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CALIFORNIA

**Same-Sex Marriages
Begin June 17**

The California Supreme Court ruled June 4 that marriage licenses will be issued to same-sex couples beginning June 17.

Despite protests from the opposition, the court denied a petition for rehearing the requests to issue a stay in the marriage equality case. The justices' order denying a stay was denounced by conservative organizations supporting a constitutional amendment on the ballot in November to overturn the ruling.

The justices said that the marriage law discriminated against gays and lesbians and that California's domestic partner laws, while providing many marital rights to same-sex couples, still left them in a separate and lesser status.

The court denied a rehearing by the same 4-3 vote. Chief Justice Ronald George, author of last month's ruling, was joined by Justices Joyce Kennard, Kathryn Mickle Werdegar and Carlos Moreno in reaffirming the decision. Justices Marvin Baxter, Ming Chin and Carol Corrigan, who dissented from the ruling, voted for reconsideration.

Lawyers in support of marriage equality predicted a rash of weddings would increase public acceptance of gays' and lesbians' marital rights.

"People will see their friends, neighbors and co-workers engaging in this very cherished ritual, and I believe it will continue to push the California voting public in the direction of assuring that the constitution does not treat people differently," Kate Kendell, executive director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, told *The San Francisco Chronicle*.

Attorney Gloria Allred's clients, Robin Tyler and her life partner, Diane Olson, and the Rev. Troy Perry and his life partner, Phillip De Bliegk, who won the case on grounds that denying marriage licenses to these couples is unconstitutional, plan to obtain marriage licenses June 17.

"We are proud of our clients," said Allred. "They have fought for and won a right for themselves and millions of others."

The state Office of Vital Records has prepared a new form for the marriage licenses of same-

sex couples with a line that includes "party a" and "party b" instead of "bride" and "groom."

COLORADO

**Colorado Enacts
Nondiscrimination Law**

Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter signed legislation May 30 prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in housing, public accommodations, credit transactions, juror service and other areas.

The legislation, sponsored by state Sen. Jennifer Veiga, D-Denver, and state Rep. Joel Judd, D-Denver, expands existing laws that prohibit discrimination based on race, sex, religion, disability and other characteristics.

Human Rights Campaign president Joe Solmonese congratulated Ritter, Veiga and Judd "on taking this important step to advance equality for Coloradans. As Gov. Ritter has said, this law is about basic fairness and treating people equally. Opponents of equality did their best to scare and divide Coloradans, but it's heartening to see that their tactics were rejected. This is a positive step forward for Colorado, coming on the heels of two pro-equality laws enacted in 2007."

In 2007, Colorado enacted laws prohibiting employment discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity and providing for second-parent adoption. The new law takes effect immediately.

FLORIDA

**Lawsuit: Social Security
Administration Ignores Gay Father**

Lambda Legal filed a lawsuit May 28 against the Social Security Administration on behalf of Gary Day, a disabled father who says his repeated requests for assistance for his children have been ignored for two years. Indications in the government's responses point to anti-gay discrimination.

"Asking a father to wait more than two years for the SSA to decide whether his children are entitled to disability insurance suggests either a failure on the part of the agency to do its job or blatant discrimination based on the fact that these children have two dads," said Beth Littrell, staff attorney at Lambda Legal. "Either way, the SSA's actions are unfair and unacceptable."

In February 2006, Day completed the applications for child insurance benefits for his children. He provided birth certificates and court documents that acknowledge him as the legal parent of the children. The SSA acknowledged receipt of the application and promised to provide a response in 45 days.

