

THE NETHERLANDS

Dutch gays have formed a new organization to fight for recognition of their marriages when they travel outside the Netherlands. The Love Exiles Foundation was launched May 9 in Amsterdam.

"Dutch gays and lesbians still lack essential rights they need to protect themselves and their families when they go abroad," the founders said. "If you are outside the Netherlands and your partner is hospitalized, you may be excluded from making medical decisions or even visiting your partner in the hospital.... In most countries, our relationships are not recognized for immigration purposes. Even within [the 25-nation European Union] we cannot move as partners and maintain our rights in another country. We live on an island of acceptance. We need a world, not an island."

Only 16 of the world's 192 nations allow citizens to sponsor their same-sex partner or spouse for immigration: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Israel, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

CANADA

Canada's Department of Citizenship and Immigration announced May 18 that it will recognize marriages of same-sex couples and process their immigration applications accordingly.

"It's encouraging to see the federal government follow through on its commitment to equal marriage," said Alex Munter, co-chairman of Canadians for Equal Marriage. "Same-sex couples have been getting married in Canada for almost a year. Legal recognition of those marriages is tremendously important, both for the couples and for the rule of law."

Canada's national gay lobby group, Egale, also praised the decision.

"The importance of marriage for immigration purposes highlights the international aspect of marriage," executive director Gilles Marchildon said. "Marriage travels well. That's just one of many aspects that set marriage apart from any other form of recognition."

The new policy applies only to couples where one spouse is a Canadian citizen or resident.

Recognition also should extend to "couples who marry in other jurisdictions that permit same-sex couples to marry," according to Christine Morrissey of the Lesbian and Gay Immigration Task Force.

"The number of those jurisdictions is growing rapidly," she said, "and these marriages must also be recognized by the federal government."

Five blocks of Toronto's übergay Church Street will be shut down for a leather/kink/fetish festival Aug. 15. The first-ever Church Street Fetish Fair is being staged by the Church-Wellesley Village Business Improvement Area organization.

"It's everything your mother warned you about—in a street fair," spokesman Dennis O'Connor said. "Toronto is world-famous for its cultural diversity, and Toronto's gay village is famous for its history of creating spaces for people to celebrate and take pride in who they are. We're building on that reputation—and we're going to have a hell of a lot of fun doing it."

The daylong fair will feature music by well-known disc jockeys, a street dance, S/M and fetish demonstrations, a marketplace and community

information booths. The winner of the first International Mr. Leather title in 1979, David Kloss, will serve as executive producer of the event.

THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines' Second International Gay and Lesbian Film and Video Festival, the

Pink Film Festival, goes nationwide this year thanks to support from the SM Supermalls, British Council, Goethe-Institut and National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

A total of 40 movies will be screened from June 15 to July 11 at SM theaters in Manila, Baguio and Iloilo and at the University of the Philippines Film Institute. Thereafter, the films will show across the country in all SM cinemas.

Among the featured movies are *Eating Out*, *Inter.M@tes*, *9 Dead Gay Guys*, *The Wolves of Kromer*, *Love Is Colder Than Death*, *Gulabi Aaina*, *Bukak Api*, *Macho Dancer*, *Burlesk King* and *Pusong Mamon*.

POLAND

Police and skinheads fought May 7 in Krakow after a gay rights march by 1,500 people.

Some 200 counterdemonstrators had pelted the gays with firecrackers, eggs, bottles and rocks during the march. When the march ended,

police suggested the gays leave in small groups to diffuse the situation, but the skinheads gave chase anyway.

"It was probably the worst decision they could take—to let people leave in small groups," said Sylwester Gumienny of Campaign Against Homophobia. "While everyone was going through the park towards the Old Town Square, all the skinheads and neo-Nazis started running after us.... We stormed into the square trying to find a place to hide, but the restaurant owners did not let us in."

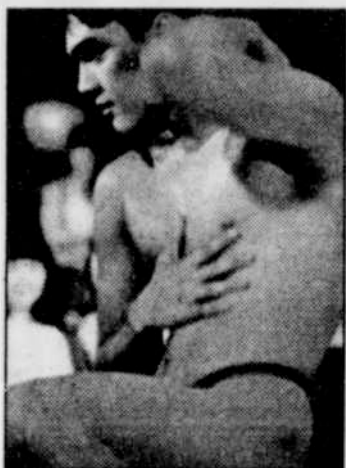
A melee quickly ensued.

"Two minutes later the police was there and the fights started," Gumienny said. "Glasses and bottles that were on the tables outside the restaurants started flying at police officers and everyone else. Confused tourists did not know what is going on. Mothers with children were trying to escape the place. Then the police started shooting in the air to calm down the situation.... The fights between the hooligans and police lasted till late in the evening. They arrested 20 [of the] most aggressive of them. Two people are in the hospital, one with a face burned as one of those Nazis threw a bag with acid into a crowd."

Conservative political parties had lobbied the city unsuccessfully to prohibit the march.

"The most appalling [thing] was the fact that the youth aggressors were encouraged and coordinated by local politicians," Gumienny said. "We are preparing lawsuits against them."

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.



Burlesk King is among the 40 queer movies that will be screened at a Filipino film fest

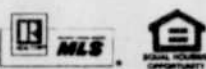


Alex Munter praised Canadian immigration officials for treating married same-sex couples equally

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Support Groups Available

For Women who Partner with Women

The Hambleton Project and the Susan G. Komen Foundation have collaborated to provide these free resources to our community:

- ✦ Bi-weekly support group for lesbians/bisexual women with cancer and their partners/caregivers
- ✦ 8-week bereavement group for lesbians/bisexual women who have lost a loved one

These groups are currently held in both Portland and Salem.

For specific meeting times, locations and more information call the Hambleton Project: 503.335.6591 (PDX) or 503.581.8356 (Salem)



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