

In This Issue...

Reflections	2
Testicular Cancer	2
Jewelry	3
Hot Politics	4
Closing the Deal	5
Domestic Abuse	6
News Briefs	8

Vol. 1, No. 4

\$2.95

A GAY & LESBIAN NEWSLETTER ON COUPLING

COUPLES

ISSN 1054-0296

June 1991

Apply Now...

Even though the city you live in may not have a domestic partners policy, you can still apply to the San Francisco County Clerks office for domestic partnership registration! Yes, believe it or not, anyone can apply.

Once you have received your form (see the tel. # below), fill it out, get it notarized and give a copy to a friend. Only those living in San Francisco may then file the form with the county clerk and receive an official registration certificate.

Call the San Francisco County Clerks office at 415-554-4114 and ask them to send you a domestic partners registration form.



Upcoming...

Estate Planning
Support Systems
Shrewd Investing
Time Apart
Co-Tenancy Agreements



Summer Travel

by Thomas Lee

Now that the Gulf War is ended, travel to European destinations has opened up once again. And though checkpoints and bomb scares no longer prevail, there is still the fall of the once mighty dollar to contend with.

Let's face it, the days of "Europe on \$5 a Day" have gone the way of disco and junk bonds.

But don't put away those passports and settle for Epcot this summer. Your best defense against inflation is the simple fact that you are a couple and these days, two can definitely travel as cheap as one. As a matter of fact, some airlines have even offered "two-for-one" (or almost two-for-one) fares for vacationers going abroad.

Alitalia's companion ticket deal (buy one round-trip fare to Italy at regular price, get the second for \$100) proved to be so successful that the offer was extended throughout May. As is usually the case when airlines are vying for a smaller amount of customers, price wars occur

and other carriers follow suit with similar deals. Watch for these kinds of special fares even at the height of the summer season.

Another ally in the pursuit of bargains abroad is the current downturn in the economy. With most people remaining cautious about spending their leisure dollars, the travel industry is getting more aggressive. Thus, discounts for plain fares, hotel rates and even restaurants are becoming more prevalent throughout Europe.

Even the staid dowager of airlines, British Airways, is offering some unbeatable deals—not surprising, considering that young upstart Virgin Atlantic Airways is waiting in the wings to take over the New England-to-Old England route after conquering New York, Miami and Los Angeles. British Airways discounts include lower fares on the Concorde (a package deal will also get you into a choice of five-star hotels); "short-holi-
see Travel on page 7

COUPLES is published monthly by TWT Press, Inc., P.O. Box 253, Braintree, MA 02184-0003. Copyright © 1991 by TWT Press, Inc. All rights reserved. 25 word maximum quotation with due credit permitted. This publication is designed to provide information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is sold with the understanding that neither the editor, publisher or authors are engaged in rendering professional advice. If expert advice or assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought. Subscription price \$30.00 annually in the U.S.A., U.S. possessions and Canada—\$40.00 annually elsewhere. Publisher & Managing Editor: Sherwood S. Hughes; Editor & Office Manager, Kenneth A. Osherow; Illustrations, M. R. Snyder. Editorial & subscription inquiries should be addressed to TWT Press, Inc., P.O. Box 253, Braintree, MA 02184-0003. Telephone/Fax (617) 770-3156.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *COUPLES*, TWT Press, Inc., P.O. Box 253, Braintree, MA 02184-0003.

Medical...

Dr. David Russell Early Detection:



Can Be The Key

Although not common, testicular cancer cases number approximately 5700 per year in the United States.

▼ At risk are:

white males 20 to 35 years old, undescended testicle and mumps.

▼ Common signs are:

painless mass or nodule in one or both testicles.

▼ Treatment involves:

removal of the testis, radiation therapy and chemotherapy.

Although testicular cancer has a high rate of cure (up to 85%), it is serious stuff. The good news is: even in its most advanced stages, testicular cancer can be cured.

▼ What can you do?

Monthly self-examinations are a great form of surveillance. Besides which, it can be fun! Fun, you say...yes! Involve your partner.

