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in the news...

Gay gubernatorial candidate

SAN FRANCISCO — A gay man best known for fighting to legalize marijuana says he's running for governor of California as a Republican.

Dennis Peron is the founder of the club that supplies marijuana to AIDS patients and other terminally ill people. He says he'll be a candidate in the June 2 primary to succeed outgoing Gov. Pete Wilson. Peron will be facing an arch-nemesis, of sorts.

The leading GOP candidate is incumbent Attorney General Dan Lungren, who has charged Peron with felony sale and transportation of marijuana.

"I'm going to be your next governor," Peron told California voters. "I'm the only candidate of the people. I'm the only one that's not a lawyer or rich. I'm going to get there through grass roots. I'm not going to spend any money."

Anti-gay protesters

KISSIMMEE, Fla. — The Walt Disney Co. is being besieged by anti-gay protesters again.

They caused traffic jams in January at Disney World and they're promising a "presence" at the park to protest the company's gay-friendly policies.

One of the leaders of the latest protest was the Rev. Flip Benham, an activist with the anti-abortion group Operation Rescue.

The group listed many of the same reasons cited by Baptists when they announced a boycott of Disney: the company's granting of health benefits to same-sex partners of employees, allowing "Gay Days" at its theme parks and having Ellen DeGeneres, the star of the ABC show "Ellen," to come out as a homosexual. ABC is owned by Disney.

Disney doesn't appear to be concerned. In his annual letter to shareholders, Walt Disney Chairman Michael Eisner said he "always will defend the right" of the company to make entertainment that some might find offensive.

He also pledged to fight attempts by outsiders to control or change the content of Disney products.

Queer Scouts

LOS ANGELES — Boy Scouts might have to give up their homophobic views, at least in California.

A case is pending before the California Supreme Court in which the American Civil Liberties Union is challenging the Boy Scouts' policies prohibiting gays from being scoutleaders.

Scout lawyer George Davidson claims the group is merely upholding its belief in conservative sexual morality and duty to God when it expelled a man because he is gay and twin boys because they do not believe in God.

Attorneys for the twin boys and the man sought to portray the Boy Scouts as a business rather than a private club. ACLU attorney Jon Davidson said Boy Scouts sells camping supplies through its trading posts, engages in public relations, pay a full-time staff and charges fees to its 5 million members across the country.

If the justices buy that argument, the Boy Scouts would be subject to California laws that prohibit businesses from discriminating because of sexual orientation, religion and other factors.

Anti-gay Caymans

MIAMI — The Cayman Islands are one vacation spot to cross off your list.

The islands' government refused to allow a cruise ship chartered for gay men to make a one-day stop in port. The government said research and experience has shown that such passengers wouldn't uphold standards of "appropriate behavior."

Atlantis Events Inc. of West Hollywood, Calif., chartered the 910-passenger ship Leeward from Norwegian Cruise Lines for the one-week cruise leaving Jan. 30 from Miami.

But Thomas Jefferson, Cayman's minister of tourism, commerce and transport, wrote Norwegian's port captain Dec. 8 to say the government's joint ministries voted to reject the ship's visit.

"Careful research and prior experience has led us to conclude that we cannot count on this group to uphold the standards of appropriate behavior expected of visitors to the Cayman Islands, so we regrettably cannot offer our hospitality," the letter said.

So the Leeward decided on a port call in Belize, instead. The ship also planned stops in the Mexican ports of Cancun and Cozumel.

Crimes against gays

WASHINGTON — U.S. Justice Department statistics show that crimes against gays are still a huge problem.

The FBI says there were 8,759 hate crimes recorded in the United States in 1996. Of those, 1,016 were based on sexual orientation. Race was the most common reason for a hate crime, followed by religion, sexual orientation and ethnic background.

"These statistics show what we long believed is true: Hate crimes have long gone underreported," Reno said as she called on Congress to expand the scope of hate crimes.

"Violent crime has dropped for five years in a row. But we are just beginning to grasp the problem of hate crimes, and how best to fight back. And we are not going to let up," she said.

Lesbian lawyer

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to step into a case in which the infamous attorney general of Georgia refused to hire a lesbian.

The court let stand a ruling that said Robin Joy Shahar's rights were not violated when former Attorney General Michael Bowers withdrew the job offer because of her impending "marriage" to another woman.

He was the state's attorney general when, in 1991, he withdrew Shahar's job offer to become a staff attorney in the Georgia Department of Law. Bowers said her impending marriage would affect public perception of his office's dedication to enforcing the state's anti-sodomy law.

She contends he violated her rights of association and equal protection by the action he took in 1991. Bowers is well known for winning a 1986 Supreme Court case in which the court upheld Georgia's anti-sodomy law. But Shahar's case indirectly has hurt his chances at the Republican nomination for governor of Georgia. He has had to admit he was involved in an extramarital affair that lasted more than a decade.

Adultery, like sodomy, is a crime in Georgia.

Burlington Gay Realtor Caught In Possible Scandal

Reliable sources have informed us that Bill Desautels, who is widely known as The Condo Guy, has been secretly selling single family homes.

Steven Kopstein a homeowner in Hanksville said, "Working with Bill was a wonderful experience. He helped me find my single family dream home quickly and saw the process through to closing. I would recommend him highly to friends, in fact, I already have!"

Roy Hedrick exclaimed, "By constantly helping me define what my needs were, Bill quickly learned exactly what I like in a home and delivered. He's a man who listens."

In his defense Bill Desautels responded by sharing these words from Brad Weatherford who bought a condominium from Bill, "I never thought buying my first home would be so easy. Bill helped me find a condo that I love and then provided

excellent service right through to closing."

So it appears that The Condo Guy, who works at RE/MAX North Professionals provides outstanding service to the community regardless of whether you want a single family home or condominium.

Perhaps you should call Bill today at (802) 655-3333 x17 to find out why people turn to him with their real estate needs.

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