

stop discriminating in its future funding of non-profit groups, Judge Judith Tsur ruled. "The municipality...must treat this community with equality, out of recognition of the supreme value of equality and out of respect for the values of tolerance and pluralism, which exist at the heart of democratic society," she said.

Gays March in Mauritius

Several hundred people staged the first Gay Pride parade in the Indian Ocean nation of Mauritius on May 20.

Reports said shoppers were shocked by the display in a busy section of Rose Hill. Drag queens led the parade wearing feather boas and high heels, Reuters said.

Attorney General Rama Valayden called the march "a new page in the history of Mauritius...the page of freedom."

Located off the southeast coast of Africa, Mauritius has a population of 1.2 million.

ASIA/PACIFIC

N.Z. Film Fest Prize Criticized

New Zealand's gay film festival, Out Takes, has been criticized by some community activists for offering a trip to Fiji as a membership incentive prize.

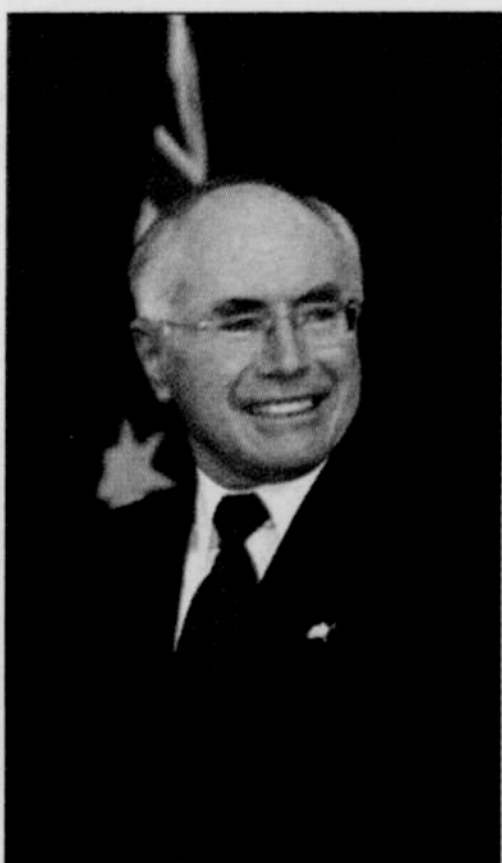
Fiji bans gay sex and reportedly blocks entry of people who are HIV-positive.

The group Reel Queer, which stages the film fest, defended the prize by arguing that a boycott of Fiji would be less effective than "to stand up and be present in the face of unjustified persecution."

Aussie P.M. Calls Gays Fundamentalists

Australian Prime Minister John Howard said May 24 that gays who seek full equality are fundamentalists.

Answering a question about same-sex marriage from a student at Ireland's University College Dublin, Howard said, "I think it is a form of minority fundamentalism to say that you have to, in every aspect of one's institutions and one's arrangements in society, have technical equivalence."



Australian Prime Minister John Howard called those seeking full equality "fundamentalists."

AMERICAS Transgender Canadian Wins Strip-Search Case

The Human Rights Tribunal in the Canadian province of Ontario ruled May 25 that transgender people who are strip-searched by police can choose whether a male or female officer—or both—conducts the search.

The case was brought by Rosalyn Forrester, a preoperative transsexual who was searched by male Peel Region police officers in 1999 and 2001, despite her requests that women perform the searches.

The tribunal found the police guilty of sex discrimination and ordered the force to produce and show its officers a video on transsexuality.

The Peel Region surrounds Toronto's international airport.

Costa Rica Rejects Same-Sex Marriage

Costa Rica's Constitutional Court ruled 5-2 May 23 that same-sex couples do not have a right to marriage.

At the same time, the court urged legislators to grant gay couples justice and legal security by creating a way to regulate stable, loyal same-sex unions.

Plaintiff Yashín Castrillo, a gay lawyer, sought to have the Family Code's heterosexual definition of marriage declared unconstitutional. He said he will appeal to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

Killer of Jamaican Gay Leader Gets Life

The man who killed leading Jamaican gay activist Brian Williamson in 2004 was sentenced to life in prison this month.

Dwight Hayden, 25, will be eligible for parole after 15 years.

Williamson was stabbed and chopped 77 times in the attack in his apartment. Amnesty International called Williamson "a courageous individual prepared to speak out for one of the most marginalized and persecuted communities in Jamaica: the gay and lesbian community."

Jamaica is widely considered to be one of the world's most overtly anti-gay nations.

Mounties to Marry

Two Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers will marry each other June 30. It will be a first.

Constable Jason Tree, 27, and Constable David Connors, 28, will tie the knot, in uniform, in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, before friends, family and co-workers.

Canada legalized same-sex marriage nationwide last July. Nova Scotia legalized it in September 2004, following in the footsteps of British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and the Yukon.

Tree and Connors have been together for eight years, since they were students at University of New Brunswick.

"The RCMP welcomes a work force that is representative of Canadian society," provincial RCMP spokesman Sgt. Frank Skidmore told the

Canadian Press news service.

But that doesn't mean the couple haven't suffered jokes from fellow officers about "Brokeback Mounties."

"I've heard that, and it's funny," Connors said. 10

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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