You can give each other exams and have fun at the same time. Monthly examinations can be done while in the shower with the scrotum relaxed. If you think you have lump or your lover detects one, see your doctor immediately. ▼

Dr. David A. Russell runs a successful general medical practice in Boston, Massachusetts. He can be reached at 142 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116 or by calling 617-247-7555.

REFLECTIONS

Personal Reflections On The Family Protection Act

The following piece was written by Michael Cronin, Co-Chair, Committee for Family Protection and Domestic Partnership, Greater Boston Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance.

The word "family" evokes many different images for me. Some twenty odd years ago when I started college, I remember encountering a lesbian who, being older than I, took me under her wing and became my first gay friend. Claudia—we called her Claude—would walk with me for hours on end talking about gay life, occasionally pointing to a man and whispering, "He's *Family*." How ironic, I thought, that the code word for something so new and wonderful was the same word for something I had just lost; for, while it was not spoken about directly, the tension over my sexual identity had estranged me from my original family.

Some ten years later, I decided to start my own family. I became foster parent to a tough, street-wise fourteen year old boy, Michael, who for all intents and purposes, had been abandoned by his family. A common bond. And two years later another son, Bobby. Two adopted sons, and I, a single father, up to my eyeballs in parenting, living in the closet again, since I believed that to be out would be to lose my kids.

Through the struggle of parenthood and adolescence, we all grew. There are many, many stories, some scary, some pretty funny. But I remember with particular bitterness the anger I felt when the principal of Michael's ninth grade high school challenged my authority to sign his report card or absent notes, though it was I who paid his tuition. Or the powerlessness I felt when the Registry

of Motor Vehicles would not accept my signature on Bobby's learner's permit application without authorization from the court. Both of these incidents, and others like them, brought forward painful self-doubts about the adequacy of our family: was it a real family, or was it, as many people seemed to imply, merely a marginally acceptable situation for gay man and two otherwise homeless, throw-away kids.

A lot of things have changed since then. Among the most gratifying for me is the recent surging up of gay and lesbian pride; among the most personally devastating is the presence of HIV disease in my life. All in all, I see things in much sharper focus now.

Today, my boys are married and on their own, beautiful, caring, sensitive people who love with a full heart unimpeded by any prejudice or hatred. They are now, and always will be, the best part of my life. My family. And my four year old granddaughter, Meg, the toast of the town when she visits, calling me grandpa and grandma almost interchangeably to the amusement of my gay friends and kids alike. My Family. My former lover, Fred, a man I will always love. Steven Tierney, most trusted friend, the man I have asked to look after my kids should I succumb to AIDS. My family. A recent rapprochement with my brother Neil, a fellow activist and friend, and with my parents and other brothers and sister has brought this family journey full circle.

You see, for me Domestic Partnership and the Family Protection Act is more than insurance benefits and visitation rights, as important as all of that is. It's about who we are and how we love. It's societal validation, long overdue, of

the many kinds of caring relationships in which we live. It's a loud and clear message to lesbian and gay couples and parents that our families are valid and good. And it's a message to lesbian and gay children, perhaps someday even to my own granddaughter, that they can take pride in the relationships and families they form, a message dispatched with the hope that perhaps they will never have to experience the devastation and pain of prejudice and hatred in their lives.

Reprinted with the permission of Don Gorton, Co-Chair Greater Boston Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance from the *Alliance News*, P.O. Box 65, Back Bay Annex, Boston, MA 02117.

JEWELRY

Tell Your Partner You Care With The Gift of Jewelry



Watches, tie clips, rings, earrings, bracelets, chains, etc... are the same old gifts we have been giving for

ages, why not try something new? Specifically GAY jewelry!

▽ **Announcing the "Commitment Triangle."**

The Phalanx company of Scottsdale, Arizona is now marketing a very unique line of jewelry for gays and lesbians.

The company is run by James who was first approached in the late 70's by a gay couple who wanted him to design matching rings for them. The pieces were so well received that other orders followed giving birth to Phalanx. For several years now James has designed many custom pieces for his clients.

Some of the pieces are available as rings, watches, pendants or custom design your own. The pieces are:

▽ **Always Remembered...**a pink gold triangle with a small triangle cut from the left corner, signifying loved ones lost.

▽ **Gay Parenting...**a pink gold triangle with a smaller triangle superimposed over it, for those with children—a great adoption gift!

