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Bad Press Mars Reno Rodeo Cash Flow

High Spirit Not Dampened

by Tom Rogers

Nearly 45,000 Gay men and women jammed the Washoe County Fairgrounds in 100° heat last weekend for the eighth annual National Reno Gay Rodeo — an event that was threatened with cancellation by the County Commissioners until just three weeks before the first wave of Reno fans started kicking up their heels and a lot of dust.

The County Commissioners were forced to consider that cancellation as the result of an intense anti-Gay campaign, and according to the President of the Comstock Gay Rodeo Association and founder of the Rodeo, a damages suit is being considered.

Phil Ragsdale, indicating that attendance figures were down 15% from expectations, told reporters that a suit for damages is being studied by the ACLU against Reno's "Pro-Family Christian Coalition," which conducted the campaign.

Although unwilling to name the amount of any damages that would be sought until the final figures can be analyzed, Ragsdale pointed out that hotel room

cancellations were up and Rodeo attendance figures were down.

"I seriously do feel that there is a valid basis for a suit," said Ragsdale. "We're waiting for an opinion from the ACLU."

The Director of Sales at the Sands Hotel there, which serves as the Rodeo's headquarters hotel and was the site of a jam-packed outdoor Western style hoedown Saturday night, confirmed that the hotel was running with "about twenty" vacant rooms that had resulted from no-shows and cancellations.

The right-wing Christian group's campaign revolved around full-page advertisements prominently labeled "AIDS Alert," which constituted a petition effort calling upon the

Washoe County Commissioners to deny the Rodeo permits for the event. The group loudly publicized fear of a public health threat presented by so many thousands of Gays "descending" upon Reno for the four-day event.

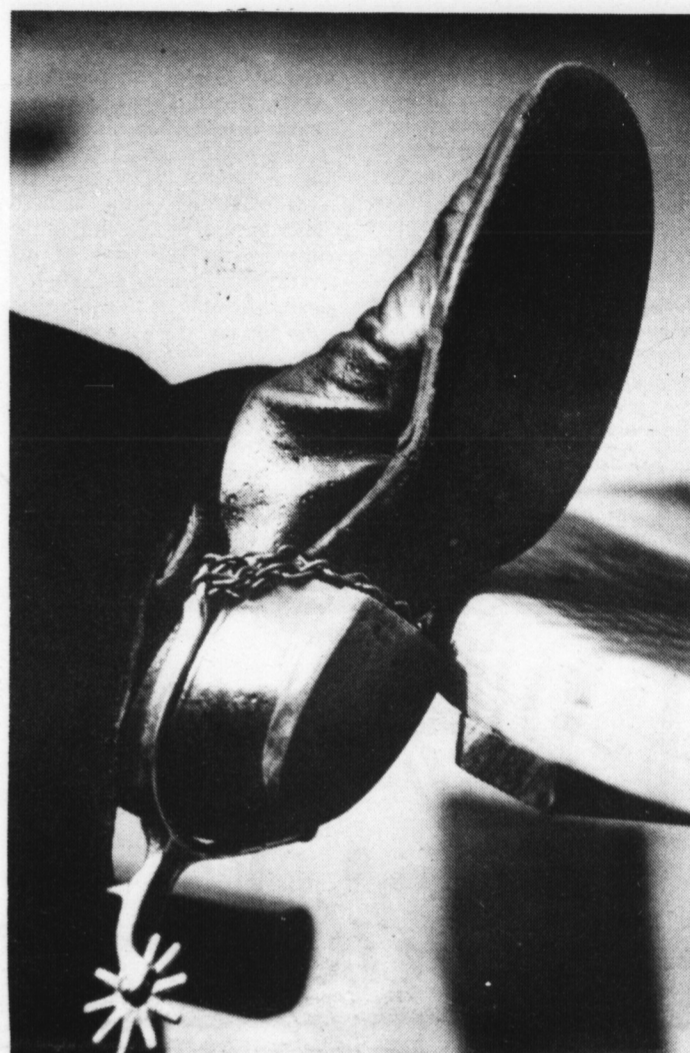
Ragsdale pointed out that the campaign was unsuccessful at halting what he describes as "Reno's equivalent of the Gay Pride Parades in other cities," because its viciousness created backlash support for the Rodeo from business and governmental leaders in Reno.

