

# the rest of



# our world

## Gay Veterans' Monument

CATHEDRAL CITY, Calif. — A monument to veterans killed while serving in the U.S. armed forces has been established in southern California.

Organizers say it's the first of its kind in the world.

A ceremony dedicating the monument was attended by veterans in uniform, the mother of a Navy serviceman beaten to death at age 23 for being gay, and a color guard carrying the rainbow banner.

"It's a turn-of-the-century event," said Dennis Palt, a former Air Force staff sergeant who served in Vietnam. "I had hoped for this but you could have never thought this would become a reality in the 1970s, 1980s or '90s. It's fabulous."

## Gay Military Doctor

SAN FRANCISCO — A psychiatrist has been ordered to repay \$71,000 to the federal government because a judge says the gay man failed to fulfill his active duty obligation.

U.S. District Judge William Alsup said John Hensala, a former U.S. Air Force captain, should be required to pay back the government because he voluntarily announced he was gay and should have known the consequences of violating the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy.

"(Hensala) presumably understood that the Air Force would follow its own rules and what the likely consequences of his acts would be," Alsup wrote. "It is not unreasonable to infer that one intends the probable and foreseeable consequences of deliberate conduct."

Hensala, 36, a San Francisco psychiatrist in private practice who sued last May, said he shouldn't have to repay the money because he wanted to serve, but the Air Force refused to let him because he announced he was gay.

## Bishop Resigns

LOS ANGELES — The ranking Lutheran bishop in Southern California has resigned after participating in the ordination of a non-celibate lesbian priest.

Admitting "ecclesiastical disobedience," Bishop Paul W. Egertson said he would step down July 31. His six-year term ends Aug. 31; he had not been expected to seek re-election.

Egertson, whose son is gay, became the first active bishop

in the 5.1-million-member Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the nation's largest Lutheran body) to join in the ordination of a non-celibate gay or lesbian.

Presiding Bishop H. George Anderson, who had asked Egertson to resign, called his decision honorable.

The church ordains homosexuals only if they remain celibate.

Anita Hill, who is in a relationship with another woman, was ordained by Egertson and others in St. Paul, Minn., where she has led a ministry to gays and lesbians for two decades.

## Gay Youth

WASHINGTON — A little open communication can make kids' lives a lot easier.

A survey of gay and lesbian high school students suggests they endure less violence and confrontation in schools where students receive AIDS and sexual-orientation instruction to increase sensitivity to gays.

The survey, appearing in the American Journal of Public Health, also found that gay, lesbian and bisexual students in schools without sensitivity training were more likely to report risky and frequent sex, substance abuse and suicide attempts.

In schools where there was gay-sensitive HIV instruction "there was a reduction, or appeared to be, in risk behaviors by GLBT youth," said Susan Blake of George Washington University, author of the study.

The June issue of the journal is devoted to the health of the GLBT population, referring to gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transexuals.

"We believe that by promoting the health of all populations the public health for all of us is improved," added journal editor Mary E. Northridge.

The research was conducted among pupils at 59 schools in Massachusetts, where school personnel are offered training on sexual orientation and suicide prevention and counseling services are available for homosexual students and their families.

The survey conclusions were based on questionnaires completed at 54 high schools by 3,647 students, including 151 who either identified themselves as gay or were identified through same-sex sexual behavior. The pupils' ages ranged from 13 to more than 18 in grades 9 through 12.

## Church Property

MADISON, Wis. — A rural congregation that broke from the United Methodist Church because of its positions on gay issues now has lost its building.

The congregation in the small town of Elo cannot retain the deed to the 141-year-old building and it reverts to the church itself, the state Supreme Court ruled.

State law clearly says the deed to a defunct Methodist church belongs to the Methodists, not the congregation, the court said in its 5-2 decision.

The congregation of the Elo United Methodist church in Utica broke away in 1997, citing the Methodists' increasingly liberal attitude toward gays.

While the United Methodist Church opposes gay ordination and same-sex marriages, its Wisconsin conference, which governs 510 churches in the state, had expressed an interest in being more accepting of homosexuality.

