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Issue #086, June 2010

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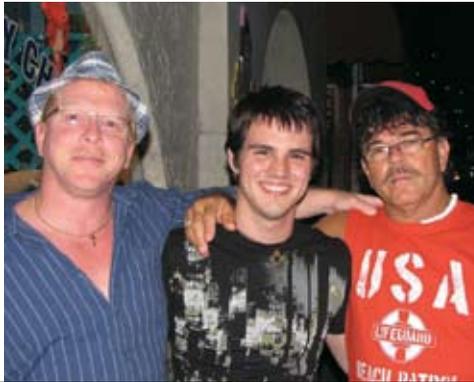
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May 27, 2010

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Ultra Lounge

photos Lee & Woofy



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HOROSCOPE by Jacqueline

With Jupiter going into Aries on the 6th, we will all experience a bit of instant blessing! After the events of that last few months, we could all use a bit of luck and prosperity. But as it goes, luck is fleeting as Mars goes into Virgo 7th, bringing us back to reality and our daily responsibilities. However, when Mercury goes into Gemini on the 10th, we are afforded the opportunity to let our hair down and be more expressive and communicative of our feelings as the new moon transitions Gemini on the 12th. But it doesn't stop there, when Venus Moves into Leo 14th, it will illuminate our path and direct us to achieving true romance enabling us to fulfill the hunger within our hearts. As the Sun goes to Cancer on the 21st, and Mercury in Cancer on the 25th, we can identify what nurtures us. Lastly, the full moon in Capricorn on the 26th is conjunct Pluto; this restores our foundation and enlightens us to our true long term path.

Aries March 23 - April 22 Welcome to the beginning of a prosperous 12 month cycle! As Jupiter goes into your sign on the 6th, look for positive changes in both your personal life and business. Be aggressive, take those chances and reach high, you can achieve whatever you desire. Your guardian angel will be there to guide and protect you on your journeys.

Taurus April 23 - May 22 Now is the time to take the opportunity and envision your goals and identify your hearts desires. However, don't rush headlong as your timing must be precise, wait until after the new moon on the 12th and discuss your vision with close friends before starting this new direction. You may find a better way. Also, this is the perfect time for quitting bad habits. You'll find the results to be positive.

Gemini May 23 - June 22 Happy solar return. As Mars enters Virgo this month, be flexible and go with the flow as this is a great time to launch new projects. Be studious with all your projects as they will be accomplished quickly. Be wary of your finances and practice patience with your friends as you may feel they are basking in your karma and relying on you too much.

Cancer June 23 - July 22 Like the Diva you've

aspired to be, this month is all about you! Venus will be in your sign until the 15th, followed by the Sun and Mercury on the 21st and 25th, this combination gives you all the spunk and finesse that will truly inspire others. Don't waste any time, set your goals and see them through. Let your actions and not your words show the world you mean business. You'll find the end result will be in your favor.

Leo July 23 - August 22 You heave a great sigh of relief as Mars finally leaves your sign after a 6 month stay. Romance is in the air and old relationships will return after the 19th, however remember why it became an old relationship and then you'll know what to do with them. Keep your wits about you and a keen eye on your finances.

Virgo August 23 - September 22 Its full speed ahead for you as Mars goes into your sign on the 7th. You'll have no problems in getting what you want as long as you separate yourself from

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the crowd and stand up to be counted! Use your inner voice to express your ideas and courage to speak up to get what you want. Let not the obstacles that Saturn places in your path deter you from reaching your goals.

Libra September 23 - October 22 Now is not the time to lessen your pace as there is more to be done. Consolidate and finalize personal and professional projects at work and at home. Let your one on one relationship keep you in balance as it will lessen the tension during this transition. This is also a good time to take a vacation, so go let your hair down and have a bit of fun.

Scorpio October 23 - November 22 The projects you started, this past winter beckon for your return. Put some time aside and rekindle your interest, you'll find that the winter hiatus has afforded you the opportunity to take a fresh look and new perspective that will allow you to succeed. Use your intuitiveness and insight to aid other's as your advice and communicative skills are beyond reproach.

Sagittarius November 23 - December 22 As Mars goes into Virgo on the 7th, it brings issues within your relationships to light. Instead of bickering, look at what the universe is trying to show you and negotiate the options with your mate. Together you can find an amicable resolution that you both can agree upon. You're having feelings of wanderlust and want to escape your day to day routine, perhaps it's time for a change in your work environment. Seek out an environment that is rewarding and beneficial where others acknowledging your contributions.

Capricorn December 23 - January 22 Ingenuity is the key word for you now. With Mars in Virgo you'll be working harder and with Jupiter in Aries you'll be doing it for less money. The lesson here is to work smart, not hard. Look at the larger goal and streamline the path

to get there. Remember to keep your options open. By using your natural resourcefulness, you'll find the best path.

Aquarius January 23 - February 22 New moon in Gemini on the 12th brings new opportunities in work, relationships and obsessions. You'll be working in overdrive to keep up, but you'll be happy. The same old wasn't cutting it anyway, so cut those ties and take advantages of the opportunities presented to you.

Pisces February 23 - March 22 Now is the time to make preparations as turbulence appears on the horizon. With Jupiter and Uranus making their transition into Aries, this month and next brings a change to the current you've been swimming in. You may have to use unfamiliar muscles to stay afloat but know that you have the strength and courage to make it. As unexpected news comes your way, know that it's in your best interest and heed its warning.