Gays who had cancelled were believed to have done so to avoid possible homophobic confrontations during the weekend event as a result of all the negative publicity in the straight press. This reporter neither saw nor heard of any problems between Gays and Reno's citizens. Reno was jammed with Gays and its citizens from Mayor Peter Sferazza to my waitress at lunch rolled out the welcoming carpet.

"The press here was very fair to us," said Ragsdale. "Those who stayed home just didn't get the word."

Ragsdale, who established the Rodeo in 1976 in spite of a more solidly entrenched homophobia in Reno then, says he prefers to think of himself more as a Rodeo Director than a Gay Activist.

(Continued on page 4)



Urban cowboys began in the Gay world and still carry on. More on the Reno Gay Rodeo on page 4. (Photo: Robert Pruzan)

Castro Fag Basher Pleads Guilty

DA Ken Cady Credited with Airtight Case

by Allen White and Paul Lorch

September 13, Jerry Fries will be sentenced to a possible three years in state prison for felony assault. The stiff prison sentence is the culmination of an incident in December of 1981.

In a classic case of "fag bashing" Fries and a carload of friends drove into the Castro area and started fighting with people near Marcello's Pizza (at Castro and Market). Robert Clifton suffered a shattered nose and Dean Willis required several stitches from cuts around the face.

An employee of Marcello's, Dave Holguin came out of the restaurant to get the car's license number. At that time, Fries took his car and rammed it into Holguin breaking his shoulders.

Following the incident, Jerry Fries stole a car and moved to Riverside County. He was caught with the car and sentenced to jail for car theft.

Earlier in the year Fries was brought to San Francisco to be tried for the 1981 Castro Street beatings.

Jim Bergstrom, an inspector for the San Francisco Police pulled the case together. He was able to build a strong case with eight solid witnesses.

Ken Cady, Gay Assistant District Attorney, was the prosecutor. Hall of Justice insiders report that Cady was able to assemble the evidence in such a strong manner that it became clear to defense attorneys that the best thing Fries could do was plead guilty. Last week, just before the case was to come to trial, Jerry Fries pled guilty to felony assault and hit and run driving.

Cady has piled up a remarkable track record in prosecuting violence against Gays. DA Arlo

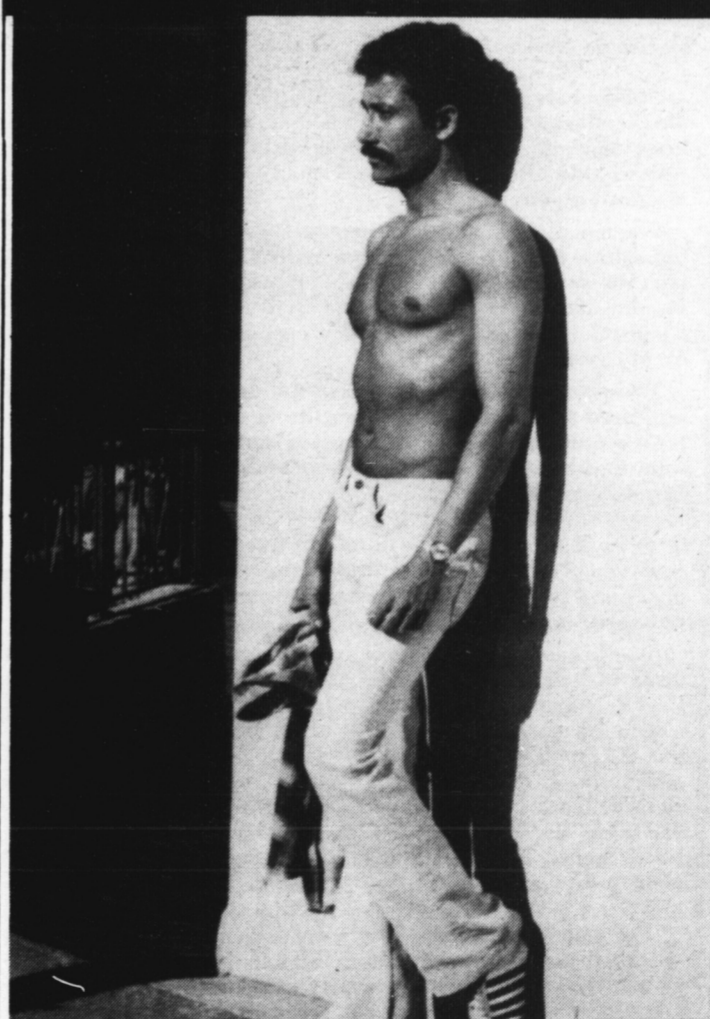
Smith has given Cady the assignment of prosecuting people who wantonly assault and injure Gays.

