

SOUTH KOREA

Hong Suk-chon, the South Korean actor who was fired from his roles on several programs after he came out of the closet in September, appeared on the *All Star Show*, a New Year's Day television special, the *Korea Herald* reports.

The paper said the invitation signaled that the broadcast networks have come around and accepted his sexuality. The firings were protested by other celebrities and gay activists who formed a support group.



Hong Suk-chon

Since coming out, Hong has appeared on some cable shows and released an album of Christmas music, but he had been blacklisted by the over-the-air networks. For the immediate future, he will serve as host of the cable program *Sex and Health* and write the memoir *I Still Get Thrilled About Illicit Love*.

AUSTRALIA

At least three new gay newspapers have been launched in Australia following the collapse of Satellite Media, which owned six of the nation's gay newspapers and the 17-year-old national gay glossy magazine *Outrage*. When Satellite crashed and burned, it took with it *Outrage*, the *Melbourne Star Observer*, Melbourne's *Brother Sister*, Brisbane's *Brother Sister*, Sydney's *Capital Q*, Perth's *Westside Observer* and the *Adelaide Gay Times*.

The new paper in Sydney, published by former Satellite employees, is called *G*. Melbourne has *Melbourne Community Voice* and *BnewsS*, produced by separate groups of former Satellite employees.

An unnamed pregnant lesbian made history Dec. 14, the *Australian* reported. She is the first in the state of Victoria to become pregnant via in vitro fertilization since a landmark Federal Court ruling granted lesbians access to reproductive technology.

Family groups condemned the conception as a devastating day for families and an assault on every child's right to a father, the *Australian* said. Victoria is where Melbourne is located.

URUGUAY

About 150 gays and lesbians staged a pride march Sept. 28 in Montevideo, Uruguay, the South African gay newspaper *Exit* reported in its December issue.

Another 100 participants walked along on the sidewalks, out of view of media photographers. The city's first gay pride parade, in 1993, attracted 13 people, *Exit* said.

With the theme "Consciousness of Sexual Diversity," the parade traversed the city's most crowded street, July 18th Avenue. One banner read, "Yes to alternative families, civil union, adoption and insemination."

A float—the first ever in an Uruguayan pride parade—was funded by the City Council. Two "nuns" rode on it, dancing and blowing kisses. The next day, the Catholic diocese denounced the float as a "scandal."

"Among all these people and rainbow colors, I felt so brave, so proud," one marcher, William, told an *Exit* correspondent.

UKRAINE

Ukraine's Our World Gay and Lesbian Center in Lugansk says it has exhausted domestic sources of funding and is seeking foreign donations to continue its work.

In a 28-page magazine sent to foreign journalists, the organization said \$10 will fund 50 copies of its Informational Bulletin, which is mailed to politicians, reporters and public fig-

ures; \$20 will pay two days' wages for the group's three employees; \$50 will pay two weeks' rent on their office; and \$100 "will give life to the new projects we plan, like developing legislative proposals and answers for younger homosexuals adapting personally and socially."

The average salary in Ukraine is less than \$50 a month, the activists said.

The magazine sent to reporters, *Ukrainian Gay Men and Lesbians at the Threshold of the Millennium*, provides a comprehensive look at the situation of Ukrainian gays and the work of the Our World Center. It can be viewed online at www.gay.org.ua/publish.htm.

For more information, e-mail ourworld@cci.lg.ua, call 011-38-0642-53-06-99, or visit www.gay.org.ua.

MEXICO

City councilors from Mexico City's ruling Democratic Revolution Party are in the final stages of preparing a measure to recognize gay unions and let gay couples adopt children. It is not known if the bill will pass.

The leftist party holds 19 seats in the body. The center-right National Action Party has 17 seats, and the centrist Institutional Revolutionary Party has 16 seats.

"It is very significant from our point of view to advance the human and civil rights of these people that are supposedly born free and equal under the constitution," Armando Quintero, the council's Democratic Revolution Party leader, told the *Reforma* newspaper.

GHANA

People with AIDS in Ghana have been cut off from the drugs AZT and 3TC following legal threats from mammoth drugmaker Glaxo Smithkline.

In an effort to increase drug access, Healthcare Ltd., a distributor in Ghana, recently bought cheap generic AZT and 3TC from Cipla Inc., a company in India. The generic drugs are about 10 times cheaper than Glaxo Smithkline's patented versions. Glaxo Smithkline found out Cipla was exporting the drugs, accused it of violating patents and threatened a lawsuit if the exports continued.

Cipla halted the exports, Healthcare Ltd. stopped distribution of pills that already had arrived in Ghana, and the people with AIDS who were taking the drugs now go without. For more information, call 215-731-1844 or e-mail asia@critpath.org.

THE PHILIPPINES

Jonathan Agudaa, 30, has sued the Manilla discotheque Club Royale for denying him entrance because he was dressed in women's clothing. His case was heard Dec. 12 before the Commission on Human Relations.

"Gays have the right to wear ladies clothes, too," Agudaa testified. Cross-dressing "is a form of self-expression for gays, and the public should not perceive it as offensive."

NIGERIA

Alliance Rights Nigeria is a new gay organization in the West African nation. The group, which has 467 members, organizes seminars and lectures in high schools to provide information on sexually transmitted diseases, safer sex and gay and lesbian pride.

At least one other gay organization, the Alternative Lifestyles Foundation, has formed recently in Lagos. Co-founder Kene Uz Korie hopes to organize gays and lesbians into a formidable pressure group to promote gay visibility and equality. **JN**

Compiled by REX WOCKNER, who has reported for the gay press since 1985. He has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Drake University and started his career as a radio reporter

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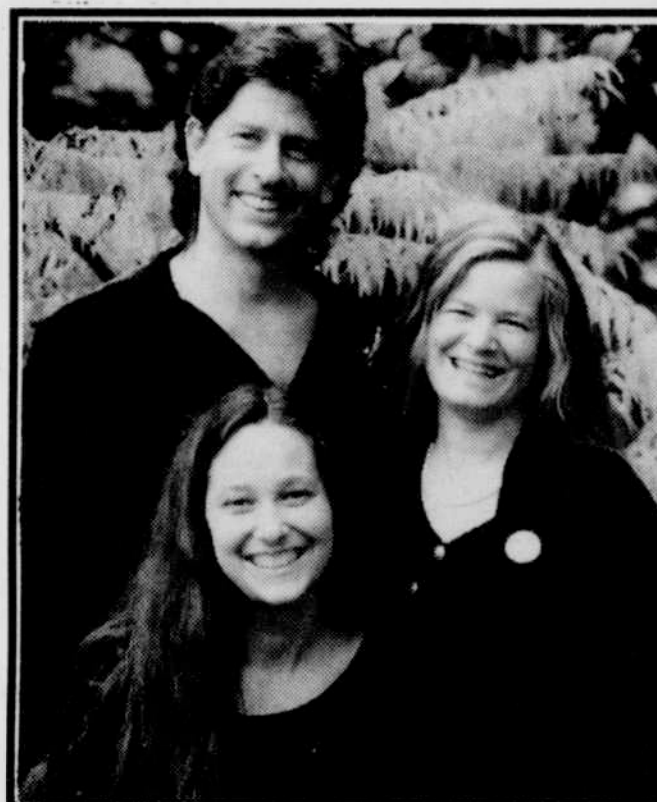
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