How the Gay Community is Reacting to Monterey’s First Reported Anti-Gay Hate Crime - Story on pp. 4 & 5

Local Story

Gay Teen Group Grows Up and Out

The Gay Teen Alliance Offers Gays Under 25 Support During the “Wander Years”

Most young gay women and men find coming out of the closet a lonely experience. Too old to ignore their sexuality and too young or afraid to find mentors at the bars, they previously had to sit on the sidelines until their turned 21. For many, the wait often proved too long; suicide rates for gay teens remains high, as do the number of young gay men whose first sexual encounters end with their being infected with HIV.

The Gay Teen Alliance (GTA) of Monterey County hopes to reach these men and women. GTA’s only requirement for membership is that participants be under the age of 25. “It’s basically here to provide a safe supportive environment for gay youth since there aren’t other outlets in the area,” said GTA coordinator Craig Wenzl, who is himself 28 years old.

The group has expanded considerably in the last several years, and now has 25 members. A Salinas meeting will begin shortly, since previously all meetings had been held on the peninsula. Group activities include a movie night, pizza parties, and special events, among them a dance celebrating National Coming Out Day on October 11th.

Wenzl said that GTA focuses on issues of most interest to gay teenagers and young adults: dating, coming out (“A very popular thing to talk about,” said Wenzl), HIV, and safer sex. The latter isn’t surprising since the group is sponsored by the Monterey County AIDS Project (MCAP) as part of their gay outreach program called Man-to-Man.

Gay mentors from the local community are always needed. A nine-point screening process which includes a personal reference and criminal records check, several interviews with MCAP staff members, and a thorough training program helps to guarantee that facilitators and adult volunteers can be trusted. GTA currently has ten adult facilitators and anyone over the age of 25 is encouraged to apply.

The GTA hopes to let more teens know about its programs by contacting Monterey County schools. The group will send letters to school counselors as a resource, and will do as much as possible to have a presence at both high schools and colleges.
Letters to the Editor

WNBA Coverage Not Happening in Herald

As a great supporter and fan of the WNBA (Women's National Basketball Association), I was appalled and disgusted at the response I received from the Sports Editor of the Herald regarding lack of coverage in our local newspaper. The following is a copy of the letter I sent to the Editor of the Herald on August 9. So far, my letter has NOT been printed. What do you think?

Dear Editor of THE HERALD...

When is the WNBA (Women's National Basketball Association) ever mentioned in the Herald sports pages? The answer is never.

I spoke to Dave Haerle, the Sports Editor on the phone today. He says he won't put any news coverage of the WNBA in the paper because this area doesn't have a team.

Mr. Haerle, give us women a chance. Give the individuals who would like to see any WNBA coverage.

And, for those of you who would like to see some "men aren't crystal-snorting gym bunnies, RuPaul, or leather-clad motorcyclists.

Beyond Vicious

There is a common belief held in the gay community that in order for one to be gay/lesbian one has to be vicious. Well, this is not the case. These are the days when most of us will not tolerate vicious queens' in the name of high camp humor. There is humor in it. There is a humane way of being gay. None of these individuals have any semblance of self-esteem.

We don't need to 'put down' the people who would like to see some WNBA coverage. This is our community. We made mistakes. We are not in 'your cl Jug' just to bother your ego and score points. You score more points by being yourself, not by pretending that you own the whole joint, and by not expecting everyone to adore you the minute you walk through the door. Get over it already.

Dress as you want, be what you want, but its time to stop being vicious to people we don't like in the name of being 'gay'. Those days of constant cat-fights are over. Get over it! Get a life! We are more than our candy double-entendres.

We don't need to become 'straight-looking' or 'straight-acting' in order to get respect. We can be queers, or regular joes, who love a good time and not step all over people. If we want to fight, then we should fight for gay equality at all fronts. This is the true meaning of being gay/lesbian. To be a queen: to fight against discrimination and for our equal rights. The queen that started the Stonewall riots fought for the cause and did not tolerate in fighting with one another. There is more to life than being just another downhill fight. Fight for all the rights that we are entitled to as American citizens. We are not aliens from Mars! We are people!" When are we going to stand up for ourselves and stop allowing the majority to treat us as second class citizens? Stand up and fight for equality instead of fighting ourselves! IT'S TIME TO COME TOGETHER!!!

-Bonnie Schmidt

Gay on Gay Crime

As a member of the gay community I am truly saddened by the recent hate crime that took place on Lighthouse Ave. I am not talking about, just as the boys have the opportunity to establish more important than assuring the safety and well being of our fellow community members, those we call friends?

I certainly hope those who chose to look the other way, to never place into similar situations. It's disheartening to know people we call friends disappear at the first sign of conflict. Good luck to us all.

-Dave Z., Pacific Grove

Boston/New York AIDS Ride 3 Raises $7.5 Million for East Coast Orgs.

The third annual AIDS Ride from Boston to New York City ended in a grand ceremony Sunday, Sept. 14th in the Chelsea district of New York City.

Tens of thousands of well-wishers gathered to cheer the 3,186 riders as they ended their journey. The money they raised will benefit the Lesbian Bisexual Gay Community Center of New York City (picture below) and the Community Health Project in Boston.

The first riders to arrive at the stage set up on 7th Ave. were the dozen or so HIV+ members, made visible by their bright orange pennants attached to their bicycles. A lone bicycle was laid down the street to remind those in attendance of the hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children lost to AIDS in the past 14 years.

It's important that our community not forget the awareness we experienced in high school, the fear of going into our first gay bar, or the "virgin shakes" of our first sexual encounter, one that may or may not have been driven by love.

My great hope is that the gay teenagers of today will feel that they belong to a greater community—that all gay women aren't crystal-snorting vegans, gym teachers, or leather-clad motorcyclists and that all gay men aren't crystal-snorting gym bunnies, RuPaul, or leather-clad motorcyclists.

The failure of the State legislature to pass AB101 is a tragedy for gay youth. If the gay community has matured beyond the superficiality of the 70's, its members need to see beyond their immediate needs. The Gay Teen Alliance, recognized at Gay Pride as the Organization of the Year, is a shining example of how gay people are recognizing their responsibility to the future of our community.