In this particular case, how-

ever, Cady gave much of the credit to police inspector Jim Bergstrom. Bergstrom, says Cady, was the person who assembled and held on to the

(Continued on page 11)

IN THIS ISSUE



Gay men deal with the dog days of summer in various ways: Some dress up; some dress down; some given novel parties. For the first week in August events read Allen White's run up on page 18. (Photo: Rink)

New problems for AB-1; a delay is now predicted — George Mendenhall p. 5

The World of the River, Part III — Scott Treimel p. 14

Summer Theatre Roundup — John F. Karr p. 20

Where the city AIDS money is going p. 12

Raines' Case Court Rulings Challenged

Anti-Gay Discrimination City Ordinance Threatened, Say Gay Attorneys

by George Mendenhall

Three Superior Court rulings (one which may seriously hamper the effectiveness of the city's job discrimination ordinance) are being challenged by Gay attorneys Mary Dunlap and Matt Coles. A reversal of Judge Richard Figone's decisions during the recent Michael Raines trial will be sought in a state court of appeal.

Coles says the most serious harm is to the 1978 law adopted by the city which bars discrimination in hiring based on sexual orientation. Another ruling involves the alleged attempt to bar Gays from serving on a jury. A third is a technical matter related to Figone's refusal to accept a witness's deposition.

Raines received a 6-6 jury decision (a hung jury) in his attempt to regain city employment and win damages from the city. He challenged his dismissal as director of the city War Memorial complex, contending that

(Continued on page 11)

POLITICS AND PEOPLE



Pete Wilson Doing OK

WAYNE FRIDAY

Well-known San Francisco Gay activist Frank Cortelli, former vice president of the Stonewall Gay Demo Club, died of AIDS last week. Frank was active in many political campaigns, having worked in Carol Ruth Silver's and Harry Britt's supervisory races, and was popular with those who knew him. • The Harvey Milk Gay Demo Club is holding a fundraising party for the San Francisco AIDS Lobby Fund at the home of former Milk president Bill Kraus (79 Uranus) on Aug. 26, 6-9PM. (donations asked of \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100); 387-0145 for info or to volunteer services and refreshments for this worthy fundraiser.