For those who want to know: With Mars finally making its transition to Virgo, I thought it best to tell you about it. Mars controls your day to day actions. Where ever it lies in your chart it gives you a chance to clean things up. It is rules by Aries, so it can be impulsive. It goes through 1 sign approximately every 2 months and through all 12 in about 2 years. However, as an exception to the rule, it has stayed in Leo for about 6 months. This has caused all of us to have out challenges in creativity, children and long term finances. Now that it is going into Virgo, we all now have the opportunity to roll up our sleeves and do the work we need to make them all go back in the right direction.

Monthly horoscopes by Jacqueline. For more information on Astrology or for a private reading call: 772.286.2720

Cold Keg

photos: Lee



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Tea Time

with Miss T

Well, here we are, all set for **Space Coast Pride** and summer. We understand that Trish and Jeffrey have ordered bright sun, moderate temperatures and a nice ocean breeze for the Wickham Pavilion event. The way this year has gone it may be hot and steamy but if the breeze comes through it will be pleasant. The lead up has been more than pleasant with three benefits, one at each bar, garnering over \$3,000 to offset expenses. It's really important to cover expenses so that the building fund grows significantly each year and there's money left over to support Brevard organizations *and* seed money for next year. Next year expenses will be much higher – you know the county is going broke and the good commissioners can't raise taxes so they raise fees and boy-oh-boy did they raise the fees on the pavilion for next year. Unfortunately there doesn't seem to be a similar venue anywhere. Plenty of parks but no large pavilions and no spacious parking. It will be interesting to see what **The Living Room's** Pride Committee decides to do.

JoJo told everyone that he was going to do to change the **Cold Keg** when he took over

and if you haven't been there in a while you need to go. New lounge, new color scheme, bars moved, new stage area, bathrooms different, it's a new experience so go on a night you'll enjoy be that the infamous Trash Night Thursday, a girls night on the first and third Fridays or boys night on second and fourth Fridays, poker on Tuesdays, Goth or Latin nights on alternating Wednesdays, the Saturday show with strippers or fun with Miss Christine at bingo on Sundays. JoJo has made the **Cold Keg** his own place, even the S is gone from the dance floor! Even though we all expected JoJo to follow through, the result is truly wonderful.



You never know what's going to happen on a Men's night out at Cold Keg! Anthony (left) had a birthday party to remember and the crowd was treated to a bunch of men in leather.

Walking into a bar we expect to see friends, after all Lord knows we've been around. It's fabulous to walk in and discover a cover boy behind the bar. Yes, Jeff Freeman is tending parched thirsts at **Emerald City**. Jason has been making subtle changes to improve the place and it's cozy atmosphere. We are always surprised when people don't know about the place and hasten to encourage them to go. It's not the **Keg** and that's the point: we've got different places to go for different experiences and we all need to patronize both so when we go to one and it's not what we want that night we've got somewhere else to go.

Going up to Cocoa (we know, it's actually the middle of the county but it's a hike for those of us who live at the margins of the county) is always a worthwhile option and **Ultra Lounge** always delivers a good time. Here's the smoke free bar with two different outside areas for the smokers. Again, not the **Keg** and not **Emerald City** it's Stephanie and Tony's unique creation with a couple of theme parties every month (and the perfect place to hang after the fireworks next month).

The Living Room, next month, brings back Gay Bowling! They've been a tad busy putting **Space Coast Pride** together but Kevin and the rest of the board are not going to rest on their laurels, plunging right back in with community social events. Coffee on Thursday evenings

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(Left to Right) Jeffrey Civey, co-chair of Space Coast Pride (SCP); Lisa Moldovan, WAIA personality and SCP MC; Foxy Rocket; Jason Ripol, Emerald City owner; Kevin Kappes, president of The Living Room President; and Trish Brown, co-chair of SCP participating in the improv segment of the Space Coast Pride benefit at Emerald City.

at the Sun Shoppe are going strong and the latest offering is self-defense training. Rod and Dave have given two very well received courses and another is coming up (see page 7 for details). It's all well and good to think that you'll just kick your attacker in the balls and walk away, but if you've never even tried that how do you know how to do it. Self-defense is like any other skill: you need good instruction and practice. You need to understand what to do and how to do it and then practice, practice, practice. And Rod and Dave have many effective techniques to share so

you are prepared for different situations. This class is for all ages, genders and orientations and the first educational course **The Living Room** has offered. Think about it: social activities and outings, Pride and now courses. **The Living Room** is working hard for you – maybe you should get involved with them, too.