This issue of THE HERALD was meant to ease my concern a bit. It's dedicated to providing gay youth in Monterey County with a glimpse into the life they have ahead of them. The world we create for them and leave to them should be the other side of the rainbow. Or, at the very least, Kansas.

A Bit About the Bashing

The Paper would like to recognize Matt Friday, Bruce Carlson, and Nick Kaleel for their extraordinaory efforts in organizing our community in response to the gay bashing in August. I'd also like to thank the people who offered their services free of charge to the victim; he was overwhelmed with the amount of support you provided.

I've often said that Monterey's gay community didn't yet exist. I was wrong. If the "out" gay communities of Santa Cruz and San Jose—who so freely criticize us as "conservative" and "backwards"—showed this much compassion and concern, there wouldn't be as many beatings in their streets. Be proud of yourselves.

-Wes Kashiwagi, Class of '83, Publisher
Lesbianism Isn’t Free Choice

A University of Oregon researcher concludes that becoming a lesbian is not a simple matter of culture vs. genes. The study is outlined in a new book by UO sociologist Arlene Stein, “Sex and Sensibility: Stories of a Lesbian Generation,” published this year by the University of California Press.

“Lesbians are not a monolithic group,” Stein argues. Stein says her study indicates, instead, that a variety of factors are involved in an individual becoming a lesbian. There is no credible evidence, she insists, that either homosexuality or heterosexuality is biologically determined, but neither is it freely chosen.

“To reduce sexuality to a matter of choice or biology is a simplification,” Stein observes. The book is based on in-depth interviews with more than 40 women and focuses upon the experiences of baby boomer lesbians. Stein says she focused on baby boomers because they came of age, just as lesbianism was itself “coming out of the closet.”

“This group of women came of age at a politically volatile and exciting time,” Stein says. They felt that opportunities to recreate themselves were opening up. Feminism served as an impetus for that notion of recreation and self creation.” Stein contends that many boomers took that message to heart and said “This (a lesbian) is who I want to be.”

Among the most controversial chapters in the book is a discussion of “ex-lesbians,” women who lived as lesbians for a number of years, who have now decided that they prefer primary relationships with men. The book details the stories of 10 of these women and of the troubling questions this raises about who is a “real lesbian.”

HIV Testing Low Among Gay Men in MoCo

Only a tiny fraction of gay men in Monterey are testing to see if they are infected with HIV according to Monterey County Health Department statistics.

In 1996, only 57 gay men were tested at county facilities. A county health department representative told The Paper that the county estimates that it administers 40% of all HIV tests, with the balance being made up of private and home tests.

It’s generally recommended that sexually active gay men test for the virus that causes AIDS at least once a year.

HIV tests are 99.9% accurate. Early detection of the virus significantly improves HIV patients’ chances for survival and can stop the further spread of the virus.

HIV Tests in 1995:
- gay men = 45
- bisexual men = 123

HIV Tests in 1996:
- gay men = 57
- bisexual men = 80

Local Talent Sought for ’98 Pride Benefit

Pride of Monterey County will hold its first fundraiser for 1998’s pride celebration at the After Dark nightclub Sunday, October 12th.

“It’s a way that the community can contribute and have a great time,” said Bernice Labelle, who is coordinating the event and will serve as master of ceremonies. “We’re looking for a diversity of talent.”

For more information or to sign up for the tryouts, call the main Pride of Monterey County line at 655-2045. Leave your name and your phone number.

AIDS Walk Volunteers Sought

The 1997 Monterey Bay AIDS Walk is seeking volunteers for a number of activities. The largest fundraiser for AIDS organizations in Monterey and Santa Cruz counties, the walk needs help distributing walk forms and posters to local businesses, forming teams, making phone calls, and registering people the day of the way.

The 1997 Monterey Bay AIDS Walk will be held Saturday, October 18th. Call 633-0538 in Santa Cruz or 394-4747 in Monterey, or write to the Monterey Bay Walk for AIDS, P.O. Box 2081, Monterey, CA 93942.

Erotic Art Benefit at the After Dark

Local artist Jamie Kissel, well known for his erotic mixed media artwork, will show his work at a benefit for the John XXIII AIDS Ministry will be held October 5th from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the After Dark nightclub in Monterey (214 Lighthouse Ave., 373-8470).

Wine and cheese will be served at the showing. Ten percent of all sales will be donated to John XXIII AIDS Ministry, a local AIDS service provider. One of Kissel’s drawings valued at $600 will be raffled off during the event. All are encouraged to attend.

New Minister Supports Gay Community

One of the local supporters at the recent press conference called by the gay community was Rev. Beth Miller, who joined the Unitarian Universalist Church as their pastor in early September.

Jo Ann Novoson, president of the church’s board, said, “Our church has long flourished in this county as a spiritual home for a very diverse community of religious liberals.” Novoson went on to state that Rev. Miller would help to continue that tradition. For more information on the Unitarian Universalist Church, contact Gene Bullock-Wilson at 625-5633.
What Happened When

August 15
At approximately 1:30 a.m. a gay man is attacked and brutally beaten on the 200 block of Lighthouse Ave. in New Monterey by two assailants who escape on foot. According to the victim, the assailants asked before attacking him whether he was a "fucking queer."

August 15
Suspects caught by the police at approximately 4 p.m. and charged with two felony counts including a hate crime, and released on bail at approx. 9:30 p.m. The Paper posts bulletin informing patrons of Lighthouse bars.

August 16
First reports of the gay bashing appear in the local media. It is the lead story in the Monterey County Herald and all local television stations. Reports travel as far north as San Francisco and San Jose.

August 19
Representatives from local minority and civil rights groups called together by local gay activists Matt Friday (pictured below) and Bruce Carlson meet in Del Rey Oaks to plan response.

August 20
Community groups hold a press conference at the scene of the crime. Monterey mayor Dan Albert, Councilwoman Ruth Vreeland, and County Supervisor Dave Potter (pictured below) attend in support.

"We don't want this to happen in our community. We have the right to live and feel safe. There is nothing but complete disgust from the community at large (over this incident)." - Monterey Mayor Dan Albert

Latest Word on the Bashing Victim

The only unknown player remaining in the gay bashing case is the victim himself. When The Paper spoke to the victim the night before this issue went to press, his ribs were still sore from where he was kicked. No bones were broken in the attack, but even after six weeks his lip and nose are also still slightly swollen and tender.

