

### Gay Nursing Home Opens in Berlin

The first gay nursing home in Europe opened in Berlin this month.

The state-of-the-art facility will house 28 patients, who will be allowed to bring their own furniture and sundries.

The man behind the home, activist and architect Christian Hamm, told the German Press Agency that gay people often feel ostracized in ordinary nursing homes. "When you are old, the last thing that you want to do is to have to hide," he said.

The home is the first piece of a planned complex that will include apartments, a cafe, function rooms, a gym and a health care center with doctors and therapists, the report said.

### Traveling Government Exhibit Celebrates Czech Gay History

A government-curated exhibition documenting and celebrating Czech gay history has opened in Prague and later will travel around the nation, including to small towns, Radio Prague reported Jan. 9.

The exhibition's curator is the government's minister for human rights and minorities, Džamila Stehlíková, and its coordinator is veteran Czech gay activist Jirí Hromada.

"Twenty years ago homosexual citizens were the first group who began to speak about human rights," Stehlíková said. "Now, after 20 years of gay and lesbian development, we have a registered partnership law, and the homosexual minority is part of democratic society, with its own structure and with a very interesting cultural and social life."

The exhibition, now at the capital's House of National Minorities, includes gay magazines, old photos and videos of a disturbing debate in the Chamber of Deputies concerning the registered partnership law.

Openly gay singer Pavel Vitek told Radio Prague: "What I have been most taken by is the history, which you now forget, of the period at the end of the 1980s and the start of the '90s. And I have also really been struck by the discreditable language used by our politicians, both men and women, when registered partnerships were being discussed. It's certainly worth hearing Justice Minister Parkanová and others again!"

Stehlíková is excited about taking the exhibit on the road.

"In some small towns many people with homosexual orientation have complications with coming



**Jirí Hromada is coordinating a government-curated exhibition that documents and celebrates Czech gay history.**

out, and this exhibition will help them to understand their own identity and to begin to live their own lives," she told Radio Prague.

### Protester Found Guilty in Riga Pride Attack

An assistant to Latvian MP Dainis Turlais was found guilty of gross public disorderliness Jan. 15 for throwing what was likely a bag

of feces at celebrants attending the 2006 Gay Pride events in Riga.

Janis Dzelmis was sentenced to 100 hours of compulsory labor by the Vidzeme District Court for demonstrating what the court called an obvious lack of respect toward the public by ignoring universally accepted norms of behavior.

"This is an enormously important precedent which will send very strong signals to those people in Latvia who believe that freedom of assembly and freedom of speech should be limited with violence," said Kristine Garina, chairwoman of the Pride organizing group Mozaika.

Turlais is among the Parliament's more anti-gay members. He reportedly has called gays "faggots" and "scum."

Last year's Riga Pride went relatively smoothly, but in 2005, when activists first attempted to march, the 150 people were heavily outnumbered by around 1,000 anti-gay protesters who hurled insults, bottles and rotten eggs; blocked the streets; and forced the parade to be rerouted. The protesters chanted "No sodomy" and "Gays fuck the nation."

Then, in 2006, the City Council banned the parade. Organizers responded by holding a religious service at a church and meetings at a hotel. Attendees at both were attacked by Christian, ultranationalist and neo-Nazi protesters who pelted them with eggs, rotten food and feces.

Last year, armed with a court ruling that the 2006 ban was unconstitutional, more than 500 queer people marched around a fenced-in park under heavy police protection, dodging only a paint bomb, an ice cream cone and a few firecrackers. Police outnumbered the marchers and the approximately 100 jeering anti-gay demonstrators. 10

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