

➔ the rest of our world

WASHINGTON, DC Military School Elects Gay Student Prez

The Uniformed Services University (USU), a Department of Defense military medical, nursing and graduate school, has elected Patrick M. High as its first openly gay student council president, the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN) reported.

High, who will represent graduate students at the university, previously served nine years in the Illinois Army National Guard and is currently a PhD candidate at USU. High was elected by a student body that includes uniformed personnel in the armed forces.

"Patrick High's election as student council president is just the latest in a series of signs that those serving in our armed forces are ready to welcome openly gay colleagues," said SLDN Executive Director C. Dixon Osburn.

ORLANDO, FL Doctor Denied Gay Man Fertility Services

Lambda Legal filed a complaint in September with the Orlando Human Rights Board on behalf of a gay man denied fertility services because of his sexual orientation, Lambda Legal reported.

"Dr. Barros was denied services not because of any real medical risk, but solely because of his sexual orientation," said Gregory Nevins, Senior Staff Attorney in Lambda Legal's Southern Regional Office in Atlanta.

Dr. Dennis Barros, a veterinarian in Orlando, and his partner decided to have a child with a surrogate mother who agreed to carry an implanted egg. To do so, they sought fertility services with Dr. Frank Riggall, a practicing fertility doctor. After previously agreeing to provide services for the couple, Dr. Riggall's offices sent Barros a letter saying they were denying him fertility services because performing the procedure would breach FDA guidelines.

DELAWARE, OH Pride at the County Fair

For the second year in a row, visitors to the Delaware County Fair were met with a message of tolerance and inclusion, the *Gay People's Chronicle* reported.

The Delaware Gay Straight Christian Alliance set up a booth in the Coliseum at the fair, which ran from September 16 to 23.

"We didn't really know what to expect beforehand," said

Howard Blanchard, an Alliance member who worked at the booth last year, "but the experience was an extremely positive one."

Tony Marconi, another member of the Alliance, also put in many hours at the booth last year, the *Chronicle* said.

"We were overwhelmed at the amount of positive support we received from people who visited our booth," Marconi said.

"I also enjoyed some sincerely heartfelt discussions with people who view Scripture passages differently than we do," he continued, "but almost without exception, our exchanges were polite and respectful."

GILSUM, NH First Home for Residents Living with HIV and HCV

The first housing program for people living with HIV, AIDS and HCV (Hepatitis C) in New Hampshire - and nationwide - opened its doors on August 1st in Gilsum, near Keene, NH, said Susan MacNeil, Executive Director of AIDS Services for the Monadnock Region (ASMR).

Named after the founder of the AIDS Memorial Quilt, The Cleve Jones Wellness House will offer service-enriched congregate housing to a total of seven male residents age 21 or over, MacNeil said. The unique program is run by ASMR, whose offices are located on the second floor of the building.

Prospective residents must be living with either HIV and/or HCV and have low to moderate income. Wellness House is not a hospice, but a safe environment where residents are self-sufficient and empowered by participating in the cooperative mission of the Wellness House program.

NEW YORK Airfare Taxes to Help Children with AIDS, TB and Malaria

A new Geneva-based organization, Unitaid, will work with officials in France, Brazil, Britain, Norway and Chile to raise \$300 million in the next year to help children suffering from three deadly and prevalent diseases, the *New York Times* reported last month.

The money will come primarily from airfare taxes in the countries involved in the program, the *Times* said. Unitaid, led by France, plans to work with former President Bill Clinton, who will negotiate for lower prices from drug companies.

The program is intended to pay for health care treatment of 100,000 children living with

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VERMONT NEWS / POLITICS

Vermont's Political Stage is Set

BY PAUL OLSEN

BURLINGTON - The results of Vermont's September 12 primary set the political stage for Election Day. What follows is a summary of the key statewide races and where the major candidates stand on issues of concern to the state's gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community.

Governor

Incumbent Republican Gov. Jim Douglas will face former state Sen. Scudder Parker, a Democrat. Douglas opposes gay marriage and civil unions, declined to issue a proclamation recognizing Vermont's Pride Day celebration, and vetoed legislation banning discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression. In spite of his lackluster record on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender equality, Douglas says he's no bigot.