Life Changed Forever

The victim, who has chosen to remain anonymous thus far, was subpoenaed by the district attorney to appear at the preliminary hearing October 2nd. The district attorney informed the victim that he will indeed be pressing the hate crime charges.

For the man who was attacked, the legal process isn't the only thing he has had to contend with. The victim is not fully out of the closet, and making his identity known will mean having to reveal his sexuality to his employer.

However, the victim also told The Paper that he is resolute about seeing this go to trial. "I'm not going to be pressed back into the closet for being beaten just for who I am," he said. "It's difficult...there's no going back."

Taking Care of Our Own

"I've been just overwhelmed with the response from the gay community," said the victim. "And the response from the straight community...the outrage they've expressed. It's great. I'd have never expected it."

The victim said that after the beating what was running through his mind was that the police wouldn't be able to catch the two men that beat him. His fears were allayed when the Monterey Police Department, lead by Detective Figeroa and Detective Olson, arrested and charged two Monterey men with the crime that same day.

"It's more than I expected from the police," said the victim. "It's changed my view of the law enforcement people here. We have to give credit to them. They did a great job in this case." Many within the gay community have expressed similar change in how they view the local police.

The preliminary hearing is scheduled to be held Oct. 2nd at the Monterey County Courthouse. The victim has one year to file civil charges if he so chooses.

The arraignment of the alleged gay bashers drew 15-20 members of the gay community and its supports to the Monterey County Courthouse in Monterey. The protestors stood in front of the courthouse with signs saying "Drunkeness is not a defense" and "Being gay is not a crime, beating gays is a crime." There were not confrontations as Jason Soboleski, one of the two defendants (pictured right) entered the courthouse with his family.

Who are the Alleged Gay Bashers?

Jason Bryan Soboleski
20, 6'1", 220#
Monterey resident, star high school football player

Johnathon Earl Maxon
20, 5'11", 180#
Monterey resident

The Paper • September/October 1997
Death Threats Follow Local Man After Bashing

A local man has received death threats following the gay bashing, possibly because of his involvement in publicizing the event.

Nick Kaleel, who worked as a bartender at one of the gay bars in the neighborhood where the attack occurred, received his first death threat one week before the bashing, but didn't think much of it. After the attack and his appearance on a local television news show, the number of calls increased dramatically. Callers asked for Kaleel by name, then threatened him by saying, "This is only the beginning" and "We're watching you."

The worst threat according to Kaleel was the letter he received. The letter was postmarked in San Jose, but mentioned Kaleel by name.

Kaleel contacted the Monterey City Police Department. An officer took a copy of the written death threat and offered to provide Kaleel with a police escort. Kaleel's shift at the bar weekdays ended at 2 a.m. when there is little traffic on Lighthouse Ave.

Kaleel was quick to say that other Monterey residents have been supportive following his appearance on the news. "People at the grocery store have stopped me and asked 'How is the man that was attacked?','" said Kaleel.

First Person

The publisher of The Paper was one of the first people to arrive at the scene of the attack. Here is his account of the events that evening:

I'd just walked out of the After Dark with two friends. It was around 1:30 a.m., but there was still traffic on Lighthouse. I started walking to my car, which was parked in front of the bookstore next to the bar. I realized that the man sitting on the curb was an acquaintance of mine, and that the only reason I had started walking to my car was the blood dripping from his nose.

A patrol car arrived about ten minutes after. My friend James Mears ran to the bookstore to call 911. The police took a copy of the written death threat and offered to provide Kaleel with a police escort.

One of the passengers in the patrol car asked him if he was able to identify the attacker. The victim seemed agitated at the police. They loaded the victim into the ambulance. Firemen washed away most of the blood on the sidewalk.

One of the passengers in the ambulance talked to the patrolman to see if he could identify the attacker. They ended up following the victim to the hospital to check on the victim, but the police officer had no information.

My friends and I drove to the hospital to check on the victim, but the police officer had no information.

Court Players

Monterey District Attorney in charge of the gay bashing case

Dennis La Barbera
District Attorneys Office
Monterey County Courthouse
1200 Aguajito Road
Monterey, CA 93940
(408) 647-7770

Lawyer representing Jason Soboleski
Jim Newhouse
631 Abrego
Monterey
(408) 655-2000

Lawyer representing Johnathan Maxon
Susan E Chapman
241 Salinas St.
Salinas
(408) 754-1979

The Lesbian Alliance

"The Newsletter is a forum for a visible lesbian community which is social, supportive and empowering, encouraging action, freedom of expression and connection for Monterey County."

for additional information on events and subscriptions call 648-4338

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93912

St. Matthias Episcopal Church

"A house of prayer for all people"

Sundays, Holy Eucharist at 10 a.m.

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408/394-1744
APA Passes Resolves on “Us”
by Anita Hilton
Contributing Writer

On August 14, a resolution was passed by the American Psychological Association, reaffirming “psychology’s opposition to homophobia and clients’ rights to unbiased treatment.” The APA asked mental-health professionals to “take the lead in removing the stigma of mental illness that has long been associated with homosexual orientation.”

This resolution embodies four principles:

- Homosexuality is not a mental disorder, and the APA opposes all portrayals of lesbian, gay and bisexual people as mentally ill and in need of treatment due to their sexual orientation.
- Psychologists do not knowingly participate in or condone discriminatory practices with lesbian, gay or bisexual clients.
- Psychologists respect the rights of individuals, including lesbian, gay and bisexual clients, to privacy, confidentiality, self-determination and autonomy.
- Psychologists obtain appropriate informed consent to therapy in their work with lesbian, gay and bisexual clients.

Ellen Brings Home an Emmy

Ellen DeGeneres and her writing team were honored with an Emmy for outstanding comedy writing. The Academy of Television Arts and Sciences honored the Ellen team for the “Puppy Episode,” last year’s historic coming out episode.

On stage and to a crowded room of reporters backstage, DeGeneres made special note of gay youth, struggling for acceptance. “I accept this on behalf of all the people, especially the teens out there, who think something is wrong with them because they are gay,” she told millions of viewers worldwide. “There’s nothing wrong with you, and don’t let anybody make you think there is.”