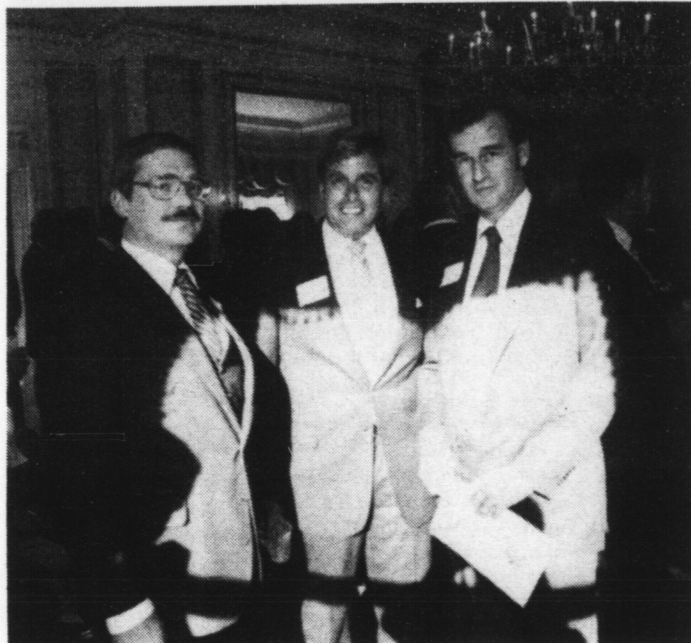
Washington observers say that friends of Ronald Reagan will have the mechanics of his reelection effort in place by October 15 and that the 72-year-old Republican will announce his reelection candidacy by Thanksgiving. • It happens in the best of families: State Senator Ed Davis (R), the long-time anti-gay police chief of Los Angeles has quietly filed in LA to divorce his wife of 42 years. A proud cop to the end, Davis asked the court to give him sole interest in "various mementos received as chief of police" (she can have the dogs and cats). • Congresswoman Barbara

Boxer will take advantage of the 5-week congressional recess to take a European vacation with her family while the other San Francisco representative, Sala Burton will divide her time between taking care of district matters and a short vacation.

Midge Costanza, never one for a loss of words, has stuck her foot in her mouth again. Speaking at the New York City Greater Business Council's Annual Awards Banquet recently, the former Jimmy Carter staffperson upset many of those in attendance when she suggested aloud that some Gay and Lesbian leaders could be more effective by remaining in the closet. • Replying to those who would have stopped the Reno Rodeo, Nevada Governor Bryan said last week that the opponents of the rodeo brought the state more bad publicity than did the event itself. (The rodeo came off with hardly any untoward incidents.) • The U.S. Senate unanimously passed a bill last week, expected to be signed by President Reagan, that would officially change the name of San Francisco's Federal Building to the Phillip Burton Federal Building and Courthouse. • The campaign getting to Cranston? Our California senator said that it

was a "mistake" to have called President Reagan a "tyrant" on a recent ABC news program. Cranston said it was a slip of the tongue, and "I disavow that statement." Cranston's advisors had best remind their man that political campaigns have been lost on stupid namecalling like this.

Reagan, meanwhile, has the continued support of at least one prominent Black. Singer Eartha Kitt told a press conference in Washington last week that she totally supports the president, saying "Reagan is OK, he's cutting out a lot of nonsense." • One of the truly nicest young women I know, Rebecca Moscone, daughter of Gina Moscone and the late Mayor George Moscone will be married on August 27 to Mark Cassin of Berkeley. • Although the American Bar Assn. refused to support a resolution that would ban discrimination in hiring, housing or public accommodations on the basis of "sexual orientation," the 158-134 vote on the Gay rights measure was closer than expected and supporters say they will be back to try again next year. • At Norton Air Force Base, Airman Raymond Orsini, 27, says he'll fight an Air Force board's recommendation that he be denied medical benefits to treat AIDS, which he contacted during a Philippines tour. The board says the illness suggests misconduct, which Orsini denies. • Oakland city fathers have come up with an unusual way of raising revenue — selling 9 by 12 billboards on the city's parking meters (the scheme should raise \$1 million annually, or about \$240 per meter).



Republicans United (the non-Gay-Gay spin-off club) parties in Suite 860 of the Palace Hotel where President Warren G. Harding mysteriously died 60 years ago. (Photo: Rink)

week on AIDS before Representative Ted Weiss of New York couldn't be too impressed with Edean's performance. I watched hours of the hearings, and while GRNL's Edean seemed to be in over his head, Ginny Apuzzo of the National Gay Task Force came off as sharp, prepared, and, in my opinion, gave a damned good showing.



