

Dykes on bikes and aborigines led the parade followed by Monica Hingston, openly lesbian cousin of Sydney Roman Catholic Cardinal George Pell. "I accepted the invitation to be part of the Mardi Gras parade because it was one more step on the way to saying, 'Look, we're here, we're not going away,'" she told the ABC.

SPAIN

Longtime Spanish gay activist Jordi Petit, a former secretary general of the International Lesbian and Gay Association, has received the Catalonia Institute of Human Rights' 27th annual Solidarity Prize.

The award was presented in the Catalanian Parliament in Barcelona by Parliament President Ernest Benach and Justice Councilor Josep Maria Vallès. "I understand that this award, which I proudly receive for my work, is a recognition of the volunteers in the GLBT movement over these 26 years of democracy in Spain," Petit said.



Spain's outgoing conservative government has accused gay director Pedro Almodóvar of slander

Famed gay Spanish movie director Pedro Almodóvar has been threatened with a "slander and libel" lawsuit by Spain's outgoing conservative government, which was ousted in the March 14 elections.

Speaking March 17 at a movie screening, Almodóvar said: "We have to understand something terrifying. The PP [the conservative Popular Party] was about to, at midnight Saturday, bring about a coup d'état. I don't want to be polite or delicate—I'm not trying to throw stones—but you have to see how the PP has been operating."

Almodóvar was referring to a rumor that the night before the election, the PP asked King Juan Carlos to postpone the voting in the wake of the March 11 terrorist bombings of Madrid trains, which killed 201 people and injured 1,500. The PP has called the rumor a "colossal lie."

The bombings have been widely credited with turning the tide against the PP, which had been expected to win re-election, in favor of the Socialist Workers Party.

Outgoing PP Prime Minister José María Aznar has strongly supported the U.S. war on Iraq despite polls indicating a majority of Spaniards do not. That support has been blamed for the train bombings, which are believed to have been carried out by the al-Qaeda-linked Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group.

BRAZIL

A judicial panel in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul, where Porto Alegre is located, instituted same-sex civil unions March 3. Couples can register at any notary public office and will receive the bulk of matrimonial rights—including in areas such as adoption, child custody, inheritance, pensions and insurance.

"This is not going to be called 'gay mar-

QUEBEC LEGALIZES SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

The highest court in the Canadian province of Quebec, following in the footsteps of Ontario and British Columbia, legalized full same-sex marriage March 19. The court said prohibiting gay men and lesbian from marrying violates the nation's Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"This is a great day for Quebec and a great day for Canada," said Bob Gallagher, national coordinator for Canadians for Equal Marriage. "Now same-sex couples can marry in provinces that represent over 70 percent of Canada's population."

Unlike in British Columbia and Ontario, where couples, including foreigners, can buy a license and marry the same day, Quebec requires a 20-day waiting period between the acquisition of a license and the wedding itself—for residents and foreigners alike.

Thus, the first weddings are expected to take place on, or sometime after, April 7. The first couple expected to marry are Michael Hendricks and René LeBoeuf, who were the plaintiffs in the lawsuit that led to the decision.

However, the 20-day delay can be waived if arrangements are made in advance with the individual who will conduct the marriage, said a spokesman for Egale, Canada's national queer lobbying organization.

riage...but it is the equivalent," said Tania Bampi, a spokeswoman for the state court administration. A national civil union measure has been stalled in Congress for several years.

ZIMBABWE

President Robert Mugabe, 80, erupted against gays again March 5.

Speaking at a church ceremony in celebration of his own long life, he said: "I'm morally repulsed by homosexuality. Let us never entertain the theory that man and man can form a family. It's Adam and Eve, not Adam and Adam, Eve and Eve."

THAILAND

The U.S.-based Web site CruisingForSex.com appears to have been blocked by the government of Thailand and cannot be accessed from within the nation's borders.

Among other things, the popular site lists quasi-public places where men cruise for sex—such as nature areas, restrooms, adult video arcades and the like. Thai cruisers can circumvent the apparent block by typing the site's Internet Protocol address (65.240.96.131) into their Web browser's address line and hitting enter. Only the name CruisingForSex.com is blocked, not the underlying numerical address.

"It appears we have the great distinction of being blocked by the government of Thailand,"



Is Denmark's Prince Henrik (left, with Margrethe II) secretly a queen?

"The floodgates seem to be open, and it looks like Canada is going to become the first North American country that has equal marriage, and this is wonderful," Hendricks told reporters.

Gilles Marchildon, Egale executive director, said: "We're ecstatic. Three-fourths of Canadians now have access to full equality.... Hopefully, the other provinces will start issuing licenses now, as well, instead of waiting for federal legislation. There is nothing standing in the way of that."

The federal government has said it supports last summer's rulings that legalized same-sex marriage in Ontario and British Columbia and will introduce legislation to open up marriage nationwide, but it has yet to act except for sending four procedural questions to the Canadian Supreme Court.

The fourth question, which was added Feb. 20, had the effect of delaying the Supreme Court's consideration of the matter until October. No action is expected in Parliament until the court answers the questions.

Quebec has offered same-sex civil unions, which extend all the provincial rights of marriage, since 2002.

—RW

SOUTH KOREA

Two gay activists got hitched March 6 at a Seoul cafe in what was called South Korea's first public gay "marriage." Lee Sang-chul, 36, and Park Jong-geun, 32, read vows and exchanged rings in front of friends and the media, the JoongAng Daily newspaper reported.

"I want my lover to receive medical insurance and other benefits that he could have if we were legally married," Lee said. The couple tried to register their marriage with local officials—the only legal procedure necessary to marry in South Korea—but they were turned away.

DENMARK

Newspapers and magazines in Scandinavia have been reporting on a new Norwegian book that mentions rumors that Danish Queen Margrethe II's husband, Prince Henrik, is gay.

Journalist Liv Berit Tessem's book *Royal Reporter—Journalist in Fairy Tale Land?* states, "It is a public secret that Prince Henrik prefers young men." She has defended her decision to

report the rumor, telling the Norwegian newspaper *Verdens Gang*, "If you have to write a book about being a royal reporter, it is a natural thing to write about all the rumors that the royals are entangled in." J

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.

Fête!

fabulous food & flowers

You've
(finally)
tied the knot
now
it's time to
celebrate!



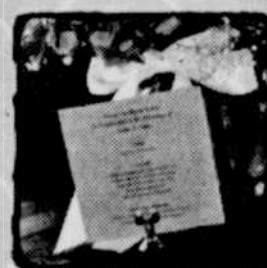
catering



floral design



event design



event coordination

Let us
help you
throw
your party
of a Lifetime!

Specializing in
celebrations of:

- ~ individual expression
- ~ home parties
- ~ outdoor & unique venues
- ~ special event planning & management

2140 E. Burnside
503-232-0232
fetepdx.com



When an ordinary
Realtor simply
won't do...



3144 SE Belmont
Portland, OR 97214
office: 503-238-7617