The congregation renamed itself the Elo Evangelical Church, and the state's Methodist conference sued to keep the deed to the 141-year-old church. A trial court agreed with the congregation but an appeals court and now the Supreme Court sided with the denomination.

## AIDS Infections

ATLANTA — More statistics are out showing that the rate of AIDS and HIV infections is increasing.

A large part of the problem, say those who work in the field, is that young people no longer pay attention to messages about preventing infections.

"It becomes blah, blah, blah — noise to them," said McWilliams, a counselor for AID Atlanta. "It's just not getting through to them. They need to hear it a new way."

The survey shows 4.4 percent of gay and bisexual men ages 23 to 29 are newly infected each year with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. For blacks in that group, the figures are staggering: One in seven becomes HIV-positive each year, roughly the same infection rate currently found among adults in South Africa.

"The numbers we're publishing right now are more like the findings you see in the '80s than the findings you see in the '90s," said Linda Valleroy,

who led the survey for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Left unchecked, the infection rates could lead to a resurgence of AIDS after years of progress to control it.

## Gay Pride

WASHINGTON — There were no rainbow flags around the White House for Gay Pride Month. In fact, there was nothing proud around the White House.

President Bush declined to declare June Gay Pride Month, as President Clinton did.

Nor, as another White House official put into writing, will the executive office of the president sponsor an observance.

"The president believes every person should be treated with dignity and respect but he does not believe in politicizing people's sexual orientation. That's a personal matter," McClellan said.

David Smith, spokesman for the Human Rights Campaign, said that since Bush became president in January he has signed proclamations designating Black History Month, Women's History Month and Irish-American Heritage Month.

Bush has "reached out to other constituencies," Smith said. "His refusal to reach out to our community calls into question his promise to be president of all the people."

## Military Gays

WASHINGTON — Ever-increasing numbers of gays and lesbians are being drummed out of the military.

Army dismissals of gay soldiers more than doubled last year, with many coming from a base where a soldier thought to have been gay was beaten to death the previous year.

The Pentagon said that 1,212 members of the armed services were discharged for homosexual conduct or for stating their homosexuality, a 17 percent increase from the 1,034 the previous year. It was the highest total since the "don't ask, don't tell" policy went into effect in 1994.

The Army had the most with 573, up from 271 the previous year. The Navy and Marine Corps had slight increases while the Air Force had a big drop.

Fort Campbell, located

along the Tennessee-Kentucky border, had 161 dismissals, more than any other Army base, according to Lt. Col. Duncan Baugh, a chaplain who is responsible for dealing with the homosexual policy in the Army.

## Hawaii Hate Crime

HONOLULU — Two men are accused of attempted murder for dousing the tents of gay campers and setting fire to one of them.

Eamonn Carolan, 18, and Orion Macomber, 19, were being held on \$250,000 bail. They face several felony charges including first-degree attempted murder, which carries a mandatory life sentence without parole.

One day before the May 26 attack, Gov. Ben Cayetano announced he would sign a hate crime bill but said he was concerned about distinguishing one category of people from another.

Police Inspector Mel Morris said the attack at Polihale State Park on a Kauai island beach is considered a hate crime based on the "insinuations and remarks" made by the suspects at the time. The victims said they were targeted because they had gay pride flags posted at the campsite.

The suspects face attempted murder charges because people were inside the tent they tried to burn, Morris said. They also are accused of breaking into the beach campers' cars.

Kauai police said the two teen-agers were found in a pickup truck with two cans of kerosene. The campers had provided the license number of a truck they said tried to run them down at the park.

## World AIDS

CAPETOWN, South Africa — The United Nations' chief AIDS fighter has some sobering news.

Even though more than 22 million people have died of AIDS and 36 million others are infected with HIV, the pandemic is still in its early stages.

If the world does not act decisively now, AIDS could spread to countries that have so far avoided the worst of the disease, said Dr. Peter Piot, the head of UNAIDS.

"When you look particularly at Asia at Western Africa at