Ginny Apuzzo, NGTF head, outclasses her GRNL counterpart in Senate hearings last week on AIDS progress. (Photo: Leigh H. Mosley)

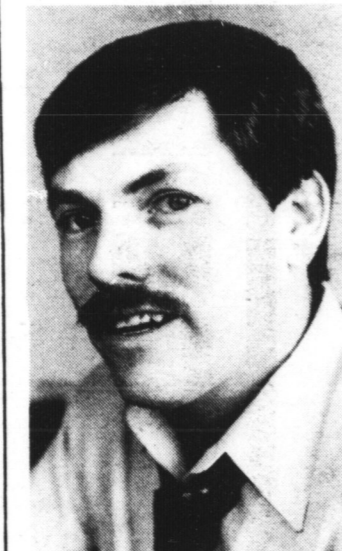
made him "outrageously happy." The Board of Supervisors have placed a proposition on the November ballot that would make it necessary to have the signatures of at least 10% of all the city's registered voters in order to institute a recall move against any elected city official. This one is long overdue and deserves passage in November. Repeal of San Francisco's tough new anti-smoking ordinance is another that voters should be ready for when they vote in November. (The ordinance is silly and makes about as much sense as does Wendy Nelder's newest brainstorm, proposed breathometers in bars.)

Dennis Collins defeated Gail Sapiro in a Monday night vote to become the new Public Relations Director of the Alice B. Toklas Memorial Demo Club (92 to 74). The Toklas club, incidentally, tells me that their annual Awards Dinner scheduled for September, has been postponed indefinitely because of the threat of a major hotel strike, etc.



Junior Senator Pete Wilson impressing old-timers.

Republicans and Democrats alike saying that they are impressed with California's junior U.S. Senator Pete Wilson. The former San Diego Mayor, a Republican, is said to be one of the brightest young Senators on the Hill.



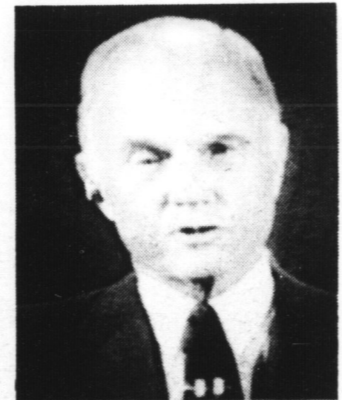
GRNL's Steve Edean makes poor show on national TV.

And reports out of Washington keep telling me that Steve Edean, executive director of the Gay Rights National Lobby isn't long for his job. Edean continues to be a controversial person and those watching the televised subcommittee hearings last



PD Jeff Brown talks to Milk Club on recent unpopular cases. (Photo: Rink)

Public Defender Jeff Brown will chair organizing effort of the local John Glenn for President push. George Raya is helping



Presidential hopeful John Glenn will be fronted locally by PD Jeff Brown. (Photo: Rink)

recruit Glenn volunteers and those interested can contact Raya at 587-5558. ■

How Gays Party

Home Entertainments and Heat Wave Heat Up Slack Week

by Allen White

Labeled fluff by some and social statements by others, segments of the Gay community celebrated themselves throughout San Francisco last week. The owners of Febe's celebrated their 37th anniversary as lovers, a leather personality was welcomed to San Francisco, politicians turned out to endorse a candidate for a political club post, and the bag lady was honored at a debutante ball.



A bag lady contest brightened up the 17th Street front stoop of partygiver Jerry Semas. This was a hot night's drag party. . . (Photo: Rink)

Last Wednesday, Gay Republican activists Al Sloop and Duke Armstrong presented a reception at their home for Coulter Thomas. Thomas has the dubious distinction of being International Mr. Leather. Sloop and Armstrong invited half the Gay politicians in San Francisco as well as the Gay Freedom Day Marching Band.

