

WORLD news

diction in the world," Bryant said. "We've been very Canadian about this, and the municipalities in the province have managed it.... There has not been any real problems that have developed."

Same-sex marriage has been legalized by court order in seven provinces—British Columbia, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan—as well as the Yukon Territory. It remains unavailable in Alberta, New Brunswick, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Prince Edward Island.

The federal government, agreeing that the old opposite-sex definition of marriage is unconstitutional, plans to pass legislation through Parliament in the next few months legalizing full same-sex marriage nationally.

Only the province of Alberta has objected to the plan, with Premier Ralph Klein promising an all-out fight to protect Albertans from gay matrimony.

Full same-sex marriage also is allowed in the Netherlands, Belgium and the U.S. state of Massachusetts. Spain is expected to extend full marriage rights to same-sex couples later this year.

Canada has no residency requirements for marriage, and foreign couples can buy a license and marry the same day—except in Quebec, where there is a 20-day waiting period. Quebec's waiting period can be waived if advance arrangements are made with the person who will conduct the marriage.

ATLANTIC CANADIANS OPPOSE SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

There are only five provinces and territories in Canada where courts have not legalized same-sex marriage, and residents of some of them wish it would stay that way.

Gay couples can marry everywhere but Alberta, New Brunswick, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Prince Edward Island.

A new Corporate Research Associates poll found that support for same-sex marriage stands at 38 percent in New Brunswick and 42 percent in Prince Edward Island.

The poll of Atlantic Canadians also found weak support in two provinces where same-sex marriage is legal—46 percent in Nova Scotia and 44 percent in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Opposition stands at 52 percent in Newfoundland and Labrador, 53 percent in New Brunswick, 46 percent in Nova Scotia and 53 percent in Prince Edward Island. The remaining percentages of people had no opinion.

Parliament is expected to pass legislation this spring extending same-sex marriage rights nationwide.

The poll questioned 1,500 people in Atlantic Canada and has a margin of error of 2.5 percent for the full poll, and of from 4.9 to 5.6 percent for individual provinces.

OPUS DEI LOSES OPUSGAY CASE

The international, fundamentalist Roman Catholic organization Opus Dei has lost a battle to force the Chilean gay newspaper *OpusGay* to change its name, the British Broadcasting Corp. reported Dec. 31.

Chile's intellectual property authorities said it "is difficult to see how the public could be exposed to mistakes or confusions" between the two entities.

Opus Dei officials claimed the paper's name was a deliberate attempt to offend the organization and its followers.

Opus Dei, which means "God's work" in Latin, was founded in 1928 and has some 80,000 members in Europe, North and South America and elsewhere. Membership is by invitation only. The organization aggressively opposes

birth control, abortion and gays.

Critics, including some inside the church, have called *Opus Dei* secretive and manipulative.

ASIA/PACIFIC

NEPAL GETS A GAY NEWSPAPER

Nepal's first gay newspaper hit the streets the third week of January, the Indo-Asian News Service reported.

Funded by the British Embassy and published by the gay Blue Diamond Society, the eight-page *Blue Diamond Weekly* "aims to sensitize locals about the gay community," the



The Blue Diamond Society is Nepal's central gay rights organization

report said.

Nepalese gays say they are routinely rounded up and beaten by the police.

In addition to news, the paper will offer personal stories, an advice column, recipes and beauty tips.

TASMANIAN SAME-SEX COUPLES REGISTER

A total of 39 same-sex couples registered their relationship during the first year of the Australian state of Tasmania's partnership registry, *The Mercury* newspaper reported Jan. 3. Four heterosexual couples registered also.

A total of 22 of the same-sex couples were male and 17 female. Registration confers marriage rights in areas such as health care, parenting; adoption, kinship, wills and pensions. The registry is open to any two adults if one or both of them provide personal care and domestic support to the other, regardless of whether the relationship has a romantic component.

"The Tasmanian partnership registry is the first in the world for other types of significant personal relationships like older companions and carers and the people they care for," said Rodney Croome of the Tasmanian Gay and Lesbian Rights Group.

NEW ZEALAND POLL INVALIDATED

Recent editions of this column reported on a poll indicating that New Zealanders oppose the nation's new gay-inclusive civil unions law by a 3-1 ratio. However, this poll (a 900-number phone-in poll that cost \$1 to participate in) was not scientifically valid. In fact, scientific polling has found that New Zealanders favor the law by a margin of 56.4 percent to 39.3 percent. **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.



Nepalese gays and lesbians celebrate Pride in 2003



Gay rights activist Rodney Croome congratulates Tasmanian couples Rebecca Wealands and Lee Hyland (left) and Jason Kemp and Mark White

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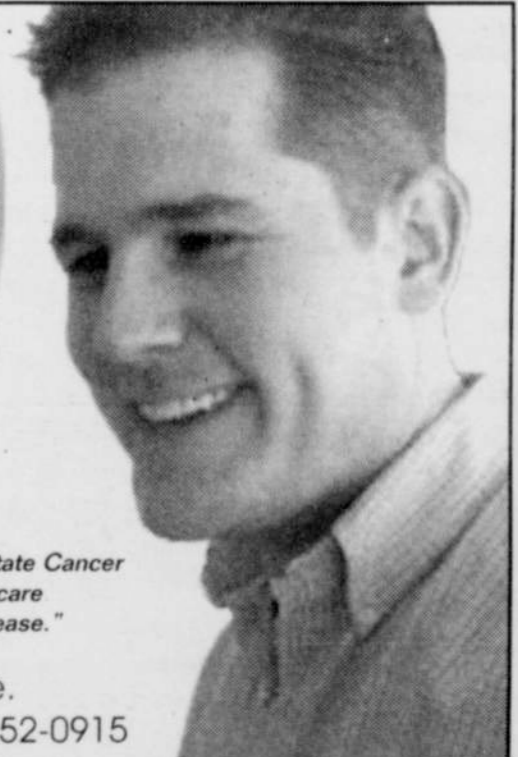
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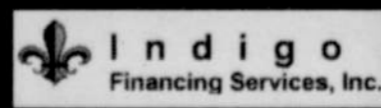
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