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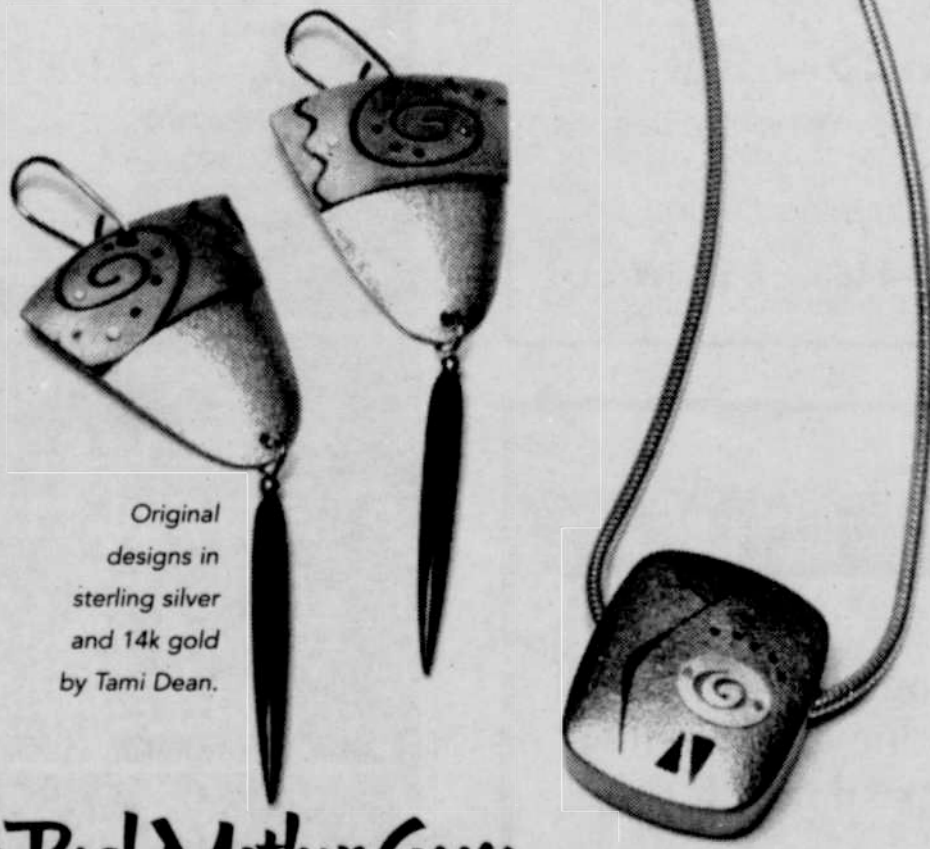
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WORLD news

THE NETHERLANDS

Attorneys Heather Wishik and Susan Donegan of Provincetown, Mass., tied the knot July 31 in Amsterdam.

The Netherlands has offered same-sex couples full marriage identical in every respect to heterosexual marriage since April 1; it is the only nation where that is possible. Foreigners, gay or straight, can marry in the Netherlands after they have lived there for four months.

"Susan has been practicing law there for a year and a half...and is a resident of Amsterdam," Wishik said in an Aug. 10 phone call from Provincetown, where the couple have a home. "We were the first foreigners to marry at the Zuider Amstel town hall in the southern part of Amsterdam. It seemed important to us that the Dutch law is exactly the same [for gays and straights]."

"It felt to us like there was a way to be ordinary and a lesbian couple in a new way," Wishik added. "It was a real extension of Dutch fairness and choice. We found it a delightful process. The town hall clerks never raised an eyebrow. They were cordial, gracious, welcoming, wonderful."

Wishik is in the process of establishing residency in the Netherlands to join her wife full

time, "and she gets to come in on my visa," Donegan said. But are they now legally married at home in Massachusetts, where other Dutch marriages have been recognized?

"I have no idea," said Ann Donlan, press secretary to Attorney General Tom Reilly. "It's a legal

question that would require some thought and research. I'm not prepared to answer it at this point."

Donlan called back a short time later and stated, "This is a matter for the courts." Asked whether opposite-sex married couples from the Netherlands who move to Massachusetts are legally married in Massachusetts or have to get married again, she snapped, "I have nothing else to say to you."

In fact, Massachusetts generally recognizes marriages from elsewhere even if those marriages could not have taken place in Massachusetts.

"Massachusetts has—or at least had—a law that forbids uncles from marrying nieces and aunts from marrying nephews," said Jon Davidson, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund senior counsel. "There was a case where an aunt married her nephew in England and later moved to Massachusetts and the question was, what was Massachusetts going to do about that, since that marriage could not have been entered into in Massachusetts."

"The court ruled that since that marriage was not void by the laws of England, it did not feel warranted in saying the parties were not husband and wife," Davidson added. "The general rule that Massachusetts follows is that if a marriage was legal in the place where it was entered into, Massachusetts will recognize it and treat it as a valid marriage, even if the couple couldn't have gotten married in Massachusetts."

The particular question of whether Massachusetts—or any other state—will recognize same-sex marriages from other nations never has been answered by a court, Davidson said, "because until the Netherlands, no country allowed equal marriage rights for same-sex couples."

CANADA

A gay television channel launched Sept. 7 in Canada, available via satellite and digital cable.

PrideVision TV offers shows such as *Dyke*



Gimme, Gimme, Gimme will air on PrideVision TV, "the world's first GLBT television network"

TV; *Gimme, Gimme, Gimme*, a "lewd" look at habitual cruisers; *Got 2B There*, about circuit parties; and the current affairs program *Shout!* Some cable companies have indicated disinterest in carrying the channel, a spokesman said.

YUGOSLAVIA

Yugoslavia soon will have a gay magazine, editor Attila Kovacs says.

Decko, which translates both as "boy" and "boyfriend," will hit the streets later this summer. "Looking up to *Advocate*, *Attitude* [a British magazine], *PlanetOut* and other famous international gay magazines, the *Decko* team shall give its best to cover national and international LGBT issues," Kovacs said.

SOUTH KOREA

The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission called for protests Aug. 23 against South Korea's new ban on gay Internet content. The Ministry of Information and Communications adopted a rating system classifying gay and lesbian Web sites as "harmful media" that must be blocked to protect young people.

The government acted after an April decision by the Korean Information and Communications Ethics Committee classifying homosexuality as "obscenity and perversion" in its "Criteria for Indecent Internet Sites." Activists trace the roots of this definition to a 1997 law categorizing "homosexual love" as "harmful to youth."

Since the ministry accepted this definition in July, access to most Korean gay and lesbian Web sites has been blocked. Ivancity.com, the nation's largest gay Web site, was shut down by its Internet service provider July 30 without any notice or request for content modification. Gay online clubs at two of Korea's biggest Web portals, Daum and Say Club, also were deleted, reportedly on orders from the committee.

The new restrictions require Internet cafes and other public computer facilities accessible to youth to install filtering software and force Internet service providers to block access to all questionable Web sites. They also enforce "an Internet content rating system which is likely to contain a number of components: a list of officially banned sites, a regime of compulsory self-rating by Web page designers and blockage of Web sites based on a control list of keywords," the commission said.

SOUTH AFRICA

The Treatment Action Campaign sued the national and provincial health ministers Aug. 21 to force them to give drugs to HIV-positive pregnant women to thwart transmission of the virus to their babies. The government has procrastinated in making the medicine available because President Thabo Mbeki thinks it has not been proven that HIV is the cause of AIDS.

Some 200 babies are born HIV-positive every day in South Africa. About 11 percent of the population is believed to carry the virus.