A framed letter from city Supervisor Richard Hongisto was read and presented to the Houston leatherman. The large crowd was told Thomas had flown in just to be greeted by the men of San Francisco. Obviously moved by the event, he re-

treated to the kitchen while the guests took beer stored on ice in a bathtub.

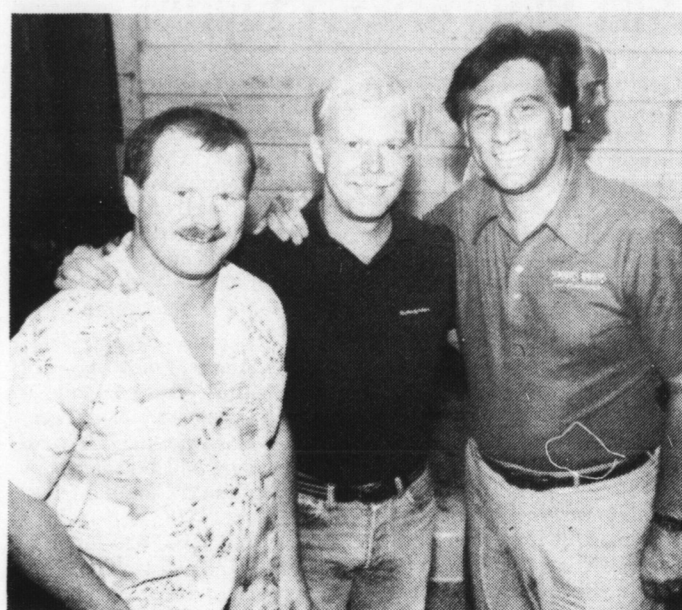
Saturday night several hundred people gathered on a 17th Street rooftop apartment for the First Annual Bag Ladies' Debutante Ball. \$100 in prize money was shared by Carol Johnson and Paul Nadeau, who were chosen as the best bag lady and the best bum. Mommie Dearest and Auntie Mame were shown on televisions throughout the house. As with most San Francisco events, the bag ladies received guests in the kitchen of host Jerry Semas.

As part of the San Francisco

Gay political process, Dennis Collins was honored at a Sunday afternoon reception at the home of Louise Renne aide Allan Johnson. Collins was running for the office of publicity chair of the Alice B. Toklas Democratic Club. The party wrapped up several weeks of active campaigning for the position. Collins was able to get Supervisor John Molinari and Sheriff Michael Hennessey as sponsors. That the political office was not that significant had little bearing on the importance of the guest list. Peter Nardoza, an aide to the mayor, was present as were supervisory candidates Pat Norman and Dave Wharton. Opera House Commissioner Tom Horn showed, as did Permit Board member Jerry Berg.

Dennis Collins spent most of the afternoon in the kitchen (where else?) answering political position questions. While Collins was running hard for his political debut, Supervisor Molinari served fried chicken.

Sunday was also the day for Don Geist and John Kissinger to celebrate 37 years as a duo. The couple own Febe's on Folsom Street. The bar was jammed as the two reminisced about their meeting in Kansas City back in



Sheriff Mike Hennessey (l.) and Supervisor John Molinari (r.) plug Dennis Collins' (c.) candidacy on Allan Johnson's back stoop. This was a political party. . . (Photo: Rink)

1946. Febe's has long been known as a leather bar with a local bar feel. They served a huge cake in their bar decorated with balloons. An important part of the Gay community is the bike clubs. With jackets bearing such names as Constantines, Barbary Coasters, San Franciscans, and the GDI's, the men

gathered to further solidify a strong social bond. The party was climaxed by the performance of something called the "Duck Dance."