▽ **The Commitment Triangle...** sculpted from pink and white gold, with pink diamonds, was designed for couples who have entered into a lifelong commitment to one another. One diamond

for each year of commitment.

▽ **Exclusively Yours...** 14 kt white gold triangle with pink star sapphire, indicates that the wearer is in a relationship with a steady partner.

▽ **Regalia...** 14 kt gold triangle with 10MM man made pink star sapphire. It is a strong, bold and striking creation!

Other significant designs include motifs that recall the owner's preferential gods of mythology, i.e. Zeus, Eros, Aphrodite, Artemis, Apollo, etc.

Cufflinks, rings, watches, button covers, heel studs, and earrings—the list goes on—are all part of the Phalanx line.

And perhaps the funniest part of all is the catalogue. It contains not only the products available for sale, but also an "in depth" history, with information about the gods and the Lambda symbol, as well as a 13 page history of gays from mythological times through Stonewall, researched and written by a foremost professor of gay mythology.

If your partner has a birthday coming up, check out the Phalanx catalogue (see blow)—the designs are attractive and you're buying a piece that has specific meaning. If there is an anniversary in the near future consider the Commitment Triangle (inset this page) or even the Regalia ring.

Enjoy! ▼

[ED]

James can be reached at Phalanx, P.O. Box 12666, Scottsdale, AZ 85260 or call 1-800-678-4685.

Religion...

The Catholic Church has voiced its opinion on domestic partners in Massachusetts. Four Roman Catholic bishops are taking a stand against the proposed Family Protection Act which is up for approval in the Boston City Council.

The Church feels that recognizing gays and lesbians as part of an "extended family" will only serve to undermine society's definition of life... What the Church fails to realize is that the word "family" has changed significantly in the past twenty years.

Although the Church's stand is not surprising, the eleven page statement delivered by the bishops to state lawmakers is of concern. At a time when gay and lesbian activists are strongly recommending that the Family Protection Act be passed, the church's statement could help derail the City Council's decision.

If you're looking for a church where gays and lesbians are accepted with open arms, try one of the Metropolitan Community Churches or Dignity chapters or many of the other churches and temples located all over the country.

Anniversaries...

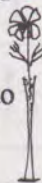
Congratulations to: John Browning & Bret Tyrrell of Indianapolis, Indiana. They will share their 2nd anniversary on June 6th.

The staff and friends here at TWT Press send their very best to both of you on this special day!

.....

Let's keep this column regular and strong—send us your anniversary dates and a small note to your partner. Give us one month's notice.

[ED]



Follow-up...

The time is ripe for a domestic partners policy for faculty at Stanford University. You may remember that the April issue of *COUPLES* reported on the university's new domestic policy that extends to undergraduate and graduate students—now, the faculty may have some of the same benefits.

The Faculty Senate is studying a bill urging the University to give long-term partners of gay and lesbian faculty and staff members the same benefits that are afforded their married counterparts.

According to the *San Francisco Sentinel*, "seventy-one members of the Academic Council signed a petition asking that spousal benefits be extended to the partners of faculty and staff members who are in 'long-term, same-gender committed relationships.'"

The bill has been proposed in the past, but was left to "die" because of the costs associated with insurance benefits. The Academic Council is seeking benefits that include: medical, dental, and travel insurance. Unfortunately, due to the university's poor financial position of late, the bill could be stone-walled yet again.

POLITICAL

by Keeston Lowery

Domestic Partners & Hot Politics

One of the thorniest issues of the current gay and lesbian political agenda is the extension of employee benefits to committed but unmarried couples. Most employment policies in both the public and private sectors limit the applicability of such benefits as bereavement leave and medical insurance to the married partners or children of the employee.

In recent years some public jurisdictions and a limited number of private firms have recognized the changing nature of the American family and allowed, by practice or policy, a variety of extensions of employee benefits to unmarried heterosexual, gay, and lesbian couples and their children. These benefits, for example, allow unmarried gay or non-gay couples that meet specified criteria to take bereavement leave following the death of a partner, or to add partners to medical insurance policies under family rates. But, as recognition of the long-term relationships of gay and lesbian couples increases, the need for policy standards for practical application of benefits to these couples will need to be developed.