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Spiritually Speaking

**“There’s one life and there’s no return and no deposit
One life so it’s time to open up your closet
Life’s not worth a dam till you can say, Hey world, I am what I am.”**

So go the words and music by Jerry Herman made popular in La Cage Aux Folles. Over the years artists such as Gloria Gaynor and Tony Bennet have belted it out; no wonder it has become a rallying cry of the Gay Pride movement. The message is pretty clear: BE YOURSELF. Do not be ashamed. One of the criticisms of any Gay Pride event is that “alternative sexuality” is being pushed rather uncomfortably into the face of the straight world. You know—the scandalous parades with nearly naked hunky men in leather, effeminate trolls, outrageous drag queens, and the seeming overload of glitter and glamour in a (some would say) tawdry carnival context. Opponents would say our “Pride” is no more than a rebellious gesture and gaudy at that. One does not have to be a flaming queen to be proud. There are gay people from all walks of life—professionals, intellectuals, and more who do not ‘look the part’ of any stereotypical concept. The talented and handsome Pop Artist Ricky Martin has recently ‘outed’ himself on his website, saying: “I am proud to say that I am a fortunate homosexual man. I am blessed to be who I am.” The reality is, many keep their true identities under wrap due to career concerns and other personal reasons which is understandable in

a world of unforgiving tendencies. But, I digress... Back to parades: and everybody loves a parade! Honestly, I have been somewhat embarrassed by the raw display of pride in some gay pride parades. But I would be a good sport in my clergy collar and wave to the people like a true born royal celebrity because it was and is very crucial for me to witness to the following:

God loves you. God does not make trash. God does not make mistakes.

Accept yourself as God has created you and live life to the fullest.

Breaking free from my conservative and introverted shyness was liberating and a sort of coming out of the closet. I had been ‘out’ for years, albeit just not parading my pride down the main street of American sensibility. So, for me, gay pride was not some unfounded garish display, but simply celebrating human diversity; living free from the SHAME society has attached to LGBT people since time immemorial. There has always been some group oppressed by shame who with time rose up and declared that enough is enough. The Civil Rights movement and the Women’s Rights movement in this nation are prime examples of people tired of being pushed to the back of the bus whether ethnically or gender wise. Their ‘pride’ afforded them the courage to stand up for justice and human equality in a country where personal

continued on page 12



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Emerald City

photos: Lee



In My Words

a personal viewpoint

Promises To Keep...

Don't Ask, Don't Tell." Maybe it is time to do both. The time has passed for there to be civil discourse on whether to lift the ban on non-closeted gay men and lesbian women in the armed forces of the United States. The time has passed for the gay men and women in this country to plead for recognition as first-class citizens equal in every way to their heterosexual counterparts. The time has passed for the homosexual community to be freely demonized by the denizens of the bible toting and misquoting fanatical world, and the practitioners of the exclusionary fundamentalist brand of religion that has become a plague on all of our houses. The time has come for the law-abiding gay and lesbian community to stop trying to please the Ultra-Right, a segment of the populace that is so narrow, grasping and phony, that they can never be pleased, and the fact is, do not want to be appeased. Appeasement to these gun toting fanatics mired in their eighteenth century thinking where the white, heterosexist, Christian male rules the day... appeasement would take away their weapons of fear and one of their main tenets for raising the funds they need to perpetuate themselves. If homosexuals are seen as equal, they can no longer be cast as predators.

Even as we hold residual respect for President Obama, he needs to receive the message that he holds the trump cards that will finally and at long last

help us move into the twenty-first century as citizens of the United States with full and equal rights under the law. Mr. Obama needs to remember that Yes We Can, and yes we should receive his respectful assistance while his Party holds the majority in Congress. The hateful "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law and the so-called Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) have to be repealed. Both of these laws need to be revoked simply because it is the fair and equitable thing to do.

We pride ourselves as being the land of the free and the home of the brave, but until all persons are able to walk with pride and to openly be who they are, this land is not the land of the free. Until lawmakers have the intestinal fortitude to recognize the worth of all their constituents and to stand for the acquisition of their full civil rights, we cannot justifiably call ourselves "the home of the brave."

We stand at a crossroads in our history. The Obama administration has taken on and is attempting to right some of the wrongs that have led to some of the social injustice in the United States. Reforms for unfair and costly health care delivery and for the usury that masks as our financial system are being addressed. This is well and good, and the President deserves thanks and praise for finally hitting them head-on.

But we deserve a place at the table. We deserve and should ask for... no,

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we should demand that campaign promises made to us by the man from Chicago need to be kept and fulfilled. This has to happen now!

So Mr. Obama, it is all in your lap. There can be no adequate excuse for delaying. You must not preside over another Administration that refuses to live up to the campaign rhetoric directed at the gay and lesbian community. You promised. If you do not keep your promises, then shame on you. Shame on you, and know that the gay constituency that the party of Jefferson and Jackson has always taken for granted may very likely not be yours in the future.

Because of our arsenal of weapons and our wealth, we call ourselves the "leader of the free world." But we cannot claim the moral high ground when countries such as Canada,

continued on page 25

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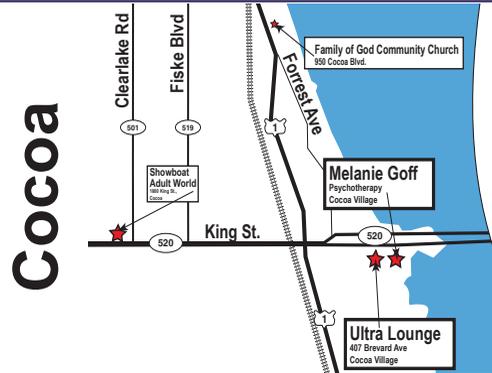
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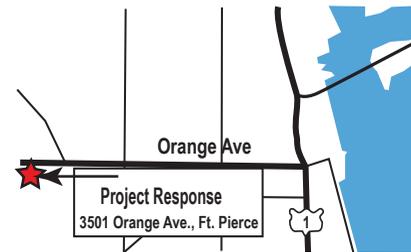


