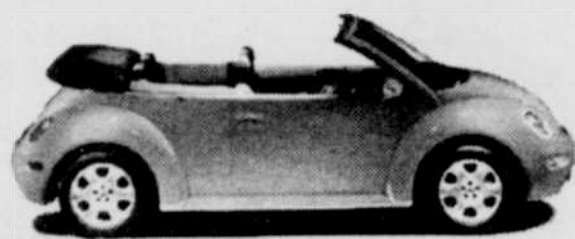


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WORLD news

SOUTH AFRICA

Thousands of queers marched Sept. 25 in Johannesburg's 15th annual Gay Pride parade.

Police failed to make good on their threat to arrest drag queens for violation of the nation's 1993 Gatherings Act. It prohibits wearing a disguise, mask or anything else that obscures facial features while participating in a gathering, march or protest.

Organizers had threatened legal action if the police nabbed the cross-dressers. The South Africa Constitution is one of only a handful in the world that bans discrimination based on sexual orientation.

SINGAPORE

Singapore's first major drag pageant, Miss Tiffany Singapore, drew a sellout audience of 1,350 people Sept. 26 to see 13 finalists compete.

The contest, held at one of the city's biggest restaurants, raised \$70,600 for low-income people. "This was a groundbreaking event considering the whole family values thing," organizer S. Moganaruban of the charity group Singapore Amalgamated Services Co-operative Organization told the French Press Agency.

Jesse Rogers, 28, walked away with the crown and \$2,940 in prize money. She will represent Singapore at the Miss Tiffany Universe contest in Bangkok, Thailand.



Singapore crowned its first transsexual beauty queen at the Miss Tiffany Singapore pageant

FRANCE

France's first gay television network, PinkTV, launches Oct. 25 on cable and satellite. It will cost about \$11 a month.

The network's sportscaster is a miniskirt-wearing cross-dresser, *Wonder Woman* will air every evening, and porn will be presented overnight. The channel also will offer Japanese manga cartoons, movies, documentaries, music shows, experimental videos, talk shows and *Queer as Folk*, according to The Associated Press.

France has recognized a gay family for the first time, granting legal status to a lesbian couple and their three daughters who were born via artificial insemination, the Paris daily *Le Monde* reported Sept. 22.

A Paris judge allowed "Carla" and "Marie-Laure" to establish a legal link between each parent and the children and granted them joint parental authority. Prior to the ruling, Carla had won the right to adopt the children, who were born to Marie-Laure.

The women have been together 15 years. The kids are ages 10, 7 and 5.

State prosecutors chose not to appeal the ruling.

In his new autobiography, gay Paris Mayor Bertrand Delanoë says homophobia is still a big problem in France.

"In some quarters, to be homophobic is seen as a sign of poor taste," he writes in *Life, Passionately*. But "outside of certain circles homosexuality is still something to be endured. In small towns, and especially in the countryside, homos are condemned to secrecy."

Delanoë also denounced President Jacques Chirac for abandoning a campaign promise to



Bertrand Delanoë

push for passage of a hate crimes law. "Associations still do not have the right to launch civil action suits, as they can for racist or anti-Semitic crimes," he said.

AUSTRIA

An Austrian Roman Catholic bishop resigned Sept. 30 in the wake of a gay sex scandal at a seminary in his diocese.

Bishop Kurt Krenn, 68, stepped down after an investigation at the St. Pölten diocesan seminary found digital images of kiddie porn, gay sadomasochistic porn, sex with animals, and students kissing and fondling each other and their male teachers.

The Vatican closed the seminary, which has been in operation since 1455, in August. A seminarian from Poland was convicted of possessing child pornography and given a six-month suspended jail sentence.

IRAN

Iran has OK'd sex-change surgery for gender identity disorder, Middle East Online reported Sept. 30. A permit from the state medical office is required to access the surgery, which might be subsidized by the government.

The cost is about \$7,500 for female-to-male surgery and \$3,000 for male-to-female surgery. Once surgery is complete, the individual is given a new birth certificate and national identity card.

UGANDA

The Anglican Church of Uganda is returning all money donated recently by agencies of the Episcopal Church, the U.S. branch of Anglicanism, to protest the New Hampshire diocese election of openly gay Bishop Gene Robinson last year.

"Please do not raise any more money on our behalf," Archbishop Henry Luke Orombi wrote. Historically, African Anglican dioceses have relied on donations from the West.

CANADA

The Supreme Court of Nova Scotia legalized same-sex marriage Sept. 24—following in the footsteps of court rulings during the past 17 months in British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and the Yukon Territory.

About 82 percent of Canadians now live in jurisdictions where same-sex marriage is allowed. The federal government is expected to enact legislation in coming months that will cover the whole nation.

As other judges did, Justice Heather Robertson declared the federal opposite-sex definition of marriage to be an unconstitutional violation of Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms. She redefined marriage in Nova Scotia as "the lawful union of two persons to the exclusion of all others."

Saskatchewan likely will be the seventh province or territory to legalize same-sex marriage. A lesbian couple from Saskatoon—Nicole White and Julie Richards—announced plans to sue the provincial and federal governments after they were denied a marriage license last month.

Another member of Canada's Parliament has said he's gay, the Toronto newspaper *Xtra!* reported Sept. 16.