At least 10 cities in the United States have established some form of registration system for public and/or private employees who meet set criteria, and the application of employee benefits to those who register varies between each of these jurisdictions. For example, San Francisco recently created a registration system for all citizens, but the benefits to employees will depend upon the application chosen by each government or private employer. In contrast, a Seattle ordinance extends all benefits, including medical and dental, to unmarried couples as well

as married couples when the employee works for city government. However, common themes have emerged: the couple must have evidence of mutual responsibility such as sharing the common necessities of life; the couple must have lived together for a specified period; the declared relationship must be the single relationship declared by either member of the couple; and both parties must be 18 years of age or older.

In Portland (Oregon), 200 city employees petitioned the city council in 1990 to correct the problem of parental leave policies which applied only to married heterosexuals. Examples which illustrate the need for standard policies vary from the Parks Bureau, where family rates are denied to gay couples and their children at public swimming facilities, to the Bureau of Risk Management, where a gay couple was denied participation at family rates in the "Trim the Fat" contest among employees and their partners. No documented cases of denial of bereavement leave have become public, but denial of medical, dental, and child care benefits is routine.

Any action to alter these policies may depend on the tenacity of public employees, especially those in long-term relationships, in making their case to reluctant gay and lesbian community leaders, pragmatic elected officials, and a general public with little information. ▼

Keeston Lowery is the chair of the Public Advocacy Commission for the Right to Privacy Political Action Committee in Oregon. Reprinted with permission from The Lavender Network, P. O. Box 5421, Eugene, OR 97405, 503-485-7285.

REAL ESTATE

Negotiating & Closing

Part 3 by Donald Vaughan



This is the third of a four-part series on buying real estate together.

▽ **Making the deal: negotiating the offer and purchase agreement.**

Once you have decided on the house you want to buy, and how it is to be financed, you will need to make a purchase offer. It is at this stage that you should consider bringing in a lawyer or experienced broker to represent you, since the offer lays the groundwork for your remaining dealings with the seller. A carefully drawn offer includes all the points which are important to you: a description of who is buying, what you believe you are buying, its price (including the deposit you will make), what, if any, financing you will need and the terms (interest rate, points, co-signers, etc.) you are willing to accept, what inspections you want to do (of the property's structure or its legal title, for example) prior to your obligation to purchase becoming enforceable, what if any, repair work needs to be done by the seller and, the date you want to close the sale.

A poorly worded offer, or one which overlooks important factors, can have serious repercussions ranging from the seller accepting another offer, to losing your deposit, to the seller suing you to force you to live up to what the offer mistakenly may have said.

In most parts of the U.S., once an offer is drafted and accepted, a more detailed purchase and sale agreement is negotiated between you and the seller. In some areas, however, the offer itself becomes the final contract, once accepted by the seller.

▽ **Closing the deal and moving in.** The variety of issues to be considered and tasks to be done after the terms of the

purchase are agreed upon and before the closing occurs differs widely from deal to deal. Generally, they fall into two broad categories of working with the lender so that it is prepared to provide you financing on the closing date, and organizing the move.

Your first job once the agreement to purchase is signed is to get a complete application form into one or more likely lenders. This can be more work than one may think, especially if you are not the best record keeper. Once complete initial applications are in, lenders often require additional information should their investigation of employment, credit or assets raise questions. Keeping in mind a variant of the Golden Rule ("s/he who has the the gold makes the rules"), you generally are better off complying with the lender's requests for information than arguing about whether it is really needed.

Once the lender commits to providing you with the financing, you should finalize your moving plans. If your move is scheduled for a time when lots of people are moving into your area (such as June or September in college towns), it may be necessary to firm up arrangements with movers at an earlier date in the process. Your lawyer or broker should be able to list what buyers are expected to arrange for in your area as to the change over of utilities and other transitions in ownership.

Fairly soon after the lender provides you its financing commitment, your lawyer or broker should be able to tell you exactly what you need to bring to the closing, where it will occur, and generally what will be involved. A few days before the closing they should be able to tell you the precise amount of funds you will need, and whether they need to be in the form of certified check, bank check, wire transfer, etc. If your funds are not "certifiable" (if they are in a money market fund not run by a bank, for example), you may need to know this information earlier, to give you time to transfer funds into an acceptable form.

