

these areas because of fear."

Black gays can find it difficult to visit the bars in Cape Town's gay village because of the expense of transportation, cover charges and drinks.



ASIA/PACIFIC

SINGAPORE WILL NOT ALLOW GAY CONCERT

Singapore's Media Development Authority says it will not allow an April 3 concert by openly gay U.S. spiritual-pop duo Jason and deMarco.

"Alternative lifestyles are against the public interest," the MDA said. "Based on the reports about the duo's performances in the United States and the duo's Web site, the duo uses their musical performance and their own example of being a couple to celebrate and promote a gay lifestyle."

The couple were being brought to Singapore by the local gay Christian support group Safehaven, which says more than half of the tickets for the Action for AIDS charity concert have been sold. But without an "arts and entertainment license" from the MDA, the concert cannot be staged.

Safehaven is appealing the matter to the minister for information, communications and the arts.

"The discrimination that goes on against gay people is not just an issue that goes on in Singapore, it happens everywhere," Jason said March 24. "Go to any city around the world, and you will find it. We are very concerned about the intolerance against gay people that is expressed and enforced by the government of Singapore, and we are asking people to speak out."

KOREAN TRANSEXUAL TO STAR IN TV SHOW

A transsexual actress is set to play a transsexual character in a South Korean major network television series, *The Korea Times* reported March 21.

Model and entertainer Harisu will be a lead character in the Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation's 12-part miniseries *Trembling Heart*, which premieres April 2. She will play Park Man-ho, a man who leaves his family for two years and returns as a woman named Park Hye-un.

NEW ZEALAND RECONSIDERS TREATMENT OF DE FACTO COUPLES

When New Zealand's Civil Union Act comes into force next month, the idea had been to treat married, civil-unioned and de facto couples the same under the law.

But now that's changed because of concerns that closeted same-sex de facto couples may not want their closet doors knocked down by the government. De facto couples are couples who have never married or entered a civil union but live in a partnership nonetheless.

According to *The New Zealand Herald*, same-

sex de facto partners will escape being treated as couples for social welfare purposes for two years as officials mull the problem. The extension also is designed to allow de facto couples to "reorganize their affairs," the newspaper said.

AMERICAS

NEVIS REJECTS GAY CRUISE SHIP

The Caribbean island of Nevis—part of the nation of St. Kitts and Nevis—barred a cruise ship carrying 110 mostly U.S. gays from docking March 23.

A police boat halted the Source Events/Windjammer Barefoot Cruises ship and took the captain to shore for a meeting with port, police, customs and immigration officials, after which the ship was ordered to sail on. Port authority acting general manager Oral Brandy told reporters that Nevis does not want homosexuality "to be a part of our culture."

Two days later, however, Nevis Tourism Minister Malcolm Guishard said the ship was turned away not because the passengers were gay but because they were naked, and Capt. Cornelius Plantefaber could not promise they would be clothed on land. Plantefaber reportedly denied he made such a statement.

Gay cruises have stopped at St. Kitts in the past.

"We welcome all visitors," government spokesman Erasmus Williams told *The Associated Press*. "We've had gay ships in St. Kitts in the past, and the visits have gone off without problems. I'm surprised that Nevis officials didn't let them in."

Gay sex is illegal in St. Kitts and Nevis, which has a population of about 42,000.

THEATER CHAIN CAVES UNDER PRESSURE

Canada's largest movie theater chain, Famous Players Media, will no longer run "issue-driven advertising" after a boycott threat by the Canadian Family Action Coalition, the Ottawa gay newspaper *Capital Xtra!* reported.

The threat followed screening of \$15,000 worth of ads favoring same-sex marriage, paid for personally by the chain's president, Salah Bachir. The ads were produced by Canadians for Equal Marriage.

The family coalition is still not satisfied and has demanded the chain run an equal number of free ads opposing same-sex marriage, *Xtra!* said.

ALBERTA GIVES UP ON OPPOSING SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

The premier of the Canadian province of Alberta, Ralph Klein, has abandoned his long-running fight against legalization of same-sex marriage.

Eight of Canada's 13 provinces and territories have legalized same-sex marriage, and the federal Parliament is expected to legalize it nationwide this spring. Klein said March 17 that the province has tried every tactic available to resist same-sex marriage and now "will have to abide by the law of the land," *The Edmonton Sun* reported.

Klein considered invoking the "notwithstanding clause," a rarely used section of Canada's Constitution that allows provinces or the federal government to enact temporary laws that contradict the federal Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Such temporary provincial laws, however, cannot usurp federal power—and the definition of marriage is a federal matter.

Same-sex marriage is allowed in British Columbia, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan and the Yukon Territory. **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.



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