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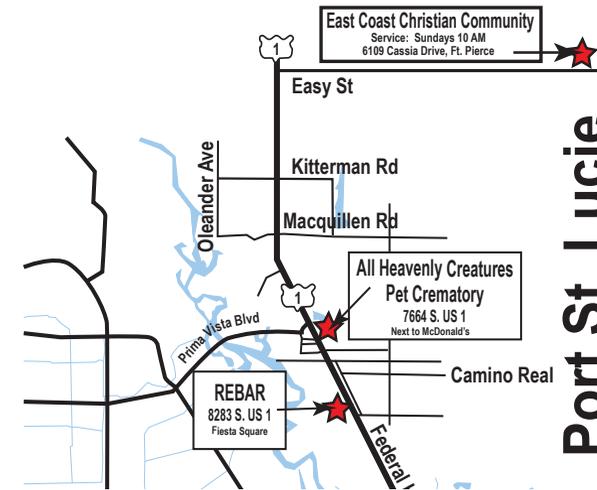


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Port St. Lucie

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BODY TALK



Ronald Blake

There are times in life when we all struggle between naughty and nice. This seems to be a good time to confess my health and fitness sins. You be the priest and just listen. I'll be the sinner and unload my over-fifty pound piece of guilty luggage upon you.

Last Sunday I had more than two but less than nine alcoholic drinks. It was much closer to the number nine than it was to the number two. OK Padre it was nine and they were all Bud Lights and they went down so very smoothly just like the commercials said they would.

On Monday I had several heaping handfuls of M & M's after lunch and then again after dinner. I usually keep plenty of these chocolate goodies on hand just in case friends drop by and want a happy handful or two for themselves. I also like to be prepared for my own sweet tooth cravings. This day I made them all disappear!

A few weeks ago I had six slices of that Supreme pan pizza from Pizza Hut. I believe that included ham, olives, extra cheese, pepperoni, mushrooms, onions, Canadian bacon, green peppers, and plenty of grease I smudged all over my pants. I would have eaten the other two slices but I had to share the pizza with my partner.

Last Wednesday I smoked a cigar to celebrate Wednesday with some of my poker friends. Hump Day and Texas hold 'em just had a way of getting me to befriend four Guinness beers and some chips and dip in addition to that faux Cuban cigar that my friend Vinny brought over.

Two weeks ago on a weeknight I stayed

up until three in the morning waxing nostalgic with my brother and two of his friends that flew in from Indiana. There were some very respectable Cuba Libres being created and destroyed as the night was whittled away with anecdotes from raucous raconteurs.

One day last December I came home from my six mile run and scoffed at the idea of eating a banana, a box of raisins, or slices of honeydew melon. I instead reached for some delicious and salty potato chips. The brand name and the amount consumed didn't matter to me. I enjoyed the bliss of the moment with that little devil on my left shoulder that had a smile on his face the whole time.

Then there was the day not so long ago that I had a terrible argument with my best friend. I cursed and yelled and threw a chair about something that seemed so very important at the time. My blood pressure soared and I held a grudge for three days. I finally realized the error of my ways and apologized to my friend and the group of pals that had to witness this tendentious tempestuous tirade.

We all make mistakes in life and this includes how we deal with our health and fitness. I work hard not to let all of these blemishes make their way onto my permanent record too often or all at the same time. When they happen just dust yourself off and get back on that horse. The great author Robert Louis Stevenson said "Saints are sinners who kept on going."

This health and fitness column is brought to you by that guy who has walked the plank and lived to tell. That swashbuckler is Ron Blake and he can be reached at www.myblakefitness.com.

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About the Gay & Lesbian Community Survey™: Tremendous stride toward full equality have been achieved by our communities over the past decade. There's Power in Our Pride. Power to make a difference!

- Gay and lesbian survey studies have opened doors (and minds) in leading corporations and organizations, which in turn have recognized the value of their LGBT employees through the establishment of equal hiring policies and domestic partner benefits. This has been a catalyst, leading to sweeping changes in political and social inclusivity.
- Demographic reports also influence marketing investment. Virtually absent until recently, we now see a growing variety of products and services represented in gay media, celebrating our diversity. Ads keep LGBT publications and websites in business, serving their communities with independent news and information.
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- Taking an annual pulse on market trends through surveys helps demonstrate the LGBT community's growing power, and influences positive change.



We respect your privacy. All personal survey data is held securely by Community Marketing, Inc., a gay-owned and operated, independent market research and communications firm based in San Francisco, and will not be sold to third parties or used for marketing purposes. CMI was founded in 1992 and is proudly NGLCC-Certified. Thank you!

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liberty (promised in the Declaration of Independence) was perceived for the white Protestant man only; excluding non-Protestant, non-whites, and non-male groups. We can say we have come a long way in re-interpreting our founding fathers' intentions. (Or perhaps they were bigoted—ouch!)

Ethnicity and gender are valid identities as sexuality is. I have heard arguments that they are NOT the same thing. Of course they are. We do not choose to be born men or women. We do not choose to be born black and white. We do not choose to be LGBT. Who we are is a divine gift from our loving Creator. Let us embrace our unique and diverse gifts and live in unity and harmony; affecting a world where no one is hated or maligned, or even historically tortured and executed for who they ARE. And so, was it any wonder that the June 1969 Stonewall Riots in New York City was a catalyst for societal change of attitude regarding fags and queers, as we are so called. This pivotal event inaugurated the modern pride movement amidst violence and police brutality. Today, many nations in our world celebrate LGBT Pride, furthering the cause of equal rights by lobbying politicians, registering voters and expanding visibility to properly educate and work for a common understanding.