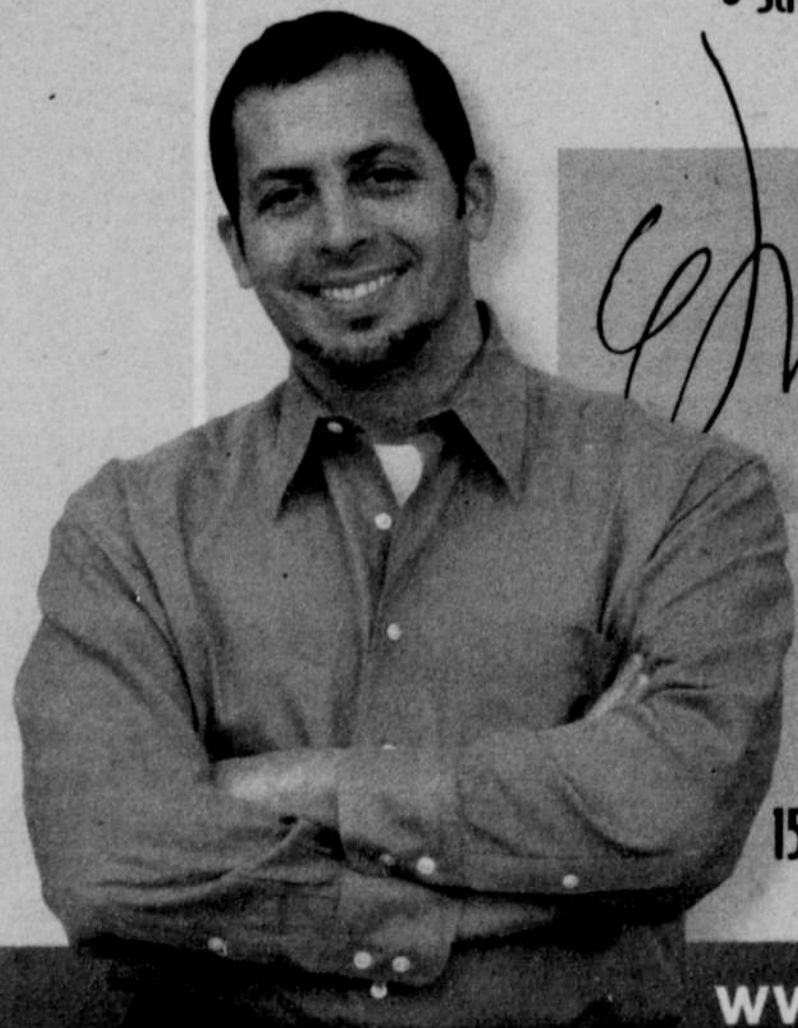
After more than a year with no response, Lambda Legal sent a letter on Day's behalf seeking action by the agency. The SSA still did not provide an ini-

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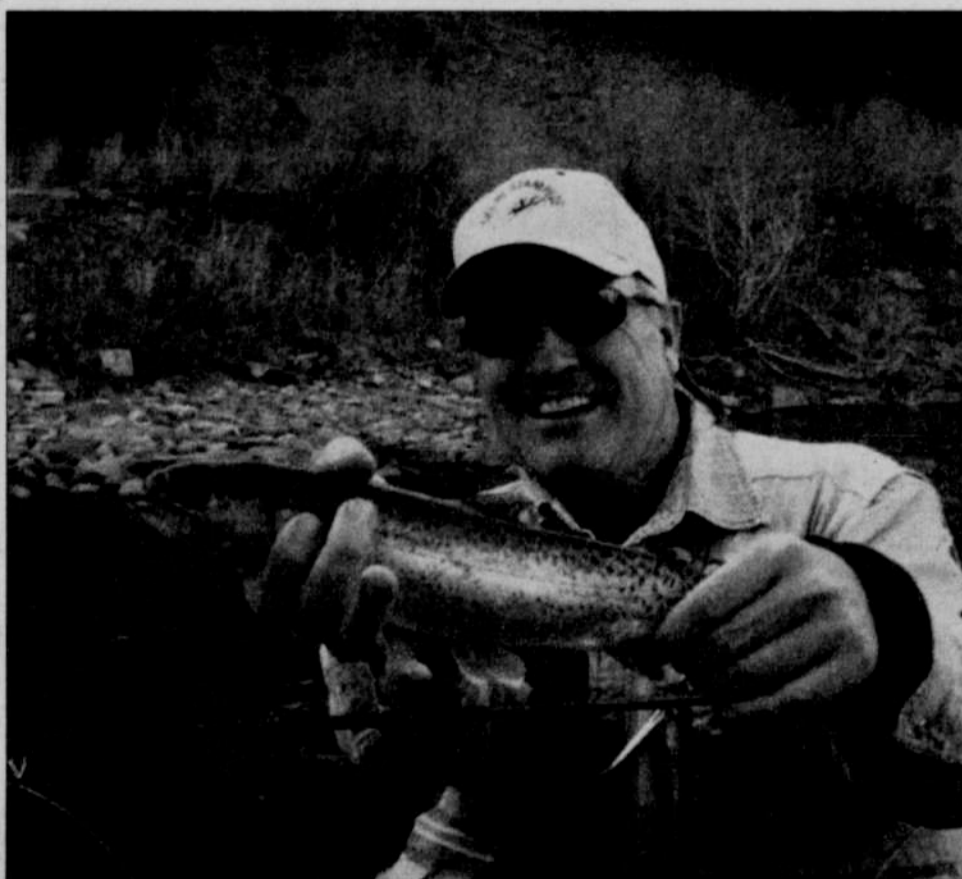
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Fly-fishing Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter signed a more inclusive nondiscrimination law May 30.