

ALABAMA

Slightly more than a year ago, New Woman All Women Health Care in Birmingham was the site of a fatal bombing.

Today, security cameras comb the parking area and yard where the bomb went off Jan. 29, 1998, killing an off-duty police officer and critically injuring a nurse.

The bombing at the health clinic, which provides abortion services, set off a manhunt for Eric Robert Rudolph, 32, who is believed to be hiding in the woods around his home in western North Carolina.



On the anniversary of the bombing, a memorial service was held in memory of police officer Robert Sanderson, who was moonlighting as a security guard at New Woman when the blast occurred. He died instantly.

Meanwhile, nurse Emily Lyons, who was badly injured, has become a spokeswoman for reproductive rights since the bombing.

According to a Jan. 28 Associated Press report, thousands of people have reached out to Lyons, including Dana Ford, who runs the Othertide Lounge, an Atlanta lesbian nightclub that Rudolph is accused of bombing 11 months before the Birmingham explosion.

The report says evidence found in searches of Rudolph's home, truck and a warehouse led authorities to charge him in the 1996 Olympic Games bombing in Atlanta, in which a woman died, as well as explosions at the clinic and the lesbian club.

CALIFORNIA

Willie Brown flew on United Airlines. According to the Jan. 27 *San Francisco Examiner*, the mayor of San Francisco took a United flight despite the fact that his own city is embroiled in a bitter lawsuit with United over the San Francisco law that requires companies doing business with the city to provide workers with domestic partners the same benefits married workers receive.

Members of the city's Board of Supervisors and other community members have called for a boycott of United because of the airline's refusal to comply with and legal challenge of the domestic partners law.

Kandace Bender, Brown's spokeswoman, says she does not know if the mayor was aware of the boycott, but he is supportive of the law.

"No one in this city has been more supportive of equal benefits than Mayor Brown. No one," she says.

While the mayor was winging his way across the country via the "friendly skies," attorneys for San Francisco and the Air Transport Association, an airlines trade group, appeared before U.S. District Judge Claudia Wilkins to make final arguments.

The ATA filed a lawsuit in May 1997 seeking exemption from the ordinance. United Airlines joined with the Air Transportation Association in the lawsuit, which contends that only the federal government, not local governments, can force this requirement on the airline industry.

Also in court the same day were attorneys from fundamentalist minister Pat Robertson's American Center for Law and Justice. They represent S.D. Myers, an Ohio-based contractor. Myers' suit claims his company should not be

forced to comply with a law that condones a "relationship based on sex outside of marriage."

It is expected that, however Judge Wilkins rules, the case will next be appearing in appeals court.

COLORADO

Student athletes in a school district near Fort Collins could be banned from playing sports if it is revealed that they have HIV or AIDS.

If a student athlete reveals that he or she has an infectious disease, the Poudre School District requires that a committee of parents, health professionals and school officials decide whether the student may play sports, according to The Associated Press.

Although the policy—which was approved unanimously by the school board in mid-January—applies to all sports and all "serious communicable diseases," the only diseases actually named were HIV and AIDS.

"We're not automatically excluding anybody," argues Joe Hendrickson, the policy's lead author and the district's director of pupil services. "Our intention was to find a policy that did not discriminate, that would only consider exclusion if there were a medically sound recommendation."

MINNESOTA

A Minneapolis police trainee finds himself in the rather awkward position of having to leave the police department each time he wants to use the restroom.

The trainee, a preoperative female-to-male transsexual claims he has been denied access to the male shower and bathroom facilities at the department.

No unisex facilities exist, and use of shower facilities is a required part of training, reports the Jan. 21 *Minneapolis Star Tribune*.

The trainee, known only as "John Doe," has filed a discrimination suit against the police department in Hennepin County District Court. He is undergoing medical treatment in preparation for surgery to become a man.

In addition to the problem with the shower facilities, the complaint also alleges that supervisors and co-workers refer to "John Doe" using female pronouns.

He is seeking payment of attorney's fees, use of the male restrooms and showers and to be addressed as a man by his co-workers.



MISSOURI

Gay and lesbian employees of a Missouri school district have reason to be happy.

According to the Jan. 13 *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, the St. Louis School Board approved a policy banning sexual orientation discrimination in all aspects of employment, including hiring, promotions, salaries and assignments.

According to school officials, the new policy is an extension of a similar one passed last year that banned discrimination against gay and lesbian students.

NATIONAL

A study published in December's *New England Journal of Medicine* says the cost of

treating people with HIV in the United States is less than one percent of all U.S. medical expenditures on patients.

That comes to about \$20,000 per HIV-infected person each year—or \$6.7 billion annually—according to the government-sponsored study, which was overseen by RAND, a think tank based in Santa Monica, Calif.

The 3,072 people interviewed for the study, which was conducted in 1996, came from dozens of rural and urban areas around the country. They were all being treated in hospitals or doctors' offices.

The \$20,000 figure is approximately one-third of the estimates from the early 1990s. Those early estimates were made before the widespread use of so-called AIDS drug cocktails.

"Compared to what we spend on all kinds of other things, it's just not that much money," says project co-director Dr. Samuel Bozzette.

An online thesaurus created by America Online Inc. and Merriam-Webster Inc. was pulled off the Internet after complaints from gay and lesbian rights organizations about the derogatory references used for the word "homosexual," reports the Jan. 18 issue of *The Wall Street Journal*.

The list of synonyms for "homosexual" included such all-time greats as "fruit," "faggot" and "homo," among others. The word "pederast," which refers to men who seek young boys as sexual partners, also appeared.

In a statement, Merriam-Webster officials said they were "reviewing policies regarding inclusion of words that are offensive or inappropriate."

The company also noted "the thesaurus is not a political tool," but a compendium of words "used in our society."

Activists protesting the thesaurus did not ask for the words be removed; they simply requested the companies provide more guidance on the derogatory nature of the words.

The words were discovered by Mike Webb, a Seattle talk show host who was just checking out the thesaurus. He was stunned at the definitions that appeared on his screen when he typed in the word "homosexual."

He notified an acquaintance at GAYBC Radio Network, and the activist groups went to work.

"I'm not for censorship," Webb says. "My only problem is that kids who stumble on these words might think these are words that can be used."

SOUTH CAROLINA

When Susan M. Gilman, a parolee, moved to South Carolina, she identified herself on her driver's license application as a man. That made it much easier for Gilman and Marsha Vicky Haas to get a notarized marriage license from Charleston County last spring, and for the pair to subsequently get married, reports the Dec. 17 *Charleston Post & Courier*.

South Carolina law forbids same-sex marriage. Both women have been charged by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division with same-sex marriage. Gilman was also convicted in September on two counts of having false identification.

The marriage was discovered during the investigation of Gilman's use of a man's name. The marriage license listed the groom as Scott Gilman Austin and the bride as Marsha Vicky Haas.

Both women were released from jail on personal recognizance bonds.

■ Compiled by KRISTINE CHATWOOD

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