Ellen was nominated for six awards. In addition, The Simpsons episode, “Homer’s Phobia,” which dealt with prejudice against a gay man (whose voice was provided by John Waters), and Tracy Takes On..., which has explored gay themes, won for Best Animated Cartoon and Best Variety, Music or Comedy Series respectively.

Growth and Good Ratings

“The Academy saw much of what American’s saw, a incredibly brave person allowing her audience to grow with her and her television character,” said Chastity Bono, GLAAD’s Entertainment Media Director. “Ellen DeGeneres, and the whole Ellen team made history last April, and Emmy voters recognized and valued that incredible work. Television continues to make strides at accurate portrayals of lesbian and gay mens’ lives thanks in large part to Ellen and people like her who have the courage to simply be themselves.”
Focus on Gay Youth

A Coming Out Story
by Corinne Coccia, 18 Contributing Writer

I was one of those lucky people who got to have two first loves. One male and one female. In junior high I had my first boyfriend and I went to school dances and wrote notes to boys and played "Girl Talk" at slumber parties with my friends. So when I turned 15 I thought that I was getting the hang of the whole "dating guys" thing. However that fall semester I became infatuated with a girl in my math class. I don't remember deciding at any one point that I wasn't attracted to guys anymore. I just remember thinking about her and wanting to be around her more than any other girl I knew. Then I recognized that what I was feeling was actually a crush and it scared the hell out of me! The first thing that crossed my mind when I thought of the words "I'm gay", was "oh, great...this is perfect. The tomboy girl that everyone called a boy anyway is now a lesbian." I could practically hear the "I told you so's" coming at me. I remember feeling like my whole world had stopped—that I had absolutely no control over who I was or who I would ever be. It gave me a wonderful perspective of how little control people really have over life. I looked at the small image I had of my future and was overwhelmed by the thought of how hard my life was going to be now and of all the people that I would meet who would never understand me. Because of this anxiety, I didn't choose to except the challenge of self-acceptance for about a year. Then something changed in my head during that fall semester. I went to SAN FRANCISCO and it was the first time I'd been there. I think that city called me. It was the "something" that I needed. I chose that time to tell my her because I was so emotionally overwhelmed by the accepting vibes of the city. She was surprised but happy for me! I have always been close to my mom and didn't think she would disown me but I still felt an immense sense of relief because I no longer had to make up stories about what my pride ring necklace meant (I used to say they were mood rings...Ha!).

When I told my friends about my sexuality they were accepting as well. I don't have a horror story, at least not yet. The worst discrimination towards homosexuals at my high school was when the principal (who has now been removed) denied the existence of and prohibited a gay/straight support club that a few students had formed. I was not yet caught up in the whim of activism but if I could go back to that moment in my present state of mind, I would have raised hell!

Coming to college gave me that state of mind. I'm now a Sophomore at California State University Monterey Bay and the Vice President of an LGBA called "All in the Family." The hardest part about coming out in Orange County was not having anywhere to go or anyone to relate with. I mean there was NOBODY! My friends were great but they did not have the same feelings so they could not relate. All in the Family was small and developing when I came into it but it was still like a dream come true. Suddenly I had a community! The loneliness that I felt for two years developed into PRIDE. I posted a version of my coming out story to my school on Oct.11th of last year and it was accepted campus wide. The confidence that I received from that is a foundation that I will use for the rest of my life, whether I'm dealing with my sexuality or any other conflict that may obstruct my path.

As I continue to grow up and evolve more into the person I want to become, I will always have a sense of pride.

As I continue to grow up and evolve more into the person I want to become, I will always have a sense of pride.

People still ask me what my title is or what I identify as. They like to say "she's a lesbian" or "she's bisexual" and I have to admit that I take comfort in titles as well. However, the person who calls me a lesbian is just as right as the person who calls me bisexual. At this point in my life I am attracted to and in love with a woman. That does not mean that I am not attracted to or could never love a man. I'm just gay in every definition of the word.

Being gay is not a choice or a disease or a curse. It's a phenomenon that no one can completely explain. Coming out is an experience essential to the life of every questioning, individual whether they are doing it at 15 or 50. We all walk a common road and this story is one of the many pebbles that forms it.

If you have any questions/comments, e-mail me at corinne_coccia@otter.monterey.edu. I love talking with people on this subject and answering any questions that I can.

P.G. Museum Offers Nijinsky Exhibit

The Stowitts Museum in downtown Pacific Grove is showing original paintings and photographs from The Stars of the Golden Age of Ballet, featuring near life-sized paintings of Nijinsky, Pavlova, Karsavina, Bolm, Fokine and Lopokova in their most famous roles. An exhibition catalog is available of Nijinsky Dancing. The Museum is located at 591 Lighthouse Avenue, Pacific Grove, above the Bay Cafe. Hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 1 to 5 p.m. and by appointment. Admission is free. For more information telephone the Museum at 655-4488.

Oak Fired California Grill
Serving Dinner Nightly From 5:00 p.m. – Closed Mondays

Entrees

Rib Eye Steak .......... 15.95
Served with a peppercorn Merlot reduction sauce.

Top Sirloin .......... 14.95
Served with a roasted onion Maitre d' sauce.

New York Steak .......... 15.95
Tender New York topped with an herbed Roquefort butter and mushroom sauce.

Filet Mignon .......... 16.95
Served with a chardonnay, porcini mushroom glaze.

Rack of Lamb .......... 18.95
Wood-fired and served with a balsamic and herbed butter reduction sauce.

Applewood Smoked Pork .......... 13.95
Medallions of pork accompanied with an apple-cranberry chutney.

Babyback Ribs .......... 1/2 Rack 11.95 . Full Rack 14.95
Full or half a rack served with Brix' Carolina honey bar-b-que sauce.

Wood-Fired Split Chicken .......... 9.95
1/2 chicken grilled with a roasted garlic rosemary glaze.

Salmon Fillet .......... 13.95
Grilled and served with a refreshing dill cream sauce.

Our Reputation is at Steak
Fodor's Gay Guide
Author Visits
Sand City Bookstore

When someone else writes about you, it usually means you're newsworthy. Monterey has finally become a gay destination worth talking about. Fodor, one of the most respected names in travel books, has launched a series of gay travel guides. The author, Andrew Collins, recently spoke at a book signing at the Sand City Borders.

