

WORLD news

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Saskatchewan gays won their fight to have Pride Day proclaimed and the gay flag hoisted over the Legislature.

Premier Lorne Calvert also issued a written apology to the queer community. The Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Pride Committee of Regina and the Saskatoon Pride Committee had filed a complaint against the province with the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission alleging discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Calvert wrote: "I wish to acknowledge the government's regret for the circumstances that led to the original 2000 proclamation being denied. On behalf of the government of Saskatchewan, I apologize for the treatment you received in June 2000 and ask that you extend our regrets and apology to your families and friends."

The province also gave each Pride committee \$1,613 to be used for anti-homophobia programs.

New regulations will allow Canadian gays to bring a foreign partner to Canada permanently as long as they've been "conjugal partners" for one year.

Previously, a gay couple had to have lived together for one year—a difficult assignment when they were stuck in different nations. "This is a major breakthrough, in what only a few short months ago appeared to be an insurmountable impasse," said John Fisher of the federal lobby group Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere.

Gay Toronto City Councilor Kyle Rae libeled seven officers when he called them "rogue cops," "goons," "renegades" and "cowboys," a jury ruled June 20. He made the remarks after police raided a women's Pussy Palace night at a gay bathhouse.

The jury called Rae's comments "malicious" and fined him \$110,000, which will be paid by an insurance policy. All charges against the Pussy Palace organizers were dropped after a judge found that using male officers for the raid constituted an "unreasonable search" that contravened the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.



Kyle Rae

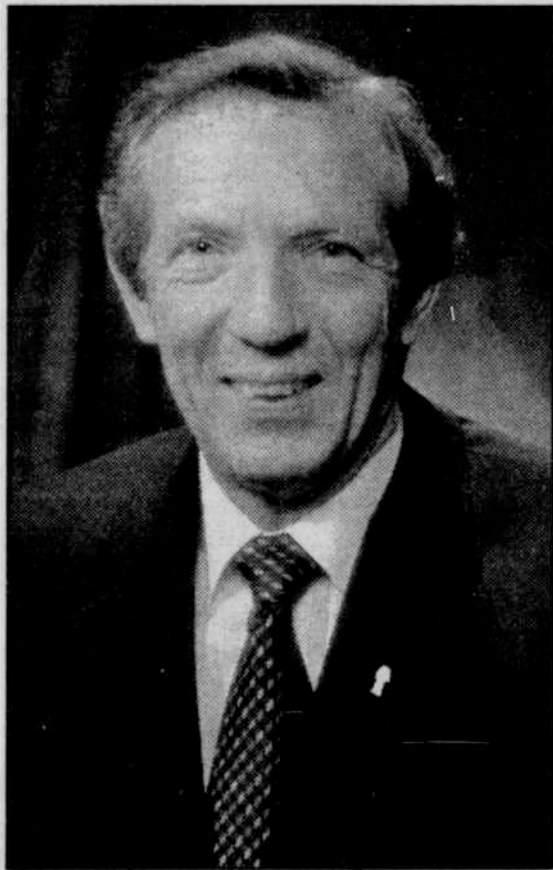
MEXICO

The Mexican state of Guerrero, where Acapulco is located, saw its first Gay Pride parade June 13. About 360 people marched through the main streets of the capital city, Chilpancingo, as thousands watched from the sidelines.

Organizers had expected only 50 participants. The marchers carried signs decrying about 15 anti-gay murders that remain unsolved and urging state and federal politicians to pass legislation mandating equality.

They chanted, "Behind the balconies, there are faggots, behind the Venetian blinds, there are more lesbians." They also poked fun at Mexican President Vincente Fox, chanting, "Vincente in his boots also seems to be a fag."

Spectators "threw hurrahs [and] kisses and applauded," according to a glowing report in the



Saskatchewan Premier Lorne Calvert apologized for the province's prevention of a Pride proclamation in 2000

Sol de Acapulco daily newspaper. The march ended with speeches in the state's central plaza.

Imperial Courts across the United States and Canada donated \$10,000 to four Tijuana AIDS groups in early June.

The money went to AIDS Project Tijuana, the Acosida AIDS clinic, Casa Hogar Las Memorias and Procabi. San Diego activist Nicole Murray Ramirez presented the funds in conjunction with Tijuana's eighth Gay Pride parade.

The court system has chapters in more than 70 North American cities. Much of this year's Tijuana funding came from Portland; Eugene; Boston; San Antonio; Reno, Nev.; San Francisco, San Diego, Sacramento, Orange County and Oakland, Calif.; Toronto; and Surrey, British Columbia.

ZIMBABWE

British gay activist Peter Tatchell flew to Rome to harass anti-gay Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe.

Tatchell raised a ruckus outside the Zimbabwean Embassy between midnight and 1 a.m. June 13. He banged on the doors, slammed the heavy knockers, rang the emergency night buzzer and shouted at the windows.

"You will get no sleep as long as you continue to murder, torture and maim your own people," Tatchell yelled. "One day you will be arrested and put on trial just like Slobodan Milosevic."

Tatchell said later, "It is wrong that he can come to Italy in defiance of the [European Union] travel ban and do what he likes with impunity." He was joined in the noise making by Grace Kwinjeh, the E.U. representative for the Zimbabwean opposition, the Movement for Democratic Change.

They left when it looked like Mugabe's bodyguards were preparing to come outside. Tatchell was beaten by Mugabe's bodyguards during a past protest.

Mugabe was in Rome ostensibly to attend the U.N. Food Conference.

"There is no point the E.U. agreeing to a travel ban if Mugabe is free to evade it by using the excuse that he is attending a U.N. conference," Tatchell said. "He is almost certainly exploiting the U.N. to indulge his penchant for fine restaurants and luxury shopping.... Mugabe should be arrested rather than being feted by the U.N."

The E.U. imposed a visa ban on Mugabe and 19 of his top officials Feb. 18 because of mistreatment of observers sent to monitor Zimbabwe's presidential election. The United States followed suit Feb. 22, citing a campaign "marred by political violence and intimidation."

Mugabe has said of gays: "What an abomination, a rottenness of culture, real decadence of culture. [Homosexuals are] repugnant to my human conscience...immoral and repulsive.... Animals in the jungle are better than these people because at least they know that this is a man or a woman.... I don't believe they have any rights at all." □

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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