Jesus, in Matthew 5:45, encourages us: "that you may be children of your Father in heaven, who causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous." In other words, God's gifts of sun (light) and rain (nourishment) are freely given regardless of political party, spiritual category, and sexual identity— nothing is held back in a prejudicial kind of way. These gifts are received by the grateful and the

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ungrateful, the deserving and the undeserving. We are all children of God. Straight, Gay, Red, Yellow, Black, White, Men, Women, etc... Come out of shadow's dishonor! Put away the umbrella's camouflage! CELEBRATE! Open the doors of your hearts and live to the fullest! Walk barefoot in the warm sun and refreshing rain!

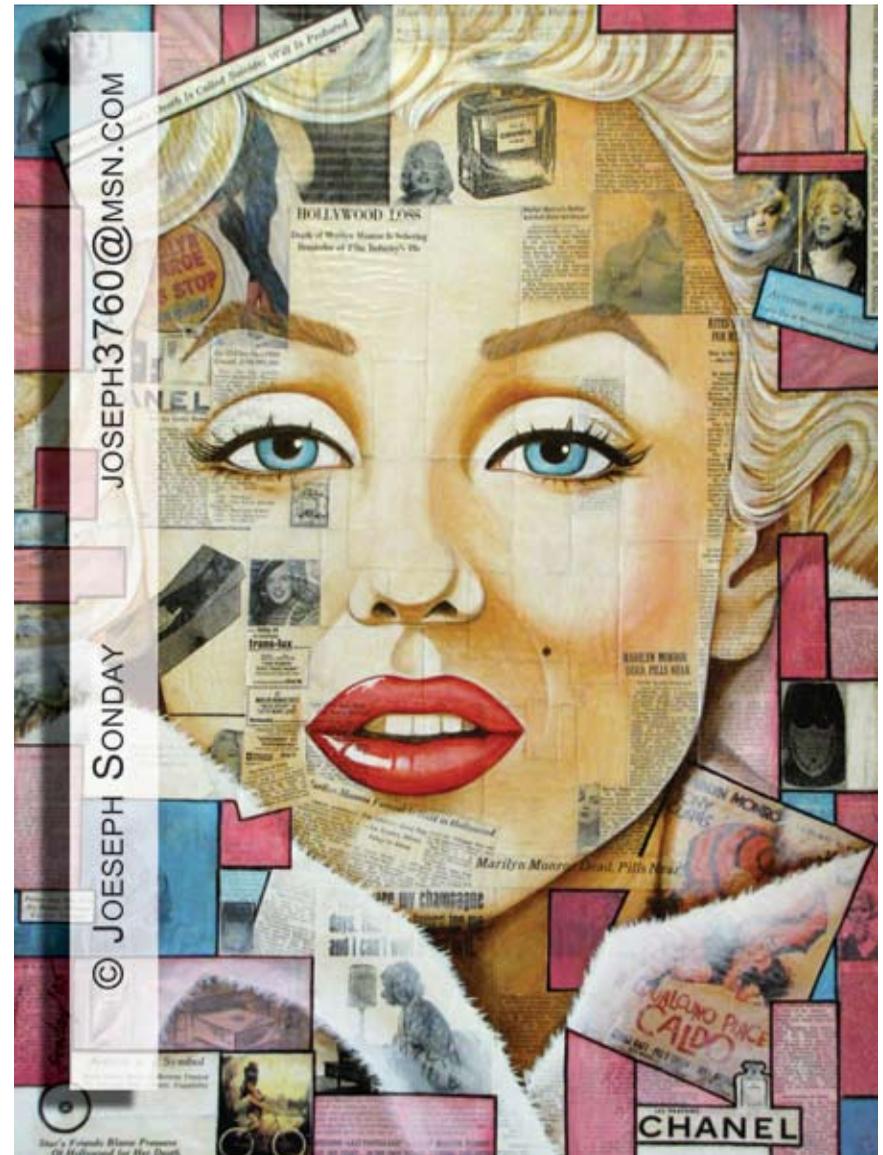
"Life isn't about waiting for the rain to pass; it's about learning to dance in the rain." –Anon

▼

The Reverend Gregory L. Denton is a priest of the independent Catholic movement with roots in the Baptist and Pentecostal Church. Ministering throughout south Florida since the late 90s, Greg can be reached at RvGLD05@aol.com or 954.336.7342.



Joseph Sondag, a self-taught contemporary artist, expressed an interest in art and exhibited exceptional talent from a very early age. During his teen years he accepted many private and corporate commissions. At the age of 17 Joseph moved to Miami where he worked as an illustrator in a local publishing house. Joseph has designed greeting cards as well as a line of handcrafted home décor (Bohemian Chic). He is currently exhibiting in Art Fusion Gallery in Miami. Joseph lives in Sebastian and can be contacted at Joseph3760@msn.com.



IN THE NEWS

For current headlines see our website: www.outmag.com

JACKSONVILLE—From edgechicago.com Controversy is almost certainly bad for business, and Jacksonville tourism officials could potentially learn this lesson after two local politicians made anti-gay and anti-Muslim comments during a City Council meeting late last month.

