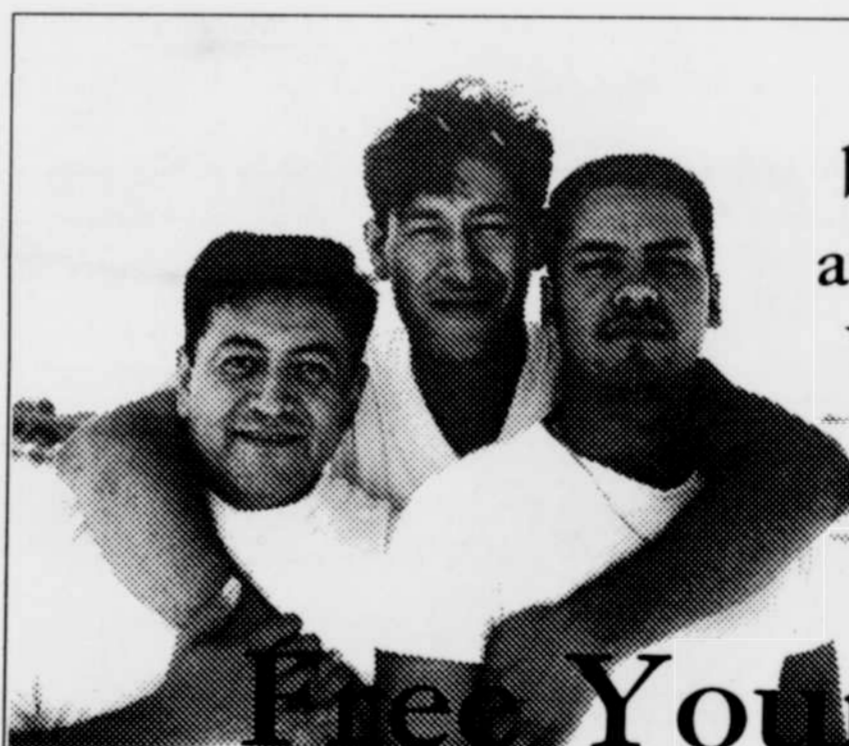
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