



Georgina Beyer, the world's first openly transgender member of a national parliament, is considering a run for mayor of Wellington, New Zealand, after her retirement.

Scotland Yard said it didn't know if Gary Frisch, 38, jumped from the building or fell by accident.

In a statement, Gaydar's corporate parent, QSoft Consulting, said: "Gary's legacy as a co-founder of the Gaydar phenomenon is immense, and it is one that we shall both celebrate and continue into the future. Gary will never be forgotten and is deeply missed by us all."

AMERICAS

Ontario Sperm Banks Can Ban Gay Ejaculate

The Ontario Court of Appeal in Canada ruled Jan. 29 that regulations requiring sperm banks to reject donations from men who had sex with a man since 1977 do not violate the nation's Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The case was filed by a Toronto lesbian who wanted to use a gay friend's sperm, had been unable to get pregnant via self-insemination and sought a clinic's help. The court called the ban a "rational and health-based" approach to minimizing the possibility of HIV and hepatitis transmission.

There is a process under which men who have sex with men can donate sperm. They must submit a special request to the minister of health, have their ejaculate tested for diseases, have it quarantined for six months, then have it tested again.

But the unnamed lesbian plaintiff called that process unfair to lesbians who personally know their gay male donors.

Colombian High Court Rules for Gay Couples

Same-sex couples who have lived together for at least two years have the same property and inheritance rights as common law opposite-sex couples, Colombia's Constitutional Court declared Feb. 8.

In an 8-1 decision, the justices said the law governing such rights for heterosexual couples was unconstitutional to the extent it excluded gay couples. The gay group Colombia Diversa had asked the court for the determination.

ASIA/PACIFIC

Feds Again Squash Australian Civil Union Bill

Australia's federal government has again shot down an effort by the Australian Capital Territory to legalize same-sex civil unions.

Members of the ACT Legislative Assembly had reformulated their bill, thinking they addressed the federal government's objections to the first version, but Attorney General Philip Ruddock said the revised measure still violates the Marriage Act, which says marriage is between a man and a woman.

Ruddock again vowed he would instruct the queen's representative, Governor General Michael Jeffery, to override the law if it were passed. The governor general possesses such power only in regard to laws passed by the Capital Territory, which is politically similar to Washington, D.C.

The ACT government will set the bill aside for now, with plans to move it forward if Prime Minister John Howard's conservative Liberal Party is ousted in the next federal election later this year.

But ACT Attorney General Simon Corbell is fuming over the delay. He accused the federal government and Ruddock of "arrogance and high-handedness...by press release."

Transsexual MP Quits

The world's first openly transsexual member of a national parliament, New Zealand's Georgina Beyer, is quitting this month.

She has served for seven years and always intended to leave office by the time she turns 50, which will be in November. Beyer said her departure also will assist the Labour Party's "rejuvenation" process.

After leaving office, Beyer will appear onstage in the Dunedin Fortune Theatre's production of *Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks*. She also is considering running for mayor of Wellington in the next election.

MIDEAST/AFRICA

African Gay Paper Celebrates 200th Issue

The South African gay newspaper *Exit* held a party Feb. 2 at Johannesburg's chic Oh Bar to celebrate its 200th issue.

Publisher and editor Gavin Hayward told the South African Press Association, "Exit will never make me a millionaire, but I earn a living out of it." The monthly free publication is 12 years old. 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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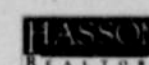
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