"I oppose discrimination against anyone," Douglas told *Out in the Mountains*. "It is important that each and every Vermonter have the opportunity to be treated equally in our society and maximize his or her potential."

Scudder Parker, a minister raised in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, represented Caledonia County in the State Senate for eight years. Most recently, he worked as an energy consultant and for Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility. Parker supports full equality for GLBT Vermonters, including access to civil marriage.

"I have a long history of commitment to social justice and am committed to equal rights for all Vermonters," Parker said in an interview with *OITM*. "That really is one of the fundamental pieces of building a healthy society, a strong community, and a great economy."

Lieutenant Governor

In the Lieutenant Governor's contest, incumbent Brian Dubie, a Republican, will face Democratic State Sen. Matt Dunne. Like Douglas, Dubie opposes gay marriage and civil unions. Dubie also opposed recent legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression in Vermont.

Dunne has represented Windsor County in the state Senate

since 2003. He previously served in Vermont's House of Representatives. In an interview with *OITM*, Dunne highlighted his legislative differences with Dubie. "I was a strong supporter of the gender identity bill," he said. Dunne has also expressed public support for gay marriage.

"In general, I don't believe in discrimination based on sexual orientation, but I would have to look at it," he said.

U.S. House of Representatives
State Senator Peter Welch (D-Windsor County) currently serves as Vermont's Senate President Pro

Rep. Bernie Sanders has represented Vermont in the U.S. House of Representatives since 1991, where he has garnered 100 percent positive ratings from both the Human Rights Campaign and the AIDS Action Council.

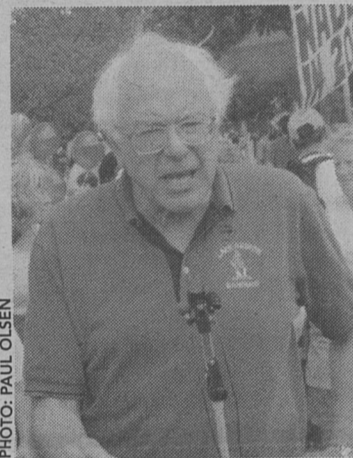


PHOTO: PAUL OLSEN

Progressive Party member Marvin Malek, a physician, is also running for Lieutenant Governor.

U.S. Senate

Independent U.S. Rep. Bernie Sanders will face Republican businessman Rich Tarrant in the race to fill the seat of retiring Sen. James Jeffords, also an Independent.

Sanders has represented Vermont in the U.S. House of Representatives since 1991. In Congress, Sanders garnered 100 percent positive ratings from the Washington D.C.-based Human Rights Campaign, and a 100 percent rating from the AIDS Action Council. His office maintains a written nondiscrimination policy including sexual orientation, he is a sponsor of the Employment Nondiscrimination Act (ENDA), and he voted against the anti-gay Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). Sanders also opposed efforts to amend the U.S. Constitution to prohibit gay marriage through the Federal Marriage Amendment.

In an interview with *OITM*, IDX co-founder Rich Tarrant said he would cosponsor ENDA and oppose the Federal Marriage Amendment. However, in a subsequent interview with *Vermont Woman* newspaper, Tarrant offered qualified support for ENDA.

Tem. Welch, an attorney, said gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Vermonters should support his candidacy due to his record as a "strong and consistent supporter of equal rights." If elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, Welch promises to fight for gay and lesbian equality. He said he opposes the anti-gay Federal Marriage Amendment and would cosponsor the Employment Nondiscrimination Act (ENDA), the Uniting American Families Act, and the Domestic Partner Health Benefits Equity Act.

Republican Martha Rainville is the former Adjutant General of Vermont's National Guard. Rainville supports civil unions and opposes the Federal Marriage Amendment because she doesn't think "it is appropriate for the federal government to be involved in that issue." She "supports the concept" of ENDA but needs to review the bill before committing to voting for it. "To me what's important is what a person brings to the job," she told *OITM*. "Their sexual orientation is not important. It's their performance, their character, and their contributions."

Election Day is November 7, 2006. ▼

➔ Paul Olsen is the Vermont correspondent for *in newsweekly*.