



# Tradewinds

December 2008

Monthly Newsletter

## GAY NEWS HERE AND ABROAD *by Roy Liebman, Publications Chair*

### THE CULTURAL SCENE

The highly-publicized matchmaking website EHarmony settled a lawsuit by agreeing to offer same-sex matches. The company, which has strong evangelical backing, also agreed to provide the first 10,000 same-sex registrants with free six-months subscriptions. (So you'd better get in line fast, A/PGF guys!) Rather than offering such matches on its regular website a new one called Compatible Partners will be created.

The country's largest greeting card company, Hallmark, has unveiled its new line of same-sex wedding cards. They are also suitable for civil union commitment ceremonies in that the word "marriage" is not actually mentioned. It has previously featured "coming out" cards as well. Since it is estimated that close to 100,000 gay/lesbian couples are in some kind of legal union in the United States it makes good business sense. Because of possible public backlash, however, each individual Hallmark store will decide whether or not to carry the cards.

At least one school library, in Virginia, pulled a children's book about two male penguins after complaints that it encouraged a gay "agenda". The book is based on the real-life "love" story of two male penguins, Roy and Silo, at a New York City zoo. Parents in other localities have also requested that the book be removed from their children's libraries.

### SCIENCE

A recent study has found similarities in the brains of gay men and straight women. Among the similarities were the brain circuits that deal with language/verbal expression and the processing of emotions. Brain similarities between gay women and straight men were not as pronounced. Straight women and gay men were found to have symmetrical brains---more favorable to verbal skill---while straight men and gay women's brains were slightly asymmetrical.

### RELIGION

The Board of Rabbis of Southern California, the largest aggregation of rabbis in Southern California, voted overwhelmingly by 93% to oppose Prop 8. This was particularly meaningful because the group has representatives from all the factions of Judaism, including the Orthodox which has been vocally anti-gay. The six most senior Episcopal bishops in the state had also opposed it. The proposition passed with the strong backing of the Mormon and Catholic churches.

### CONNECTICUT

After a four year legal battle Connecticut became the third state (now the second since Prop 8 passed) to allow gay marriage. The state Supreme Court, by the "usual" 4 to 3 decision, ruled that preventing gays and lesbians to marry violated the state's constitution. Massachusetts, which was the first state to legalize it, now remains the other state.

### LOUISIANA

Governor Bobby Jindal is sometimes called the Republican's answer to Barack Obama because he is a young up-and-coming man of color. He has allowed an executive order to lapse that barred job discrimination against gays, claiming he took the action to protect faith-based organizations in their dealings with the state. He stated that federal anti-discrimination laws would adequately protect GLBT people but in reality federal laws do not do this, and now neither does Louisiana.

## OREGON

The Coquille tribe of Native Americans has legalized same-sex marriage among its members even though an Oregon law prohibits it. The tribe claims that by federal law it is not subject to Oregon statutes. It is believed to be the first Native American tribe to do this although the Cherokee Nation supposedly issued a marriage license to two lesbians a few years ago.

## ISRAEL

Same-sex couples in Israel can now adopt children. This covers both the adoption of one spouse's child by the other and unrelated children as well. The first court decision on this came in 2000 but only this year did the Attorney General issue a legal ruling.

## PANAMA

In July the President of Panama lifted the country's 59 year ban on gay sex. It was the last Latin American country to have had a sodomy law on its books that criminalized gay sex.

---

**Thailand will celebrate its first National Human Rights Day for Sexual Diversity on Nov 29, Manila its 10th gay pride anniversary on Dec 6 and Hong Kong its first gay pride march Dec 13**

National Human Rights Day for Sexual Diversity, Nov 29

Thailand will celebrate its first National Human Rights Day for Sexual Diversity on Nov 29 at Lido cinema, Siam Square, Bangkok.





Check our Event Calendar on our website [www.apgf.org](http://www.apgf.org) for complete details on any of our events

### Support Our Sponsors



**Prudential**  
**California Realty**  
JOHN AAROE DIVISION

*David Lao & Pei Chang*

Phone: (626) 922-4268

[www.davidandpei.com](http://www.davidandpei.com)





[www.apgf.org](http://www.apgf.org)

**Asian/Pacific Gays and Friends**

Advertise your business here

Reasonable Rates



inquiry: [webmaster@apgf.org](mailto:webmaster@apgf.org)

---