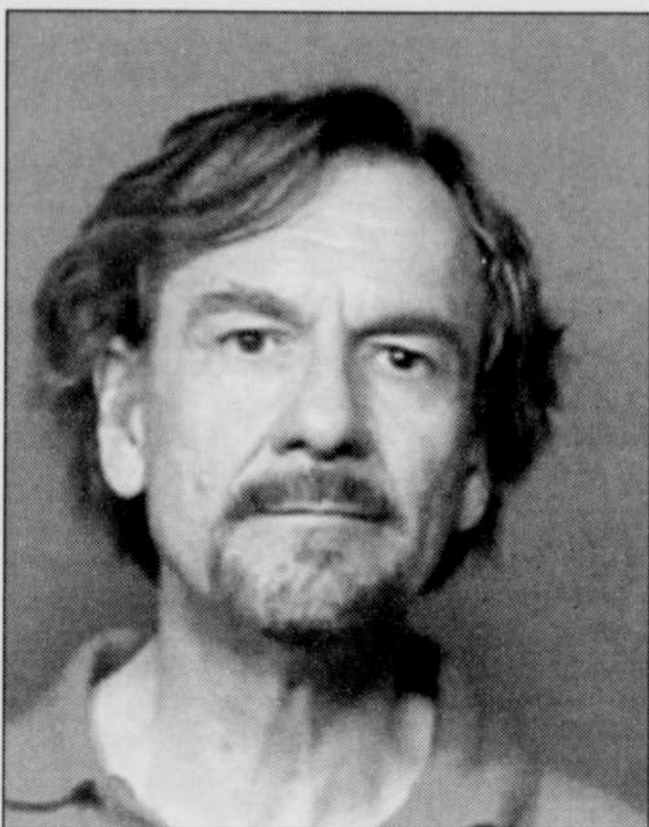




The Rev. Lonnie Latham claimed to be ministering at the Habana Inn in Oklahoma City, which describes itself as "the Southwest's largest gay resort." He was picked up on lewdness charges there.

reporters as he left the Oklahoma County jail and claimed: "I was set up. I was in the area pastoring." This isn't the first time he's been in the area, having received a traffic violation there a few years back.

In a statement, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force leader Matt Foreman noted: "Rev. Latham has been an outspoken opponent of equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. And, of course, in recent years the Southern Baptist Convention—the nation's largest Protestant denomination—has become increasingly homophobic and aligned itself with the worst elements of the far right in working to stop marriage equality for gay people. Rev. Latham supported a directive urging its churches to befriend gays and lesbians and try to convince them that they can become heterosexual 'if they accept Jesus Christ as their savior and reject their 'sinful, destructive lifestyle.'"

"These kinds of situations involving anti-gay political and religious leaders being caught, literally, with their pants down are hardly uncommon. My instinctual reaction has always been one of smug satisfaction—'serves the damn hypocrite right.'"

"Maybe I'm getting old, or maybe it's lingering good will from being with my family in Wyoming over the holidays, or maybe it's thinking about *Brokeback Mountain* too much, but today I only feel sadness for Rev. Latham and his family. Homophobia—directed at others and at one's own very being—is the real perpetrator here."

CALIFORNIA

L.A. Criminalizes Unprotected Sex

New regulations passed Jan. 10 by the Los Angeles County board of supervisors bans unprotected sex in all county commercial sex venues (such as bathhouses and sex clubs) and requires them to pay \$1,088 in annual licensing fees and undergo quarterly health inspections, *The Los Angeles Times* reports.

All sex clubs and bathhouses will be required to display signs and posters stating that unprotected sex is prohibited by patrons, and they must provide free condoms, lubricant and information on HIV prevention and safer sex. Owners of sex venues also

are now required to prohibit entry to anyone appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Religious, Civil Rights Groups Support Same-Sex Marriage

In eight amicus briefs filed Jan. 9 with the California Court of Appeal, more than 250 religious and civil rights organizations urged the court to put an end to state laws that deny same-sex couples the protections of marriage. The court is hearing the state's appeal of the March 2005 decision by San Francisco Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer, which held that California's statutory ban on marriage of same-sex couples is unconstitutional.

"I am proud to join with other civil rights leaders in standing up for fairness and dignity for all," said Alice Huffman, president of the California Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. "Never before has such a diverse array of groups stepped forward to call for an end to the unfair treatment faced by same-sex couples and their families when they are denied the ability to marry."