The city's path away from its socially conservative, Bible Belt reputation caught a snag when a Councilman Don Redman asked Parvez Ahmed, an appointee to the city's Human Rights Commission, to "demonstrate how he prays to his God" in reference to his Muslim faith. Many in the audience reportedly gasped audibly before a city attorney rushed to Redman before he spoke further.

This incident came after Councilmember Clay Yarborough told the Jacksonville Times-Union he would prefer gay men and lesbians to not hold public office in Florida; he was also unsure if Muslims were eligible to campaign.

Yarborough had also previously issued a detailed questionnaire to Ahmed regarding his views on marriage and faith, which he was forced to answer during the meeting. Yarborough, who voted against Ahmed's eventual confirmation on the Human Rights Commission alongside a third of his City Council colleagues, issued a statement later in the month that argued the nominee had connections to a terrorist group.

Ahmed's bizarre grilling has led to an outcry from many activists in Jacksonville who fear the incidents will affect the city's tourism industry. Some would like to see action taken against Redman and Yarborough.

Nadine Smith, executive director of Equality Florida, said she was proud to see Jacksonville residents' reaction against Yarborough and Redman's comments.

Following the uproar and growing calls to boycott Arizona after the state's governor signed a controversial immigration bill, tourism officials agree Yarborough's comments and others like them are grounds for concern. At a time where almost every

major American city has ramped up efforts to tap into the lucrative gay and lesbian travel industry, a perception of a city's "backwardness" toward any group poses a potentially serious threat to them.

Steve Smith, a KeyWest-based board member of the International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association, said it is now up to Jacksonville officials as to whether they will work to curb discriminatory rhetoric from their city.

"If we want change it is up to the individuals who love their community and recognize the importance of quality of life and the need for tourism to support and vote for qualified candidates who will represent the diverse interests of their communities and visitors," said Smith. "They need to remove from office the officials who are intolerant and big

WEST PALM BEACH—More than 19 years after first being asked to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, members of Palm Beach County's school board unanimously voted to amend the school district's Equal Opportunity Policy and its Policy Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment to include "sexual orientation" and "gender identity or expression." The two policies are expected to be formally adopted at a public hearing within the next few weeks.

"Good things come to those who wait, and we have waited a long, long time," said Rand Hoch, President of the Palm Beach County Human Rights Council, a local non-profit organization dedicated to ending discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

In 1991, the Council first asked the School Board of Palm Beach County to prohibit discrimination against the school district's gay and lesbian employees.

"Back then, a few members of the school board actually wanted to reserve the right to discriminate against gay and lesbian teachers," said Hoch. "They did not want to have the words 'sexual orientation' in any school district policy."

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After months of discussion, in an attempt to compromise, the school board revised the school district's nondiscrimination policies by eliminating the references to all protected classes.

"It was an absurd compromise," said Hoch. "Race, religion, national origin, color, sex, age, marital status and handicap were all removed from the school district's nondiscrimination policy."

In 1996, the US Supreme Court addressed the issue in the landmark gay rights case Romer v. Evans. Writing for the majority Justice Anthony Kennedy noted, "Enumeration is the essential device used to make the duty not to discriminate concrete and to provide guidance for those who must comply."

As a result, the school board restored the listing of protected classes in the district's anti-bias policies - but still refused to add sexual orientation.

Noting the inconsistencies among the school districts various nondiscrimination policies, the Council repeatedly asked the school board to conform all of the nondiscrimination policies to each other and to the applicable anti-discrimination laws.

"It should not have taken so many years to persuade the school board to protect gay and lesbian employees from discrimination," said Hoch.

TALLAHASSEE—As the Legislature Adjourns, Florida Drops to #49 on the GLBT Equality Scorecard according to eQuality Giving.

Although Florida ranks in the top 10 states for contributions to national, state and local GLBT organizations, our state has dropped to #49 (out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia) when it comes to GLBT equality.

Only Arkansas ranks lower than Florida!

For the 19th consecutive year, the Florida Legislature has adjourned without passing a single pro-gay piece of legislation, pushing Florida's ranking down to number 49 in the United States for GLBT equality, according to eQuality Giving.

eQualityGiving's mission is to grow and support an online community of donors by providing free services and strategic advice to achieve legal equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Americans.

TALLAHASSEE—Leon County, which includes state capital Tallahassee, Commissioners voted broaden its human rights ordinance "to deter discrimination and include more protection for members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered community."

The proposed changes offer stronger protections from discrimination in four areas: general provisions, employment discrimination, equal access to places of public accommodations and fair housing. The issue created distinct division in the community. Commissioners have received hundreds of e-mails and calls in the past month from residents, business owners and members of faith-based groups.

WASHINGTON, DC—According to a story in FLORDIA TODAY the Supreme Court Justices split sharply on school's bias policy.

The case pits a university's interest in safeguarding students from discrimination against a religious group's interest in preserving its identity and message by limiting participation; whether a state-run law school may refuse to recognize a religious student group that excludes gay students and non-Christians.

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The case could affect campuses nationwide, and many groups are following it, including the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on the students' side and the American Civil Liberties Union on Hastings' side.