Collins was formerly on the editorial staff of Fodor's. He pitched the idea of a gay guide to the company, and was given an advance against royalties to fund his research. The gamble paid off. Fodor's new gay series is already in its second printing, and the series will soon be expanded to include 20-25 more American cities as well as a guide to Amsterdam.

Digging Below the Surface

The Fodor's guides, unlike the more well-known Damron and Ferrari guides, also has regional editions with detailed information about selected cities. A chapter on Monterey's gay community is a part of the guide on the San Francisco bay area.

Collins travels with his boyfriend and finds it particularly nice that many straight establishments treat them as a couple. Mentioning the straight community of a given city is important to Collins, who feels that many gays "don't want to travel around in a pink cocoon."

The Fodor's gay guides are available at local bookstores, including Borders in Sand City.

Gay Happenings on the Central Coast

September

Sat, 20th
Gay Teen Alliance in Salinas
The local group for gay youth (men and women under 25) will hold its first Salinas meeting. Don't miss the pizza party at Gay Teen Alliance in Salinas. Call GTA 353-5867 or 772-8202, or write to www.gtamonterey.org. At the MCAF Salinas office, 12 E. Cabrill St.

Mon, 22nd
Gay Pride Talent Show
The Pride of Monterey County group holds its first fundraiser at the After Dark nightclub, 281 Lighthouse Ave., Monterey, 373-4887.

Fri, 26th
GTA Activity Night
7 p.m. The Incredibly True Story of Two Girls in Love. Call GTA 353-5867 or 772-8202. Point to www.gtamonterey.org.

Sun, 28th
MCAP Volunteer Picnic
in the Simmons area of Toro Park off of Hwy 68. Noon to 5 p.m. Music by Jonath and the Whalesalers. Free, but park admission is $5/car so carpools are suggested. All-you-can-eat BBQ, lotteryball, games. Call 772-8202 for information.

October

Tue, 2nd
Preliminary Hearing of Gay Bashing Suspects
Time and date are subject to change. Call Nick at 394-2559 for details.

Sun, 5th
Erotic Art Show Benefit
at the After Dark. Well-known artist Jamie Kiesl will hold an art showing at the After Dark nightclub from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Proceeds from a raffle for a drawing worth $840 and 10% of all sales will be given to John XXIII AIDS Ministry. Wine and cheese will be served.

November

Wed, 1st
Deadline for The Paper
Turn in your articles, letters, poems, rants and raves, calendar events, etc. Deadline is Wednesday, November 27th. To the editors. Call 655-3756 or e-mail wes@mbay.net.

FAST 12
Reviews of Cultural Elements
John E. Brennan
Film

Men in Black - Surprisingly good. People (well, OK, men) can be such pigs. Eat lightly before viewing.

Rent!
Ridicule (1996): Lightly witty film about a country aristocrat who must use his wit at the court at Versailles to drain the swamps back home. Refreshing love interest strangely interested in diving suits. Yes, it has subtitles.
Gay Marriage Book Reviews

by Kassi Ydris
Contributing Writer

For those of you out there who are ready to settle down and make a permanent commitment to your 'chosen one', I recommend that both of you buy the book, Same-Sex Marriage: Pro and Con written by Andrew Sullivan who also penned that other won-

The majority wants to prevent us from legal marriage because it is convenient for them to see us as promiscuous bunnies...

For those who are just out, new to the scene, or who want to meet decent men in the hope of a long term relationship, then I highly recommend the book, Finding True Love In A Man-Eat-Man World: The Intelligent Guide To Gay Dating, Romance, And Eternal Love. If you only read one book this year, then this should be the one, for the author has read all of the dating guides out there and has compiled all the information here for you in one excellent guide. You will learn about how to pick up men, how to keep a relationship together, and other things that all of us should know.

And if you are looking for a good story, then get the book Tales Out of School by Benjamin Taylor, which is not your typical coming of age story of a young boy growing up in Galveston Island. The writer's elegiac prose and lyrical narrative make this a wonderful book to read during a lazy Sunday afternoon.

New Music

If you are looking for new music to get, then check out the album "Extra Virgin" by Olive. You have heard them before, but their U.K. chart-topping single, "You are not alone". The whole album, propelled by Ruth-Ann Boyle's alluring voice and electronic bleeps of enchantment—transport you to states of utter joy and inner calm. Then there are those tracks which strike a nerve such as "Miracle" and "I don't think so." Check this out next time you are at Tower Records.

Hawaii Marriage Update

The Fluid Reciprocal Beneficiary Status So Far

172 Couples Tie the Somewhat Fuzzy Knot

A s of August 13, 172 Hawaii couples have tied the "reciprocal beneficiary knot". Governor Ben Cayetano let Hawaii's Reciprocal Beneficiary Law take effect without his signature, as of July 1, 1997. Just what the law means is not entirely clear—it is 92 pages long with numerous references to other parts of Hawaii's law code. The references are often just to section numbers. So, understanding many of the references requires the study of many more pages of laws.

In late July Hawaii's Bar Association had Dan Foley, the attorney who has worked with the same-gender marriage case since 1991, brief themselves on what the RB Law includes. Especially for the United States it is an advanced "domestic partnership" status, including at least 50 benefits of marriage (such things as hospital visitation rights, the right to inherit property from another, etc.). It's a good first step in the direction of full equality (to see how far we have to go, there are at least 1,049 references to marital status in federal law!).

As with all law in the U.S., it may not be clear what a law means until the courts have had years to interpret it. Today, for technical reasons of exact references, Hawaii's Attorney General opined that a key benefit (access to health insurance through employers who already give health insurance to spouses) can be denied. In Hawaii, companies do not have to offer health insurance to employee spouses and children but they must offer it to employees. The RB Law was intended to say that if an employer offers health insurance to spouses, the employer must also offer it to reciprocal beneficiaries.

Family Celebrations offers a Wedding and Special Occasion catalog for the Gay & Lesbian Community. If you know anyone interested in receiving a catalog, contact Family Celebrations at (888) 335-5998, or write to P.O. Box 3700, San Dimas, CA 91773

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Back to School Already!

