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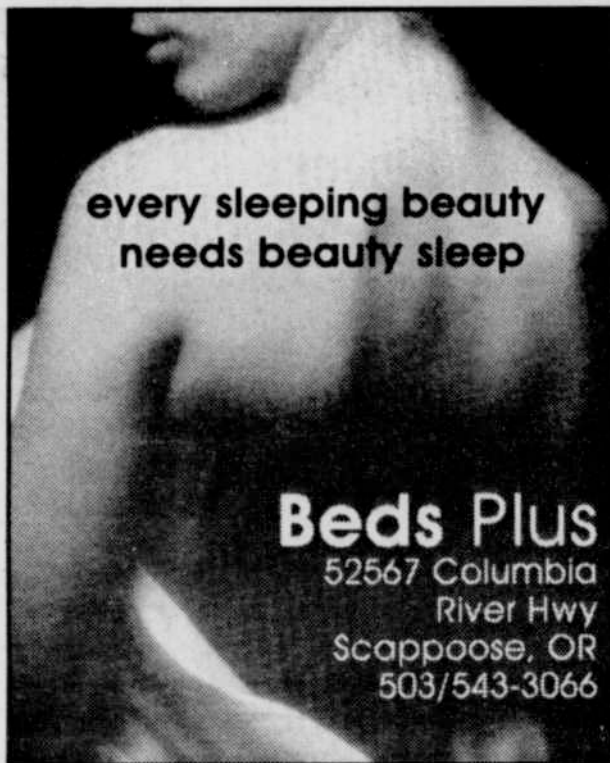
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**NATIONAL news**



If Dan Baker (right, greeting baseball player Dave Winfield) prevails, Long Beach will become the largest U.S. city to elect an openly gay mayor

**CALIFORNIA**

Political watchers who were waiting to see whether Long Beach would become the largest city in the United States to elect an openly gay mayor will have to wait.

Vice Mayor Dan Baker was an early favorite to win the contest April 9, but incumbent Mayor Beverly O'Neill—who is term-limited out and, therefore, was not on the ballot—waged a strong write-in campaign to keep her job. A runoff will be held June 4.

"History is on hold," said Bob Kearney, Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund political director. "Dan has used his current office to advocate for inclusion and equality. Now we must help him win the mayor's office. Helping gay candidates make inroads to higher office is the key to changing laws and proving that gays and lesbians are capable public servants."

Baker, a relative newcomer to electoral politics, has been heralded for his outreach to voters, which included personally visiting about 20,000 residences. In comparison, O'Neill has eight years as mayor under her belt and showed incumbency's value through her highly unusual and unusually successful write-in campaign.

For now, Tempe, Ariz.—a city of 158,000—will remain the most populous U.S. city with an openly gay mayor. Long Beach, which is located 25 miles south of Los Angeles, is home to 461,000 people, making it California's fifth-largest city.

Martin Thomas Hartman was arraigned April 15 for allegedly pouring gasoline over another man as he slept and setting him afire because he is gay. The 38-year-old pleaded not guilty to charges that he killed Clint Scott Risetfer, 37, on Feb. 24 in Santa Barbara.

Hartman told police he met the victim about six months before the murder and recently had found out about his sexual orientation. Investigators say he is mentally disturbed and was a suspect in a number of arsons for which they didn't have enough evidence to charge him.

The trial has been set for June 26. If convicted, Hartman could face the death penalty.

**VIRGINIA**

U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft and the Justice Department invoked the Hate Crimes Sentencing Enhancement Act in the indictment of Darrell David Rice for the murder of two female hikers. The action marks the first time ever that the law

was implemented to charge someone with a hate crime based on sexual orientation or gender.

"Today's murder indictment specifically invokes a federal sentencing enhancement enacted to ensure justice for victims of hate crimes," Ashcroft said April 10. The act could be used in this case because the slayings took place on federal land.



The bodies of Laura Winans (left) and Julianne Marie Williams were discovered June 1, 1996, in Shenandoah National Park

On June 1, 1996, Julianne Marie Williams and Laura Winans were discovered dead in Virginia's mountainous Shenandoah National Park, bound

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