The day before an early morning closing or earlier in the day of a later one, the buyer traditionally "walks through" the property to be sure it is in the condition required by the purchase agreement. Any discrepancies should be addressed immediately.

At the closing, you should expect your or the lender's lawyer to explain to you the documents you are asked to sign. Mistakes do happen and, if you do not believe the documents are correct, speak up. Otherwise, what could have been easily corrected can become a costly error, in terms of both time and money, or one which can not be fixed.

▽ **Running the place.** From a legal point of view, the major concerns a couples face while owning real estate focus on income tax matters and liabilities to third parties. Assuming you have been adequately represented by legal or tax specialists in how to hold title to the property, the main task is record keeping. Many couples find it advisable to designate one member as the official records keeper. Others have accountants do the work. The important thing is that the records be kept accurately and consistently.

Liabilities issues are harder to address. Generally, a good insurance policy issued by a reputable company through an experienced agent will take care of most risks couples are likely to face. Your tax or legal advisor may be helpful in referring you to an insurer, and in deciding what types and amounts of coverage to have.

Underpinning the tax and liabilities issues is whether to have a co-tenancy agreement, and what that should say. That is the topic of the last of these articles, which will also discuss selling the property you have acquired. ▽



MOVING???

Return the mailing label from your envelope with your new address.



GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS

Send the names & addresses with your check. One full year, 12 issues, \$30.

ABUSE

Domestic Abuse Is Not A Relationship Problem

by David Island, Ph.D. & Patrick Letellier, M.A.



To better understand lesbian and gay domestic violence, we need to be mindful of some of the misconceptions that exist about the topic. For example: Are victims of domestic violence co-dependents who "enable" their batterers? Do some lesbians and gay men cause their partners to be abusive? Is domestic violence a problem that can best be resolved with couple counseling? The answer to all these questions is a resounding "No." Yet these commonly asked questions demonstrate a major misconception about gay and lesbian violence: that it is a "relationship problem."

▽ **Abusive behavior is an individual's problem.** For many years, relationships in which one man was violent with his partner have been erroneously described as "violent relationships," or "abusive relationships." This inaccurate language is potentially dangerous to victims because it inappropriately implies mutuality and a *shared* responsibility for abusive and violent behavior. Lesbian and gay domestic violence is *not a relationship* problem, but rather a deliberate, violent criminal act committed by one man or woman against his or her partner. A victim of domestic violence, therefore, is not in a "battering relationship." More accurately, he or she is *in a relationship with a violent*

partner.

This concept and language are particularly important when describing lesbian or gay domestic violence, where, because the victim and the batterer are the same gender, people inaccurately tend to attribute a shared responsibility for the violence. Batterers alone are responsible for their abusive conduct. The victim's responsibility is to exit the relationship.

▽ **Domestic violence is not co-dependency.** Labeling victims of domestic violence as co-dependent is yet another way to blur the responsibility for violent behavior, taking it off the shoulders of the batterer and sharing it with his or her lover. Victims of domestic violence are not co-dependent. Most victims are healthy, sane people surviving in chronically dangerous situations. Victims must develop a variety of behaviors in their relationship to ensure their own survival. These coping skills are designed to protect them from further violence, not to prop up or "enable" their batterers. Staying in the relationship is one survival skill frequently employed by victims, since they all too painfully learn that attempts to escape are most often met with more frequent and severe violence. Thus, for many victims, staying means surviving. It does not mean co-dependency. Batterers and victims have two different problems. The batterer's problem is violent behavior. The victim's

problem is being coupled with a batterer.

▽ **Victims do not provoke violence.** Abusive people commonly believe that they have the right to strike or threaten a partner because of what was said to them. They are wrong. California law, for example, specifies that, "No words, no matter how offensive or exasperating, are sufficient to justify a battery." If your lover hits you "because" of what you said to him or her, your lover has committed a criminal violation. Provocation acts (those actions that cause a person to feel something) never cause anyone to act in retaliation. In short, "You can cause me to be upset, but only I can cause me to hit you." Too many people falsely believe that others cause them to behave violently. These people, batterers among them, are unclear on the concept of provocation. People who believe that victims provoke batterers to abuse them blame the victim inappropriately for the violence done to them.