How to look like a million bucks, even if you're a starving student (or teacher)

by Marsha K. Olson  
Fashion Columnist

Well...Well...Well... Summer has practically gone and disappeared and we’re finally approaching the fall season. This is a favorite time of year for most people because of all the holidays like Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmases that are just around the corner. Fall is also a good time to pull out those wool trousers, sweaters and jackets that have been stashed in the back of the closet! And don't forget! It's time to go back to SCHOOL!!!!!

If you’re on a definite budget, may I suggest hitting up all those thrift stores. Why? You can put together a decent outfit or several of them that won’t leave you with an empty wallet.

Most stores like Goodwill or the Salvation Army sell pants at around $5-6, jackets at $6-8, shirts from $2-3. The advantage? You’ll have a one of a kind outfit and wardrobe that nobody else will have.

You’re not interested in searching for great finds at a thrift store but at the same time you want to look hip and and stylish, Then you’re best bet are vintage clothing stores. It's convenient and easy because most of the garments are arranged in sections by styles and types you’re looking for. Prices are usually reasonable, unless you stumble upon rare and unique items that are sought by fanatical collectors!

On occasion, cool stuff pops up so keep a look out! Believe it or not Target also carries vinyl jackets for the young crowd, Orchard Supply Hardware carries all-American workwear like Dickies and Ben Davis which are tough, canvas-like garments rugged enough for everyday an schooling.

Don't care about cost, money, price? Then enjoy yourself and shop! Keep in mind that style and class are important...so don't be a cheeseball!

What to Look For

Colors  Styles
Black  Pea coats, two-tone parkas (silver, blue, etc.), plain
Brown  vinyls, V-neck cashmere, wool sweaters, sweater
Gray  vests, dusters. Turtlenecks, animal prints, mock turtle-
Dark Green  necks, plain front khakis, black pinstripe suits, berets
Khaki  (Kangol brand). Sporty duffle bags, trench coats in new
Mustard  innovative styles and fabrics, double breasted vinyl
Gold/Bronze  jackets, uniform wear, workcoats, workpants, work-
Yellow  shirts, jackets, uniform wear, work-
Orange/Rust  pants, workwear like Dickies and Ben Davis
Burgundy, Wine, Reds  which are tough, canvas-like garments
Lime  rugged enough for everyday an schooling.
Cremes, Camel, Tan  Don't care about cost, money, price? Then
Fabrics  enjoy yourself and shop! Keep in mind that
Thick soft wool  style and class are important...so don’t be a
Tweed  cheeseball!
Canvas  Cords, corduroy
Cords, corduroy  Turtlenecks, vests, dusters. Turtlenecks, animal
Ribbed cottons  prints, mock turtle-necks, plain front khakis,
Textured lycra  black pinstripe suits, berets (Kangol brand).
Crushed velvet  Sporty duffle bags, trench coats in new
Velour  innovative styles and fabrics, double breasted vinyl
Suede, ultra-suede  jackets, uniform wear, work-coats, workpants, work-
Leather  shirts. Long black evening dresses with a slit worn with
Cable knits  stiletto heels.
Rayon, polyester blends  Shoes  Knee length to ankle length
Patent leather  boots with platform heel to moderate height.

For: Amelia

Like a barrel down a Waterfall  uncertain of its fate
the possibilities of our destruction are endless. Shattered dreams and false hopes
May bell us

Can We be certain that We Will Maintain our dignity, our Sanity?
Can We build a trust and never observe each other
Mentally hearing the Voices
gazing at the photographs,
reading the words,
dreaming about each other?
On first Sight, Will We be disappointed or our love confirmed and Stronger?

I Wear a blindfold and harnd you my heart...and my soul
two precious gifts from me to you
My trust is implicit and
My love Constant
and no Matter if We are Separated
by time, distance
No Walls are too high
No Chains too thick
My love Will come to you always and forever

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MCHD Monterey County Health Department

FREE HIV TEST

June 1997

The Latest From The Lips of Local Homosexuals

trade couple  a couple in a relationship that work as a team to procure sex partners for themselves. Synonym: tag team lovers.

closet bottom  a gay man that acts and speaks to himself as a "top" but actually prefers to be sexually passive.

SLANGWATCH

Most graphic: "pickup line heard at the beach: "Do you like me, or do you have gonorrhea?"

(c) Kassi Ydris 1997

(c) Copyright 1997, Kassi Ydris.
Autumn in New York

Village. Christopher St. is packed with everything for everyone, from leather harnesses to chi chi furnishings. Contrary to what you might think, the people are friendly and cosmopolitan, the taxi drivers are honest, and the streets feel relatively safe for a big city.

Start your tour of the Village with a stop along the bike path that runs down the west side of Manhattan (pictured left). It's a pretty spot to enjoy the weather, which hovers around 75 degrees day and night this time of year with just enough of a breeze to take your mind off of the mild humidity.

Since I still think that the bars are the easiest way to learn about a city, I went barhopping. Tony, a local man, volunteered to be my tour guide and led me around Christopher St. We started at a great bar called Ty's, which like most NYC bars is tiny, about the size of the Backlot at the After Dark. From there we went to Hangers, which felt a lot like a Castro bar, and The Monster, a Village landmark. The Monster is perhaps the strangest gay bar I've ever been in; the top is a slightly funereal piano bar, the basement is a small but busy disco. We ended the evening at Splash, a disco in the Chelsea district (50 W. 17th St.) with a pool theme. As you can guess the go-go boys—alternately on stage showering or covering their semi-soft “diving boards with tiny towels—and the cheery bartenders extend the theme. Nice dancefloor, decent music, elegant lower bar.

When I'm bored, I hit the leather bars. I might mention that bars serve until 4 a.m., which means no one actually shows up until midnight. The Lure (409 W. 13th St.) was cavernous and an equally huge disappointment—more of an Easter parade than anything else, although the uniforms were impressive. The Spike (120 11th Ave. on the Westside Hwy.) was at the opposite end of the “friendly” spectrum, although I would only recommend venturing into the leather curtained biker lounge in the rear if you feel like a grope. The Eagle (42 11th Ave.) just down the street is more relaxed and convivial, much like its S.F. counterpart. My plane fare roundtrip from Monterey to Kennedy airport was $344. Cab fare between JFK and midtown Manhattan runs $35-42 and takes about 50 minutes. For more information, contact your local travel agent, or visit www.hx.com for the latest club info. -WK

It takes a trip to the Big Apple to really understand that everything else is small potatoes. New York City offers everything you could ever want in a big city. The place to explore is Greenwich Village. Imagine the Castro times ten and you'll have some idea of the number of restaurants, shops, bars, and dance clubs in the

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Located on the Kona Coast of the Big Island of Hawaii, Eco-Adventures takes advantage of the naturally clear waters surrounding Hawaii, which attract a variety of wildlife. One tour loads divers to a nighttime encounter with manta rays, another introduces them to the humpback whales that winter in the warm waters off of the island starting in October.