"Why doesn't this just all work out?" Justice Anthony Kennedy asked in frustration about why the conflict is before the court in the first place. "If the Christian Legal Society has these beliefs, I am not so sure why people that don't agree with them want to belong to them."

The dispute began when Hastings officials declined to recognize the Christian Legal Society (CLS) chapter — and give it student-activity funding, meeting space and other privileges — based on the group's refusal to let gay students and non-Christians fully participate. The chapter group sued, saying its members had a First Amendment right to limit participation to people who subscribe to their beliefs, including a ban on homosexual relations. Lower courts rejected their claim, accepting Hastings' stance that its policy prevents bias.

Stanford University law professor Michael McConnell, representing the CLS chapter, told the justices that making groups admit students who do not accept their message is a "frontal assault on freedom of association."

"Note how destructive an 'all-comers' policy directed toward beliefs would be," McConnell added, saying that an NAACP chapter would have to allow in "a racist skinhead."

Hastings' lawyer Gregory Garre argued that all student groups must abide by the open-membership policy and that the Christian students were not being singled out.

A ruling is likely by the end of June, when the justices usually recess for the summer.

WASHINGTON, DC—House, Senate could tackle 'don't ask, don't tell' next week according to a May 21 story in Stars and Stripes online edition.

In the story Leo Shane III reports that Gay Rights groups are hoping for another huge step forward in their efforts to repeal the "don't ask, don't tell" law, with key moves aimed at dumping the ban possible in both chambers of Congress.

Such action would contrast with Pentagon officials' public requests for patience on the

issue, as the Defense Department collects servicemembers' reactions to a possible change in the 17-year-old ban on openly gay servicemembers. That review is expected to wrap up by the end of the year, and Defense Secretary Robert Gates has said he opposes any legislative moves before then.

But on Wednesday, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi told The Hill newspaper that "I don't have any doubt that 'don't ask, don't tell' will be a memory by the end of this year," dismissing Gates' objections.

The comments came at the same time Democratic leaders in the House Armed Services Committee resisted efforts to include a 'don't ask don't tell' repeal in their first draft of the fiscal 2011 National Defense Authorization Act. Committee Chairman Ike Skelton, D-Mo., said this week that he instead "supports Adm. [Mike] Mullen and Gates' request for more time to study this issue."

But repeal supporters in the House could still bring up the issue during full chamber debate on the issue next week, a move gay rights groups are actively lobbying for.

Currently Pennsylvania Democrat Rep. Patrick Murphy's bill for a repeal has 192 co-sponsors, and officials in his office say several other lawmakers have promised to back the measure if it comes up for a vote.

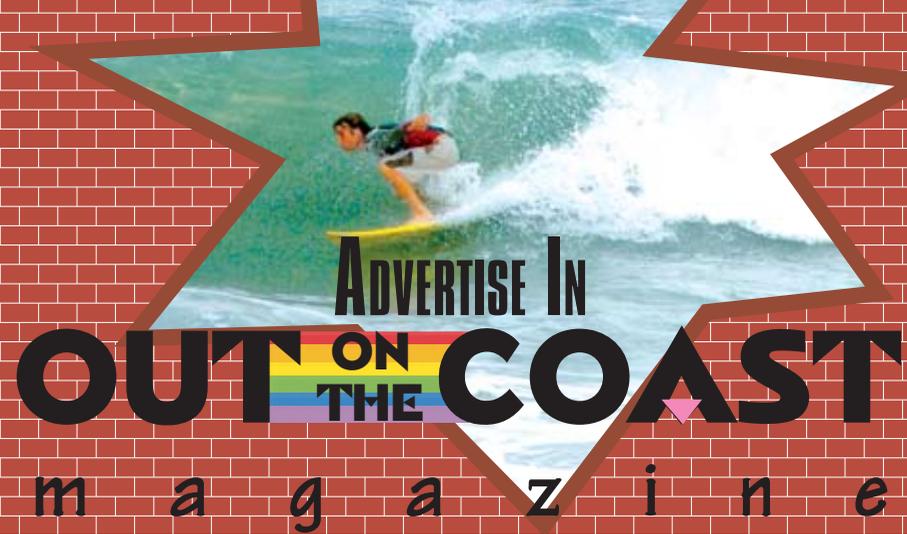
If attached to the authorization bill, a 'don't ask, don't tell' repeal could put Skelton and conservative Democrats in the awkward position of either voting against troop funding or for repealing "don't ask, don't tell" during what is expected to be a contentious election cycle.

Meanwhile, the Senate Armed Services Committee will draft their version of the authorization act next week, and committee Chairman Carl Levin, D-Mich., has long advocated using the budget bill as a vehicle for repeal.

"We are only a few days away from this historic vote," said Aubrey Sarvis, executive director for Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, which represents troops affected by the gay ban. "The objective is still to find a viable legislative repeal solution that meets the requirements of the president and Defense Secretary Robert Gates. The only major difference on the table is the repeal timeline and process."

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BREAKTHROUGH TO THE ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLES MARKET ON THE SPACE & TREASURE COASTS



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Belgium, South Africa, Spain, Sweden and many others have recognized and made same-sex marriages legal, and Canada, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands and many, many others do not demean their gay/lesbian citizens by restricting them from serving in their military.

To the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and their Generals who might oppose the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, it would seem to be time for you to put aside your personal bias and for you to be open to the experiences of the armies of your allies. It is time for you to move forward.

