

WORLD news

one occasion to use the toilet, go for a walk and watch badgers.

Davies, who is married to his third wife and has a new baby, resigned as Welsh secretary in 1998 after being caught in a homosexual situation on London's cruise Clapham Common.



Ron Davies

He later called the incident "a moment of madness"—a phrase that has stuck to him ever since.

CANADA

Prince George, British Columbia, has given in after a seven-month fight and will proclaim gay Pride Days on April 5 and 6.

It also will fly the rainbow flag and let the gay group Youthquest address the City Council. "It's satisfying to have this issue behind us," City Manager George Paul told the Canadian Press wire service.

Youthquest had filed a complaint about the matter with the provincial human rights commission. Prince George, population 70,000, is 478 miles north of Vancouver.

Canadian gay men and lesbians who have been living with a lover for more than a year must declare their partner's income on their tax returns this year.

The new requirement results from changes made to more than 100 federal and provincial statutes in the wake of a Supreme Court of Canada ruling on same-sex couplings. According to Toronto's *Xtra!*, an individual whose partner makes substantially more money than he or she does—including people on disability and social assistance—will see smaller tax refunds as a result of the declaration.

ZIMBABWE

President Bush slapped sanctions March 7 on virulently homophobic Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe. He froze Mugabe's U.S. assets and those of 76 other Zimbabwean officials and forbade U.S. citizens from having business dealings with Zimbabwean leaders.

"Over the course of more than two years, the government of Zimbabwe has systematically undermined that nation's democratic institutions, employing violence, intimidation and repressive means including legislation to stifle opposition to its rule," Bush said. "To add to the desperation of the besieged Zimbabwean people, the current government has engaged in a violent assault on the rule of law that has thrown the economy into chaos, devastated the nation's agricultural economy and triggered a potentially catastrophic food crisis."

AUSTRALIA

Sydney's 25th annual Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade attracted 250,000 spectators, 6,000 marchers and 140 floats March 1. That was about half the crowd of last year but was considered a decent turnout given that the organizers went bankrupt in 2002 and that the entire monthlong series of events had to be rescued by a group of community-based groups heavily dependent on volunteers.

"This has been a resounding success for New Mardi Gras," co-chairman Michael Woodhouse told the Australian Broadcasting Corp. "People said it couldn't happen; we have proved tonight that it absolutely can."

As usual, Dykes on Bikes led the parade, joined this year by gay former Rugby League player Ian Roberts. Notable floats included the fake Nicole Kidman noses and "Madame Sad-

dam and Her Weapons of Mass Seduction"—a tank escorted by a dozen marchers dressed as Australian Prime Minister John Howard, "complete with erect patriot missiles," Reuters said. Volunteers wore T-shirts saying, "We're here, we're queer and we vote."

"Twenty-five years ago we were asking for basic reforms like decriminalization of male homosexuality," co-chairman Stevie Clayton told the French Press Agency. "Today we are demanding nothing less than equality."

SOUTH AFRICA

Activists from the Treatment Action Campaign said Feb. 21 they will fill the nation's jails and prisons via civil disobedience if the government does not agree by March 21 to distribute HIV drugs freely to everyone who needs them.

One in five South African adults is HIV-positive. To date, the government has refused to make the drugs available at all, arguing they are too expensive and toxic.

President Thabo Mbeki also has said he does not believe HIV necessarily is the cause of AIDS. The campaign said it will break the law via sit-ins, hunger strikes and illegal importation and distribution of pharmaceuticals.

SWITZERLAND

The Swiss company Roche is making its new HIV drug, the fusion inhibitor Fuzeon, available in Europe while it awaits licensing—but at a cost of \$56 a day, more than \$20,000 a year. Pharmaceutical head William Burns blamed the exorbitant price on a "highly sophisticated manufacturing process."

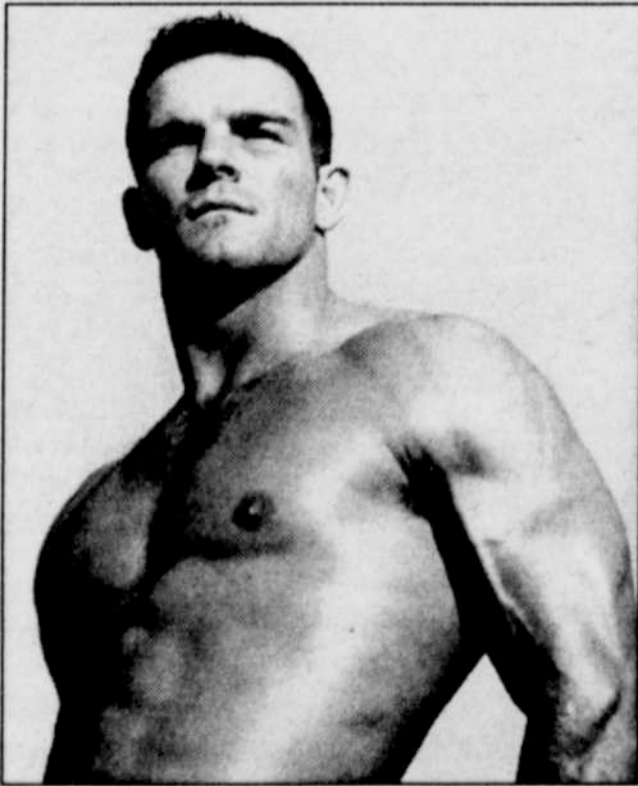
Fuzeon—also known as enfuvirtide and T-20—is the first fusion inhibitor to make it to market. It will be particularly helpful to patients who have become resistant to the other two categories of HIV drugs: protease inhibitors and reverse transcriptase inhibitors.

MEXICO

Mexico City will see its First Lesbian March on March 21. Around 1,000 participants are expected to walk from the Monument to the Revolution to the Zócalo, the nation's political epicenter.

"While we continue to support the LGBT march, we want as lesbians to have a public voice that is autonomous, heterogeneous, positive and free," organizers said. "The march will be an expression of our rebellious spirit as lesbians." □

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.



Gay rugby player Ian Roberts joined Dykes on Bikes for Sydney's Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade March 1

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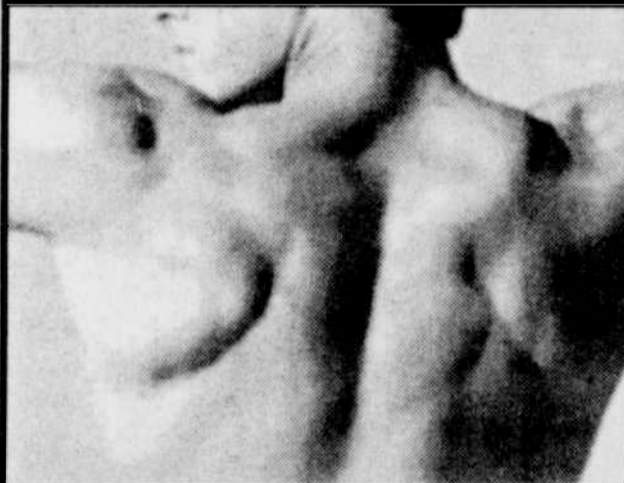


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