While not exclusively gay, Eco-Adventures makes a special effort to welcome gay men and women. Many of its regular customers come from the Bay Area and Central Coast.

For those who aren't yet certified, Eco-Adventures offers a 3-4 day open water certification course, which includes books, taxes, all gear, and a photo of your efforts. Private courses focussing on specific skills are also available, and more advanced lessons for rescue divers, medics, and dive-masters.

Eco-Adventures offers a variety of activities in addition to water sports, including hiking, biking, golfing, and horseback riding. Six-to-seven day packages are priced from $275 to $760 per person, depending on the number of activities included and hotel accommodations.

Eco-Adventures is also taking reservations for its "World Trips" vacations to Papua New Guinea (spring, 1998) and East Africa (fall, 1998). Both trips include two-day free diving packages in Hawaii.

For more information on Eco-Adventures, contact your local travel agent or call 800/329-7116, e-mail ecodive@ilhawaii.net.
Resisting Resistance

by Walt Senterfitt
reprinted from the August/September 1997 Being Alive Newsletter

The following is an update from the International Workshop on HIV Drug Resistance, Treatment Strategies and Eradication held in St. Petersburg, Florida on June 25-29, 1997. This workshop brought together over 200 leading HIV researchers in an intimate workshop setting, but thereby excluded many others and most PWA/HIVs, advocates and community journalists. However, excellent reports were prepared by several attendees and posted on the Internet (see reference for further information at the end of this article).

Introduction

Viral resistance to anti-HIV drugs is a topic which few of us understand very well, even as we are vaguely aware that it is of central importance to our daily lives and future prospects. This conference provided the best summary of our emerging knowledge in this area likely to be available in 1997, and also highlighted the critical need for public education. To help me, and I hope you, understand the topic better, I will start with a few definitions of key terms and concepts.

Viral resistance refers to the ability of a particular HIV type to continue to reproduce and infect new immune system cells even in the presence of antiviral drugs in the body. The opposite of resistance is sensitivity. If a virus type is sensitive to a drug, it means the drug or regimen of resistance is sensitivity. If a virus type is sensitive to a drug while it is reproducing and infecting new cells.

"Drug Failure" refers to when an antiviral drug or combination regimen does not work, at all or any longer, for the person taking them.

It is important to remember that not all failure is due to resistance. Some people may have trouble absorbing enough of the drug from the stomach into the bloodstream. Others may metabolize the antiviral drug more rapidly or completely than average, and thus not maintain a high enough concentration in the bloodstream to control HIV replication. This enhanced metabolism is sometimes due to drug-drug interactions where one drug significantly increases the metabolism of the other. Finally, since we all know that taking and tolerating these combinations is difficult, adherence or compliance problems can cause too little of the drugs or cocktails being in the bloodstream to keep HIV down.

The Big News from the Conference

The bad news first: evidence is piling up that many people develop generalized resistance to protease inhibitors as a class. Specific mutations associated with one protease inhibitor seem to develop in the presence of treatment to another, different protease inhibitor. Furthermore, some mutations develop that are more generally associated with the protease inhibitor in question (ie, at least 15% may be a partial exception, though there was not enough experience and therefore not enough data from resistance studies with this newest regimen). The good news is that, for the majority of people, a protease-containing combination is still working to prevent further immune system deterioration and illness.

18 Months and Holding

The standard for longevity is still being set by the combination of Crixivan (indinavir) plus 3TC plus AZT. These may well not be the best drugs, either individually or in combination, but this regimen has the best data, thanks to Merck's continuing study 035, and thus is still the standard to which all other combinations are compared. More than 85% of the people originally enrolled on this three-drug therapy still had "undetectable" viral loads (less than 200 copies/ml) after 72 weeks of treatment. These were people with fairly advanced infection (less than 200 CD4 cells) and considerable previous AZT experience, many showing genotypic evidence of resistance to AZT, but who had not previously taken 3TC.

This combination's potency was also reinforced by ACTG 320, which compared AZT/3TC/Crixivan to AZT/3TC/placebo. This group was more advanced, and had more prior viral experience than the group in Merck 035. The baseline average CD4 count in this group was 90, and viral load averaged over 100,000. At 40 weeks, the group getting Crixivan had an average increase in their CD4 count of 120, and 40% of them had an undetectable viral load. The study was stopped at that point in general use (Roche's HIV RNA-PCR test and Chiron's /sdNA test) had detectable viral loads on more sensitive tests. That is, the majority of people on combination therapy in these trials who had viral loads between 20 (the lowest level of HIV copies/ml any current test can measure) and 400-500 (the low limit of detection for the allele-specific test). In this category are many people who are doing very well, maintaining stable viral load measurements and steady increases in CD4 cells. But this category also contains a majority of people whose viral loads are clearly the majority for whom this failure is due to viral drug resistance. Resistance develops more slowly in this range, understandably enough, and it does not continue to develop.

Even in the most suppressed individuals, those with viral loads less than 20 copies/ml, (a perhaps small) proportion of them were shown to have developed some resistant virus. In other words, you may get different results from a test for genotypic resistance (say "not resistant") compared to a phenotypic resistance test ("resistant to x drug at feasible concentration") and even the latter may not match with the actual failure happening in the body.

Genotype & Phenotype Explained

With respect to resistance, different types of HIV are identified in two ways, known as genotype and phenotype. Genotype refers to the genetic makeup of the viral strain under discussion. Mutations from "wild type" or "pre-treatment" virus (what was in your body before you started treatment) can be described by the specific changes in the composition of the virus's genes. Certain mutations are associated with resistance to certain drugs.