▽ **Couples counseling is inappropriate and dangerous.** While couple counseling may work effectively with many of the problems lesbian and gay couples face today, domestic violence is an exception. Couple counseling suggests that victims are responsible in some way for their partner's violence and that there is some part for the victim to play in stopping the batterer's abuse. Both of these assumptions are false and may be dangerous to victims who stay with
see *Violence* on page 8

David Island, Ph.D. and Patrick Letellier, M.A. live in San Francisco and are the co-authors of the new book, *Men Who Beat The Men Who Love Them: Battered Gay Men and Domestic Violence*, soon to be released by Haworth Press.

More News...

According to *Equal Time* of Minneapolis, Minnesota, the University of Minnesota, one of the states largest employers, could become the first educational institution in the country to "implement a comprehensive, far reaching, domestic partnership package..."

The proposal would extend the following to domestic partners: hospital visitation rights, recruitment, pension, housing, tuition and health care benefits. While health care benefits could carry a high price tag, other benefits could be extended at virtually no cost to the university.

The University of Wisconsin has passed a new policy that will allow gay and lesbian couples and unmarried heterosexual couples to apply for family housing. The decision was made in part to adhere to new state laws that bar discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and the 1990 City of Madison domestic partnership law.

It is believed that this is the first public university in the Midwest to implement such a decision. The University of Wisconsin follows in the footsteps of Columbia University Teachers College, New York University School of Law, and Stanford University.

In Albany, New York, a serious set-back was dealt lesbian & gay rights recently when the states highest court denied a lesbian non-biological parent the right to visit the child she had helped raise. The court decided that biological rights are based purely upon biological relations, and that a persons "emotional" connections to a child could not be taken into account when defining family relationships.

Travel continued from page 1
day" stays for long weekends; and a "Reunion Pass," which gives you a free London-to-U.S.-and-back fare with the purchase of two round-trip economy fares or one first class fare.

Once you're in Europe, don't forget the many money-saving options available, like the justly famous Eurailpass, which allows you to travel to 17 countries on the fastest, most comfortable trains starting at \$230. This year, you can combine a pass with a discounted Hertz Rent-a-Car option for even greater savings.

Don't overlook package deals, which can save you significant amounts of money on both transportation and accommodations. Don't be shy—ask airlines and hotels about other discounts that may not be widely advertised.

It's always wise to engage the services of a good travel agent to plan the most economical yet rewarding trip possible. Let your agent know what you want to spend, what you're interested in doing (Beaches or shopping? Theater or bar-hopping?), and whether your destination is particularly hospitable to gay people.

The "hospitality factor" can't be overlooked when planning a vacation with your partner. What could be worse than a rude concierge or people staring when you decide to hold hands in a city park? On a trip to Brussels a few years ago, my companion and I spent an enjoyable hour nursing nightcaps and chatting with the locals at a popular men's bar. Wishing to continue the romantic mood, we walked outside hand-in-hand, thinking that the neighborhood would be tolerant of same-sex couples. Just as we crossed the street, however, a voice from a window above taunted us in what sounded like very drunken German. So much for tolerance.

A gay travel agency with a good reputation will be able to steer you in the right direction of the least intolerant sections in European cities and countries, and will also be able to fill you in on local customs and mores. Get a hold of your


local gay and lesbian newspapers and call some of the travel agencies that advertise.

Another excellent source of information concerning gay travel spots is the line of *Spartacus* travel guides, available at gay booksellers and, of course, better bookstores everywhere. There's a guide for every conceivable destination, whether it's nude beaches in Greece, mountain resorts in Italy, or pubs in Great Britain. In addition to the usual listings concerning hotels, restaurants, bars, social clubs and bath houses (yes, they still do exist), the *Spartacus* guides even offer tips on the best cruising spots and how to avoid the law when pursuing *l'amour*.

But if you're reading this, chances are that's *not* what you have in mind if you're planning a trip to Europe. What you and your partner should have in mind is the best hassle-free vacation for the money. With a bit of research and planning, it's out there. Good luck! ▼

See March issue of COUPLES for a partial listing of gay and lesbian travel agencies or check your local "community" newspapers.

