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NATIONAL news

CALIFORNIA

A movement to have the building that once housed the late Harvey Milk's home, camera shop and campaign headquarters declared an official city landmark passed its first hurdle last month when the San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board voted to commemorate the site, the *San Francisco Examiner* reported Jan. 20.

The Victorian-era building was constructed in 1894. Milk leased the property from 1973 to 1978. The sidewalk in front of the building features a bronze plaque dedicated to Milk. A mural of his image is painted on the building's exterior.

Milk, the first openly gay person to hold elective office in California, won a seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1977. He was shot and killed by former Supervisor Dan White in November 1978. During that same rampage, White also killed Mayor George Moscone.

Both the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors must approve the landmarks advisory board's decision. If that happens, the issue will go to the mayor for final approval.

ILLINOIS

The Hope United Church of Christ, located in Belleville, in now known simply as the Hope Church. The name change is the result of a vote by the congregation to split away from the national United Church of Christ organization.

The congregation of Hope Church disagreed so strongly with the national organization's policy of accepting lesbians and gay men as members that 81 percent of the group voted in favor of the split, reports a Jan. 23 Associated Press story.

"We no longer want the United Church of Christ speaking for us, taking stands for us that we don't agree with," said Darrell Coons, pastor of Hope Church. "Our members say the United Church of Christ is taking stands that aren't scriptural."

According to the Rev. Ron Eslinger, head of the United Church of Christ's Illinois South Conference, none of the conference's other 90 affiliates have chosen to leave.

NATIONAL

The White House announced in January that President Bill Clinton's fiscal 2001 budget contains an increase of \$175 million in federal AIDS funding. Most of that money is earmarked for medical care, medication and support services for people with AIDS and HIV.

According to a Jan. 18 Reuters story, the budget would increase funding for Ryan White CARE Act programs by \$125 million. CARE Act programs pay for primary medical care, drugs, treatment information and support services for approximately 900,000 people with AIDS or HIV.

The remaining \$50 million has been requested for programs that educate people about the importance of learning their HIV/AIDS status and efforts to discourage people from engaging in unsafe behaviors that can lead to the transmission of HIV.

The budget will be submitted to Congress on Feb. 7.

The U.S. Supreme Court will hear the Boy Scouts of America's appeal of a ruling by the New Jersey Supreme Court.

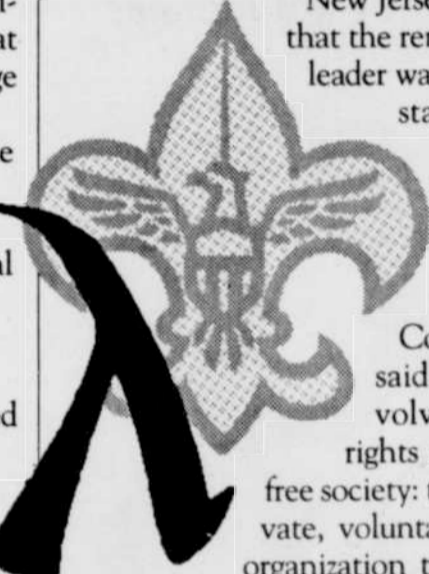
New Jersey's high court ruled that the removal of a gay troop leader was in violation of the state's anti-discrimination law, according to various media reports.

In appealing to the U.S. Supreme Court, the Boy Scouts said, "This case involves constitutional rights at the heart of our free society: the freedom of a private, voluntary, noncommercial organization to create and interpret its own moral code and to choose leaders and define membership criteria accordingly."

In its unanimous ruling last August, the New Jersey Supreme Court said the Boy Scouts qualifies as a "place of public accommodation" subject to the state's anti-discrimination law.

The U.S. Supreme Court will hear arguments in April. A decision is expected by the end of June.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported last month that in 1998—for the first time since the outbreak of AIDS in the United States was discovered in the 1980s—more black and Hispanic gay men



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