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**NATIONAL news
BRIEFS**

CALIFORNIA

Superior Court Judge William Cahill has pulled the latest pull in the ongoing tug of war between medical marijuana advocates and opponents.

No sooner had state Attorney General Dan Lungren managed to close San Francisco's Cannabis Cultivators Club on the grounds that it was not a primary caregiver—a condition for legal distribution of marijuana under the state's recently passed Proposition 215—than a new club went up in its place. True to character, Lungren sued to close the successor, Cannabis Healing Center.

Cahill's April 29 ruling, reports The Associated Press, ordered the new club to curb drug sales within the immediate neighborhood but fell far short of putting it out of business.

The new club bills itself as a primary caregiver for 300 to 500 patients daily.

The Boy Scouts of America have been dumped from the list of beneficiaries of a citywide charity drive in San Francisco.

The organization's official policy of non-admittance for openly gay people was the reason behind the action, according to the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Supervisor Mabel Tung led the move to omit the group, stating, "Gay and lesbian kids face tremendous obstacles in school and elsewhere. For their sake it is important to decry discrimination based on sexual preference, wherever it exists."

The move is far more political than fiscal, considering last year's charity drive netted the local Boy Scouts chapters just \$628.

Assemblyman Pete Knight, a Palmdale Republican who failed in two attempts to get a bill banning gay marriages through the legislature, needs to collect 433,269 signatures by June 25 in order to get his initiative on the November ballot.

According to The Associated Press, Knight's measure, entitled the California Defense of Marriage Act, would add one sentence to the Family Code: "Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California."

The state currently allows marriage only between a man and a woman, but California law recognizes all marriages performed elsewhere and thus would recognize same-gender unions should the practice be legalized in another state.

GEORGIA

Union City, a small town just southwest of Atlanta, was the scene of a recent sex-toy raid, reports the *Southern Voice*.

Police told the *Voice* they confiscated 3,500 sexual devices during the April 14 raid on New York Video. The store's parent company, Intersection, estimates the value of the confiscated merchandise—mostly dildos, butt plugs, vibrators and inflatable dolls—at \$50,000.

"They cleaned out all of the sex toys across the line," says Alan Begner, Intersection's attorney. "But we're restocking as we speak."

Georgia law reads: "Any device designed or marketed as useful primarily for the stimulation of human genital organs is obscene"—and therefore illegal to sell.



ILLINOIS

The Queer Kiss-In, christened in Evanston in 1997, returned this year to the Northwestern University campus. In an attempt to raise awareness and empower queer students,



the university's Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian Alliance coordinated a public display of same-sex affection, reports the *Daily Northwestern*.

"We just wanted to make it clear that gay people should be able to show affection in public," says student Ian Hlawati. "We need to be accorded respect."

KANSAS

Max Movsovit, an artist who was arrested for soliciting sex from an undercover police officer in Topeka's Gage Park in April 1995, has lost his courtroom challenge of the state's anti-sodomy law and a city ordinance, reports the *Wichita Eagle*.

With backing from the American Civil Liberties Union, Movsovit argued the law and ordinance violated his rights to privacy, equal treatment under the law and freedom of expression. He also charged the law discriminates against gay men and lesbians.

The state Court of Appeals panel unanimously rejected all the arguments. The court's statement opined, "As societal values evolve, the Legislature may follow some other state legislatures and decriminalize private sexual behavior between all consenting adults. However, these are issues that should be addressed by legislatures and not courts."

MICHIGAN

Voters in Ypsilanti retained an anti-discrimination ordinance that includes protection based on sexual orientation. According to the Human Rights Campaign, the 1997 ordinance was kept in place by a 56 percent to 44 percent vote May 4 in the city, which is about 25 miles west of Detroit and home to roughly 25,000 people.

The city council unanimously approved the ordinance in December, then suspended it in February after petitioners called for its repeal. The measure bars discrimination in 14 areas, including race, height, weight, disability and sexual orientation.

Ordinance opponents included professional football player and Baptist minister Reggie White. The balloting came five days after White appeared at a rally held by opponents of the ordinance's sexual orientation provision.

RHODE ISLAND

A group in South Kingstown that helps lesbians and their families deal with cancer has won tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service after an initial rejection.

Kathys' Group says it originally was told by the IRS that it would only be given a tax exemption if it extended its service from lesbians to all women.

According to the Associated Press, a lawyer for Kathys' Group, who called the initial denial an instance of anti-gay discrimination, says the status will help the counseling group gather donations by relieving contributors of the obligation to pay taxes on the money they donate.

Kathys' Group provides free counseling to lesbians, their partners and families. The group was founded in 1995 after one member of a lesbian couple—both named Kathy—became sick with breast cancer.

Compiled by WILL O'BRYAN and INGA SORESENSEN