To the members of Congress who oppose lifting these two laws that oppress your constituents... and make no mistake about it, we are your constituents, and you do represent us... to you I would simply say that if

you cannot be fair, if you cannot work to bring about justice for all of us, then step down and move on. Let someone who is willing to work without arrogance and bias take your place. It is no longer time to debate this issue. It is time, instead, to see that there is repeal. There is a time, and that time has arrived. That time is NOW!

And to you Mr. President? To you I can only reiterate: You know where the moral high ground will take you on these issues. You know what needs to be done. You recognize when the time has arrived. You know that the time is now. But, can we do it? Yes We Can!



David has a blog at <http://thedavidvbf.multiply.com/journal> and has generously allowed us to reprint it here. Please note that the opinions expressed in this column are those of the author.

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Lawrence Korb, who served as assistant secretary of defense under President Ronald Reagan and is now senior fellow at the pro-repeal Center for American Progress, has publicly backed a repeal and called Pelosi's year-end goal a realistic legislative target. But he said attaching the measure to the authorization bill isn't necessarily critical to getting that done.

Opponents of a repeal are still hoping to stall the effort, asserting that lawmakers haven't fully researched the impact on operations and morale of allowing gay troops to serve openly alongside heterosexual servicemembers.

In a letters Thursday to Senate Republicans and the Armed Forces Chaplains Board, the International Conference of Evangelical Chaplain Endorsers urged opposition to any repeal, saying any such move will have "a destructive effect" on services.

SIERRA MADRE, CA—Joe Mosca, who was appointed mayor last Tuesday by his colleagues, is now Los Angeles county's fourth openly gay mayor.

Besides Mosca, there are currently three other openly gay mayors in Los Angeles County: Mayor John Heilman of the City of West Hollywood, Manhattan Beach Mayor Mitch Ward, and Redondo Beach Mayor Mike Gin."

The Pasadena Star-News reports that while Mosca's sexual orientation did come up occasionally during his campaign it was not an issue for most of the town's 10,000-plus residents.

Mayor Pro Tem John Buchanan, who nominated Mosca as mayor, said his colleague's orientation has never been an open issue in town. 'I think the fact that it doesn't appear to factor into the votes of people in this town should be a source of pride,' Buchanan said. Sierra Madre residents, he said, are more concerned about local issues than about an elected officials' orientation or other characteristics not relevant to their ability to do the job."

ANNAPOLIS—A story in the Washington Post on line reports that State employees in Maryland can now sign up same-sex spouses as dependents, making them eligible to receive the same health-care and other benefits afforded to husbands and wives of heterosexual state employees.

The change means that O'Malley's administration has followed through in codifying a legal opinion issued in February by Maryland Attorney General Douglas F. Gansler.

In that opinion, Gansler overturned a previous attorney general's opinion, writing that there was nothing barring the state from recognizing valid same-sex unions performed elsewhere. In his role as Maryland's top legal adviser to state agencies, Gansler at the time went a step further, saying that state agencies should begin granting married same-sex couples the same rights as heterosexual ones.

O'Malley (D) has consistently voiced support for civil unions but stopped short of supporting same-sex marriage. O'Malley's chief opponent in his reelection bid, former governor Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. (R), has blasted the attorney general's decision, saying it flies in the face of state precedent not to recognize same-sex marriage.

Under new rules governing Maryland's state employee benefits program, members of same-sex unions with a valid marriage certificate from another state or the District have until June 2 to enroll a spouse for coverage that would begin July 1.

LISBON, PORTUGAL—Portugal's president has ratified a law allowing gay marriage in the predominantly Catholic country making Portugal the sixth European country allowing same-sex couples to wed.

The Socialist government's bill was backed by all of Portugal's left-of-center parties, who together have a majority in Parliament. Right-of-center parties opposed the measure and demanded a national referendum.

"Given that fact, I feel I should not contribute to a pointless extension of this debate, which would only serve to deepen the divisions between the Portuguese and divert the attention of politicians away from the grave problems affecting us," Cavaco Silva, president said. He said that, in ratifying the law, he was setting aside "personal convictions."

The new law removes the previous legal stipulation that marriage is between two people of different sexes.

Portugal's Constitutional Court validated the bill's legality last month.

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And finally, we would be remiss in this Pride season if we didn't mention the importance of registering to vote. Be Proud of who you are, be a force to be reckoned with, be registered and vote! This fall there are several Constitutional Amendments that are as important, if not more, than the candidates. So start right now and repeat after me: 4, 5 & 6, Yes; 7 NO. If you don't know what that means, look it them up you'll find that 5 & 6 were put on the ballot by voter signatures and 7 was put there by the incumbents in Tallahassee to "clarify the meaning" of 5 & 6 and developers hate 4. See <http://election.dos.state.fl.us/initiatives/initiativelist.asp> and look in the serial # column for ballot number in (), so look for (4), (5) and (6).



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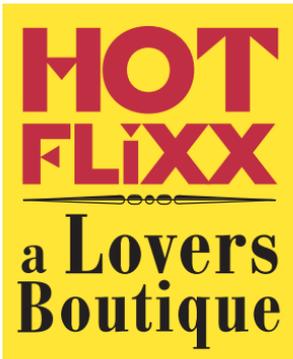
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— Pericles, Greek statesman (430 BC)

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