Geist was pleased that 37 years after meeting his lover he could sit and watch a group of grown men waddle and flap their arms just like a duck. ■

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Coming next week

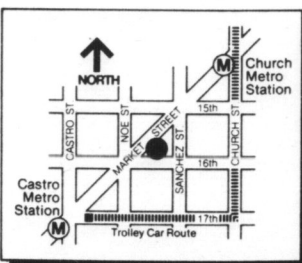
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VOL. XIII NO. 33 AUGUST 18, 1983

SF Hairdresser Blows "Panic" Murder Defense

Yreka Murderer Guilty in Brutal Motel Slaying

by George Mendenhall

George Sena, a Union Square hairdresser, destroyed the "homosexual panic" defense of murderer Walter Farmer, 24, last week when he testified at a Yreka trial. The nervous Sena, who had never been in a courtroom before, told the jury that shortly after Farmer murdered Harold Pennington, 67, in January, the escaped convict spent four days with him in his Pacific Heights apartment — four days of fun, porno photo sessions, and reciprocal sex.

Farmer was found guilty of first degree homicide, robbery, and auto theft following a two-week jury trial. Siskiyou County Superior Court Judge James Kleaver will sentence him on September 19. He can receive 25-years-to-life for homicide and possibly an additional 2 years, 8 months for robbery and auto

theft. He could receive parole in approximately 14 years (at age 38).

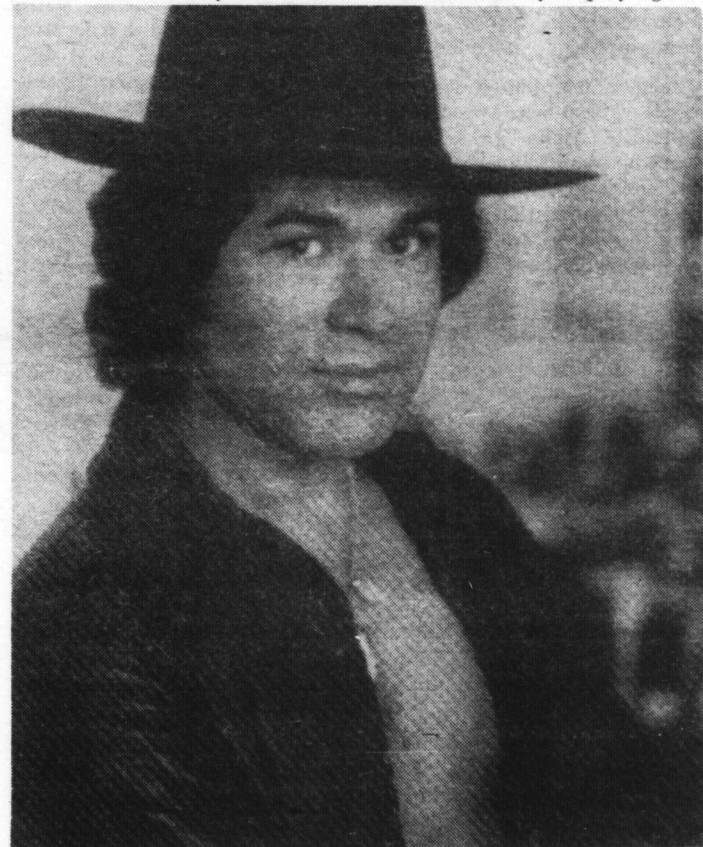
The murderer was prosecuted by Yreka Chief Deputy District Attorney Ted Bastian and defended by Public Defender Glenn Brown. Brown tried to save his client by employing the

ever more controversial "homosexual panic" defense — a defense loudly criticized by Gay activists here.

Defense psychiatrists pleaded that Farmer had "freaked out" when he was approached by the man 43 years older than himself. The defendant then learned that Sena had already revealed to Yreka authorities that the two of them had been sexually involved. Farmer, in response, admitted on the stand that he had had sex with Sena but that he "panicked" when the older man grabbed his buttocks in a Motel 6 room.

Pennington was horribly mutilated by the handsome 6'5" Farmer. The victim was stabbed 28 times, wrapped in a blanket.

(Continued on page 2)



George Sena, SF hairdresser duped by murderer and whose testimony blew apart "homosexual panic" defense.

