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WORLD news

AFRICA

**SOUTH AFRICAN SUPREME COURT
OKs SAME-SEX MARRIAGE**

South Africa's Supreme Court of Appeal declared the opposite-sex, common law definition of marriage unconstitutional Nov. 30. South Africa's post-apartheid constitution bans all discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Marié Fourie and Cecelia Bonthuys of Pretoria sued to have their 2002 union recognized as a marriage after the Department of Home Affairs refused to register it. In an earlier ruling, the Pretoria High Court had sided with the department.



Marié Fourie and Cecelia Bonthuys win legal marriage rights

Judge of Appeal Edwin Cameron, who is openly gay and openly HIV-positive, wrote that the definition of marriage must be rewritten to read, "Marriage is the union of two persons to the exclusion of all others for life."

The Supreme Court's 4-1 ruling has immediate effect on the definition of marriage, but several marriage-related laws still need to be changed. Gay activists said they will file legal actions to speed up that process.

"We have to go ahead with legal action to fix up those somewhat more minor legal problems, and we foresee that within the next 12 months or so, same-sex couples will indeed be married," said Evert Knoesen of the Lesbian and Gay Equality Project.

Full same-sex marriage is legal in Belgium, the Netherlands, six Canadian provinces, one Canadian territory and the U.S. state of Massachusetts.

**NIGERIAN COUPLE
MAY BE STONED**

A Nigerian man is in custody and his rumored male lover is on the lam after Muslim youth reportedly forced the first man to confess to "homosexuality," the *Vanguard* newspaper reported Nov. 28.

A Shariah court in Keffi issued a bench warrant for construction company supervisor Michael Ifediora Nwokomah after businessman Malam Abdullahi Ibrahim allegedly acknowledged that the couple have been having sex "for some time," the newspaper said.

The *Vanguard* said Ibrahim confessed after the youths "almost lynched" him. The local district head intervened to halt the lynching and turned Ibrahim over to police.

Nwokomah was at work and went into hiding when he heard what had happened, the report said.

Trial will be delayed until the two men can be tried together, the paper said. Punishment is death by stoning.

AMERICAS

CANADIAN GAYS WIN PENSION CASE

The Canadian government erred in 2000 when it extended pension rights to same-sex couples but refused to make them retroactive to the date that equality guarantees were enshrined in Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Ontario's highest court ruled Nov. 26.

"Excluding many of those who were intended to be included is not rationally connected to the objective of the law, which is to end the discriminatory exclusion of same-sex partners from [the Canadian Pension Plan]," the Court of Appeal declared.

Equality guarantees were inserted in the charter April 17, 1985, but the government arbitrarily chose 1998 as the start date for retroactive payments.

The ruling, which could be appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada, affects about 1,500 gays and lesbians and could result in payments of more than \$90 million.

ARGENTINES MARCH

Some 10,000 people marched in Buenos Aires' 13th Gay Pride parade Nov. 20.

"It was much more fun than I would have ever thought," said first-timer Mariano Lago, 27. "We carried the big, big, big Pride flag for a while, then went to dance along this truck all over Avenida de Mayo."

The parade's theme was "All of Society for the Right to Diversity: Civil Unions for the Whole Country."



Argentines shake their money makers at Pride 2004

About 200 anti-gays demonstrated in front of the Metropolitan Cathedral.

"We have nothing against them and we didn't come to attack them, but we're not going to let them take the Catholic Church," one of the protesters told the daily newspaper *Clarín*.

During last year's parade the cathedral was spray-painted with graffiti reading "Church = dictatorship," "Rapist priests" and "Nazi priests." The vandals chanted, "Here is the repression of the Holy Inquisition."

To date, civil unions have been enacted only in Buenos Aires and in the Río Negro province.

EUROPE

**BRIGHTON TARGETS
DANCEHALL SINGERS**

The City Council of the British gay resort Brighton and Hove urged retailers Nov. 25 to stop selling recordings by numerous Jamaican



Brighton Pride 2004 (Crystal Palace in the background)