The group filed an amicus brief asking the court to apply the holding in *Perez vs. Sharp*, the 1948 California Supreme Court decision striking down laws banning interracial marriage, to the case. The NAACP's brief was authored by longtime civil rights advocate Jon B. Eisenberg.

More than 200 local, regional and national religious organizations and clergy also filed a brief arguing that the constitutional principle of religious freedom supports the right of same-sex couples to marry. Groups joining the brief include the United Church of Christ, Union for Reform Judaism, Unitarian Church, California Council of Churches, California Faith for Equality, Ecumenical Catholic Church and Soka Gakkai International-USA, a Buddhist group. The brief was authored by a team of attorneys under the leadership of Raoul D. Kennedy.

"There is great diversity among people of faith throughout California on the issue of marriage for same-sex couples," said Rick Schosler, executive director of the California Council of Churches and California Church Impact, which represent 50 Protestant and Orthodox judicatories throughout the state with more than 1.5 million members. "It is a matter of religious freedom to allow faith communities to practice their faith by performing and blessing marriages between same-sex couples who wish to make a commitment to each other, while allowing denominations that oppose such marriages to refrain from so doing."

A total of 21 civil rights, community and legal groups joined a brief criticizing laws that discriminate against gay people, including the law limiting marriage to heterosexual couples. Karin Wang, vice president for programs of the Asian Pacific American Legal Center of Southern California and of-counsel on the brief, said: "APALC supports this case because people of color in California are sadly familiar with marriage discrimination, as many of our communities were targets of racially restrictive marriage rules in the past. In addition, the civil rights of all communities are inseparably linked, so it is important for civil rights groups to stand together in support of marriage equality." 

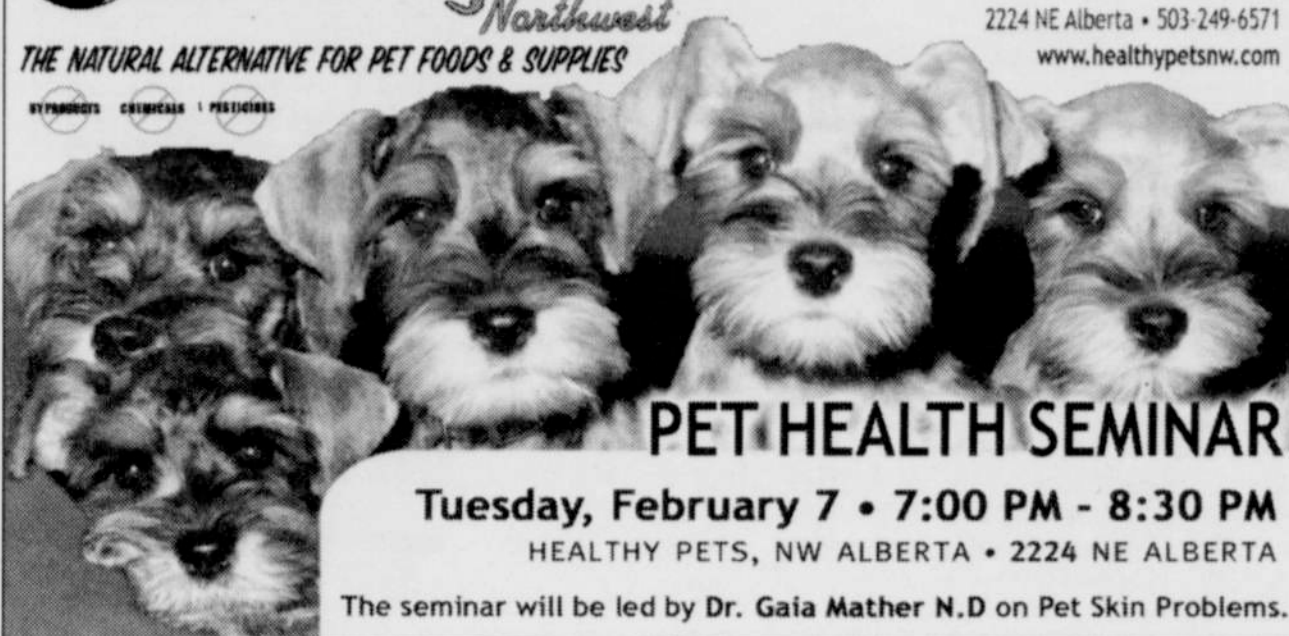
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Fanno Creek Clinic

Research Study Coordinator
at (503) 452-0915, ext. 30.