IN THIS ISSUE

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- Dick Gayer — late of Gay Guns — takes on the CIA over security clearance p. 10
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- Guess who stiffed the Debbie Reynolds gala? ... and other tidbits — Wayne Friday's "Politics & Poker" p. 16, 17

Park T-Room Arrests Spark Brush Fire

Soliciting, Loitering, or Simply the Call of Nature?

by Allen White

The disposition of arrests at a Golden Gate Park public restroom has drawn criticism from a local Gay attorney. Other Gay leaders aren't that sympathetic.

For the last several months, vice cops have been making arrests at a busy restroom at South Drive and 19th Avenue. Those arrested are being charged with soliciting lewd behavior, disturbing the peace, and loitering around a toilet for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity (647d).

After reviewing the cases, District Attorney Arlo Smith has dropped the first two of the charges against those arrested. He is not dropping the loitering charge. The District Attorney's office has also allowed the several dozen arrested to choose diversion instead of going to trial. Diversion is a procedure wherein an arrested person serves about twenty hours of community service in exchange for having the charges dropped. There is no trial or record.

Attorney Fred Rosenberg, who has been retained by a number of arrested Gay men, has met with the District Attorney attempting to get the charges dismissed completely. He was rebuffed. It is Rosenberg's contention that the several dozen people arrested were simply jogging in the park or engaged in other parkland recreations.

The attorney told the Bay Area Reporter that his clients, despite their purported innocence, are all reluctant to fight the arrests in court and have accepted the diversion plan. He said his clients don't want to pay the approximately \$2500 he charges in addition for a court trial and they also are fearful of their personal reputations.

Rosenberg is also critical of (Continued on page 10)



Walter Farmer stabs to death 67-year-old man 28 times — in prison escape. (Photo: George Sena)

The Time to Talk

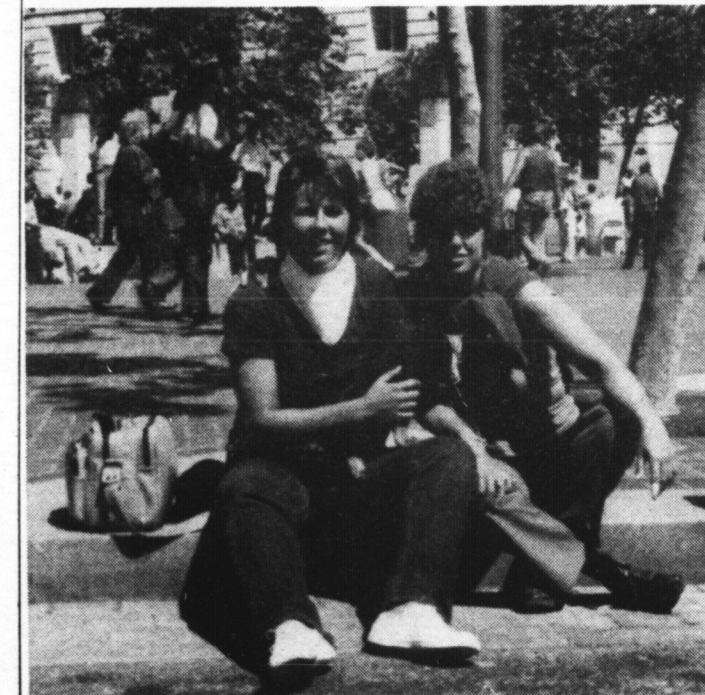
Lesbian Sailors Ousted in Concord

Group Never Sought Outside Help

by George Mendenhall

Vicki Oleski, 24, has been separated from the Navy in the East Bay because of accusations that she is a Lesbian. The awkward and disturbing experience began late last year when a young male sailor began to talk about Oleski and six other women she associated with at the Concord Navy tug station.

Last month Vicki received an Honorable Discharge although some of her release papers stated the cause, Homosexuality. (Continued on page 18)



Vicki Oleski and her Navy friend at this year's Gay Parade.