

letters

Meth Thanks

Thank you for printing Shawn Lipenski's excellent [article] ("Meth Addiction Not New" *OITM* October, 2005) outlining the history of amphetamine use in the United States. It is worth pointing out that in 1958, when 3.5 billion tablets of legal methamphetamine were produced we did not have bathtub crystal meth. When these drugs were produced and distributed in legal, regulated markets they were relatively safe and pure. When the current drug laws handed the market to criminals, they began producing the most addictive and profitable product possible, e.g. crystal meth.

This is not to say that people did not misuse amphetamines in previous decades, but the dam-

age they did to themselves was less, there were no toxic home made labs, and users did not need to steal from their neighbors to pay black market prices. This is the basis of the harm reduction principle.

David Lane
Santa Cruz, CA

Marriage Light

I'm glad to see you keeping a light on the Cote-Whitacre case with your recent article ("Exclusion Appeal in Mass. High Court," *OITM* November, 2005). Bobbi and Sandi are real treasures. I did want to let you know, however, that some of the legal information in the piece was inaccurate.

Although the article says that the law had been applied in 1936

and 1973, that's not the case. As far as we know, until same-sex couples became eligible to marry in May 2004, the law had never been applied to stop couples from other states from marrying in Massachusetts. There have been two legal opinions from the Attorney General that tangentially referenced the law – one in 36 and the other in 73 – but those opinions do not demonstrate that the law had been applied before. In fact, those opinions do not even support the Attorney General's present interpretation of the law. This matters because one of our arguments is that the government is using this law as a weapon against same-sex couples.

Michele Granda
GLAD Staff Attorney

Thanks for the clarification. The erroneous statement was in a summary of the couple's memory of the Attorney General's presentation, and it should have been checked. – Ed.

Unity Funds Hep-C Support

Twin States Network, a peer support organization serving people with HIV and with Hepatitis C in Vermont and New Hampshire is pleased to announce that it has received funding from the Vermont Unity Foundation to provide peer support services to Lesbians and Bisexual Vermont women living with Hepatitis C. Our grant was omitted from your report on the Unity Fund awards ("Final Unity Grant Update," *OITM* November 2005).

Hepatitis C, frequently called the "silent disease," affects approximately four million Americans. There is currently no vaccine for the disease, and infected individuals often don't know that they are infected until they begin to experience symptoms of liver failure.

Treatment for the disease is about 50 percent effective in eradicating the virus. The standard 28-week treatment course is difficult and many people have severe side effects such as exhaustion, mental confusion, diarrhea, severe depression. Twin States Network's goal in providing support services is to help people determine whether or not to undergo treatment, to establish a support network during treatment, to have a supportive ear during the course of treatment, to educate people about risky behavior, and to keep people connected to someone else who is also coping with this disease.

Twin States Network will use the funds received to provide phone, e-mail and face-to-face support for lesbians and bi-sexual women living with the disease, considering treatment or undergoing treatment. Two of Twin States Network's peer leaders are lesbian/bisexual women living with Hepatitis C. Services are available throughout the state.

For more information, to enroll or to refer someone to this service, please call Jo Schneiderman, Executive Director at 888-338-8796 or e-mail us at tsnjo@sover.net.

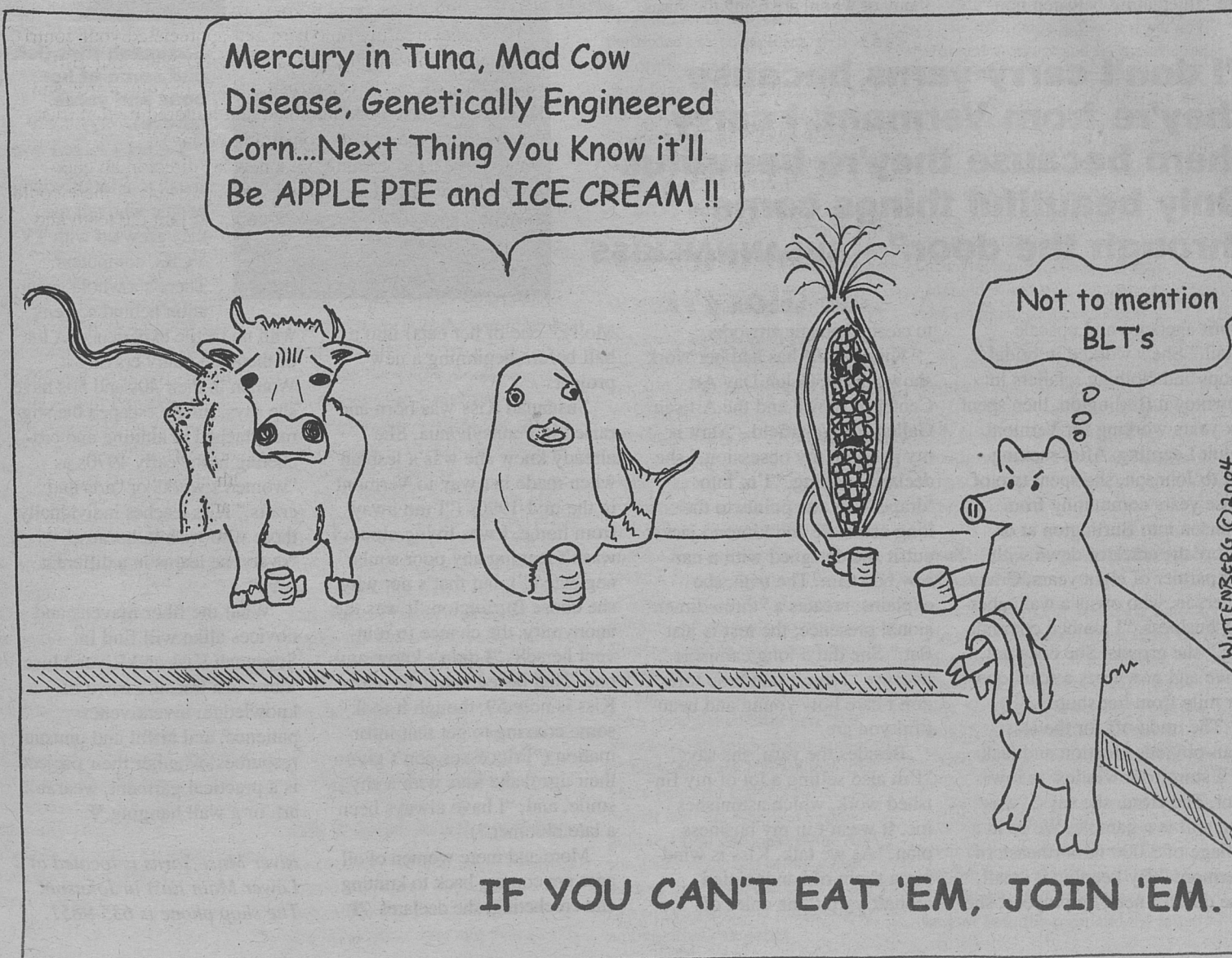
Jo Schneiderman
Executive Director
Twin States Network

Correction:

We had a brain cramp (or maybe more than one) last month and inadvertently omitted Amy Rubin from our masthead list of contributors for the "In Memoriam" piece reporting on Susan Weaver's life and death. We regret the omission and thank Amy for writing the piece.

At Witt's End

Leah Wittenberg



IF YOU CAN'T EAT 'EM, JOIN 'EM.