On Love...

Years Have Slipped By 

Years have slipped by, the good and the painful ones as well, but what we are today is all that matters. Know, my love, that I am here for you, that your pain is mine, your joy is mine as well. More than anything in the world I want to know that I add to your happiness, that I give you a fuller and more exciting life than you could ever have without me. All I ask of you is—your love, your trust, your caring—and that, together in our love, it will have made a difference that you and I walked this earth together.

—James Kavanaugh, *From Loneliness to Love, A Celebration of Covenant Love between Richard & Greg*. From the *PLGC More Light Update*.

Violence *continued from page 6*
 a violent partner, because victims are further led to believe they are able somehow to stop the violence. It is not up to the victim (nor is it possible for the victim) to help his or her partner become non-violent. Responsibility for stopping the violence is solely the batterer's, not the couple's. Remember that domestic violence is a violent crime, and no victim of any other violent crime (such as rape or gay bashing) would be encouraged or expected to play a part in the perpetrator's treatment. In their book, *Confronting the Batterer*, authors Frank and Houghton assert that with domestic abuse, "couple counseling remains inappropriate even when both parties request it and/or want to maintain the relationship" (1987, p. 63). Separate counseling for victims and batterers is always called for in domestic violence.

While domestic violence is a problem that occurs in relationships, it is not a relationship problem. Only batterers cause it to happen, and no amount of couple counseling will ever solve a batterer's problem. Gay and lesbian victims and batterers who are coupled can best get help for themselves and best foster a community-wide solution to the problem by understanding these concepts.

In the next issues of *Couples*, the authors will discuss psychological abuse. ▽

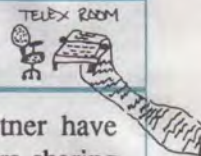
In The Works...

We are planning a summer activities column for couples. Let us know some of the exciting out-door activities you and your lover have done that you think other readers would enjoy.

Please drop us a note and let us know what you think of *COUPLES* so far. Any ideas you think will improve the newsletter are always welcome.

[ED]

News Briefs



▽ ALLEGHENY, PA—Officials at No. Allegheny High School apologized last week for stating that only heterosexual couples may attend this year's senior prom. Evidently the intent was to keep singles from attending since they tend to be rowdy. The principal of the school did say they were not making a statement about life-styles and that same-sex couples are welcome at the prom.

▽ HAWAII—Three lesbian/gay couples filed a lawsuit against the state in a move to assure same-sex couples the right to marry in the state. Bill Woods, coordinator of the Gay Marriage Project, began a steady effort to get lesbian and gay couples to apply for the marriage license. This effort was the culmination of nine years of continuous work by activists to challenge Hawaii's marriage licensing laws.

▽ EUGENE, OR—Lesbian Ann Piazza has been denied admission to low-cost family housing at the University of Oregon. She and her

partner, Pamela Harbeitner have been a couple for four years, sharing finances, and joint property. Piazza intends on fighting the decision.

▽ MINNESOTA—A district court judge has denied Karen Thompson the custody of Sharon Kowalski, her paralyzed ex-lover. The judge instead awarded the guardianship to a "neutral third party."

▽ FLORIDA—In a landmark ruling, a circuit court judge has struck down a law that prohibited lesbian and gay men from adopting children. The only remaining state in the U.S. that *specifically* prohibits gays and lesbians from adopting children is New Hampshire.

▽ SAN FRANCISCO—Board of Supervisors approved the extension of health benefits to the domestic partners of city workers: partners of unmarried city workers are now eligible to enroll at groups rates. An affidavit is required certifying the domestic partnership.

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

YES! Please enter my subscription to the monthly *Couples* at the subscription rate of \$30 annually. I understand that if I am ever dissatisfied for any reason, I may cancel and receive a refund of the unexpired balance of my subscription.

Name
Address
City/State/Zip

Method of Payment: CPSUB

Check Enclosed

Bill-me

Mail to: TWT Press, Inc., P.O. Box 253
 Braintree, MA 02184-0003

Fax/voice mail to: 617-770-3156