Phenotype is the behavior of the particular type of virus in the presence of a particular drug. Can it make a drug inactive or not? This is really the bottom line, but is much harder to measure, requiring the culturing of the virus in the laboratory and testing the cultures with different concentrations of the antiviral drug. It was hoped that the genotype would accurately predict the phenotype, but this has turned out not to be the case. So, phenotypic resistance is an increased ability of HIV to replicate in the presence of a drug.

Resistance Assays: Not Ready For Prime Time

Many PWA's and their doctors have begun to use the tests for genotypic resistance available, at a high price, from some specialized commercial laboratories. For now, this appears to be a waste of money, and may perhaps lead to mis-leading "information." The problems are twofold: the tests are not sensitive or comprehensive enough to pick up all genetic mutations that may play a role; and, genotype tests (which are clearly associated with phenotype) are too predictive or explanatory of resistance anyway, on the basis of current knowledge. In other words, you may get different results from a test for genotypic resistance (say "not resistant") compared to a phenotypic resistance test ("resistant to x drug at feasible concentration") and even the latter may not match with the actual failure happening in the body.

What's the Best Information Source In the Meantime?

The good news is that the combination of CD4 count and pre-treatment or pre-change-in-treatment patterns of CD4, together with the CD4 measurements and steady increases in CD4 counts, is still working to predict resistence to new drugs, and again, if possible, to change from one combination to a new one only made up of all new drugs. If this is not possible, there may be a combination available that is not 100% effective, but is still better than starting from drugs known to be close in their resistance patterns to those you have taken (the term for this is "cross resistance"). This implies that keeping a careful drug history is a good idea for individuals.

Other data presented showed that if a regimen was going to work in the long term, it had reached its maximum effect by anywhere between week 12 and 28. This information was reinforced by previous studies showing that one can tell fairly early on if a drug combination is going to work or not. By week 12 or so of a new regimen, if you have not seen a dramatically low viral load, you should start conferring with your provider about a strategy to modify or change your regimen.

Jurk Still Out On Possibility of Eradication

New data presented moved back the most optimistic time clock for the potential of eradicating HIV from the bodies of those who begin optimal treatment (whatever exactly that turns out to be) at the ideal time (very early in infection, probably). The reason stems from a finding mentioned by Drs. Ho and Markowitz in their updates at the 4th Retrovirus Conference in San Francisco in a paper presented at the conference even when nearly all evidence of HIV has been eliminated, it seems to persist awhile in a smaller number of quiet or resting T-cells, in the form of "proviral DNA," or HIV's genetic material inserted into the nucleus of the latently infected cell. Such quiet cells are a tiny proportion of the total T-cell population (well under 1%) and are not making any new HIV. The two disquieting new facts are: 1) these take a lot longer in a small number of quiet or resting T-cells, in the form of "proviral DNA," or HIV's genetic material inserted into the nucleus of the latently infected cell. Such quiet cells are a tiny proportion of the total T-cell population (well under 1%) and are not making any new HIV. The two disquieting new facts are: 1) these take a long time to develop. For more information, see reports by Dr. Steven Deeks and Dr. William O'Brien on the Internet at http://hivinsite.ucsf.edu and http://www.healthhg.com.

Nutrition Seminars

The Department Immunology, Hematology and Infectious Disease at Johns Hopkins University will hold a seminar on the effects of nutrition on people with HIV Thursday, Nov. 20 from 2-3 p.m. in the Nutrition Services Conference Room, Room 140. You must pre-register to attend. Call OPIS at 625-4972. For information about the seminar itself, call Michelle Barth at 625-4947.

Jury Still Out On Possibility of Eradication

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Updated reprinted from the Being Alive Newsletter. Being Alive is an organization of HIV+ and at-risk people with HIV. For a subscription, call Tel - 213.667.3262, TDD - 213.661.7837; FAX - 213.667.2735. Website: www.nymh.org/beingalive/ They’re really a great non-profit with the highest standards of HIV/AIDS reporting.
Commentary

The Dorothy Complex

Thoughts On Why So Many Gay Men Try So Hard To Be 14-year Old Girls

They are always late, they're always broke, and when they’re not dishing someone outside of their clique they’re obsessed with what their friends think of them. They don’t muster an original thought so they rely on movies and magazines to tell them what to think, drink, eat, drive, wear, live, love, and do. They’re obsessed with their hair, with their figures, and with falling in love.

The fact that I can describe pubescent girls and many of the gay men I know with the same adjectives troubles me, as it should trouble our community.

Killing the Witch

I’m neither a sociologist or a social psychologist, but I do pay attention to what is going on around me. I realize that pointing out these things is fruitless, since no one cares once they are comfortable. This is meant to make you wince a little.

After waiting an hour or more for a dinner date to show, only to have him explain that he had trouble with his hair, felt askep, or got a phone call and had to “chat quietly” as a gay man, the easiest way to end this vicious cycle is to end your tolerance for this behavior.

If someone is habitually late without calling to say they’ve been delayed, they should be left behind or not invited in the first place. Bitter queens should be ignored, or better yet left to face the prejudice of the youth culture they created and fed off of until their butts started to sag.

I suppose this sort of angry rhetoric is pointless, but of the hundreds of gay men I’ve met, there are a few dozen that I would consider adults. I find this sad. There is a difference between playfulness and childishness. The perpetuation of childish (irresponsible) behavior needs to end with the current generation, and to some degree I think that is happening.

The gay men in the generation after mine seem to have already lived through their adolescence and not saved it up for their 30s. If anyone is to change the meaning of what it is to be “gay,” I’ll place my bets on the 20-somethings to create real change in this world. The generations of gay men who have lived in Monterey County thus far have done nothing. If we have to rely on drag queens to get things done in this town, I’ll support the drag queens.

Back to Kansas

As the gay community leaves its shell and begins to stand among other minority groups as an equal, we need to learn to act on the grand “vision” for gay equality bandied about so thoughtlessly. Before asking for “rights,” ask yourself what you have done to help someone other than yourself.

If nothing changes, we will lose—and rightly so—the respect of those many brave people who struggled, sacrificed and sometimes died for the rights we now so self-righteously flout.

— Wes Kashiyagi
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  - Transvestite
  - Bisexual
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