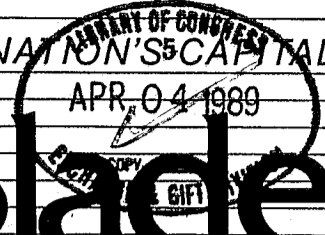


The Washington Blade

—THE GAY WEEKLY OF THE NATION'S CAPITAL



Hill conservatives pummel two federal AIDS efforts

Helms, Armstrong, Nickles block action on extension of federal AZT subsidies

by Lisa M. Keen

It was only the first volley in what is expected to be a long war of wills in the 101st Congress, but Senators Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), William Armstrong (R-Colo.), and Don Nickles (R-Okla.) won the first skirmish last week by blocking action on a bill that would have sent \$5 million in AZT subsidies to financially strapped people with AIDS.

The battleground was a bill introduced by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) to give the Department of Human Services an additional six months in which to award AZT subsidy money to state governments for distribution to people with AIDS. The Congress, last fall, approved a bill to authorize HHS to spend,

Continued on page 11



Sen. Jesse Helms refused to give his consent to Sen. Edward Kennedy's request to forgo committee action on the AZT bill.



Dannemeyer, in a statement released by his office, said "middle America" will be offended by the intimate nature of the survey.

OMB, at Dannemeyer's request, halts funding for federal sex survey

by Lou Chibbaro Jr.

At the request of Rep. William Dannemeyer (R-Calif.), the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has blocked funding for a federal sex study that calls for asking as many as 20,000 Americans intimate details of their sex lives, including questions about whether they engage in Gay sex.

The study, expected to cost approximately \$15 million, is sponsored by the National Institutes of Health and is being billed as a necessary step in the government's efforts to prevent the spread of AIDS.

An OMB spokeswoman said funds are being held up for the sex study while OMB officials determine whether ques-

Continued on page 11

IN FOCUS



Letitia Gomez and Paula Salinas have brunch together at Julio's on Capitol Hill.

'P Street Pickpocket' trial ends with deadlocked jury

by Lou Chibbaro Jr.

A week-long armed robbery trial of Eugene Price, a suspect known in the Gay community as the "P Street Pickpocket," and codefendant David Caldwell, ended in a mistrial last Friday after D.C. Superior Court Judge John Suda ruled that the jury was deadlocked and could not reach a verdict.

The case involved charges that Price robbed Gay bank teller Scott Schaut at knife-point in the wooded area surrounding P Street Beach on the morning of Gay Pride Day last June and that Caldwell "aided and abetted" Price in the robbery.

Suda directed the prosecutor and defense attorneys to return to court on April 14 to argue whether or not he should schedule Price and Caldwell for another trial or dismiss charges against

the two. Suda said a dismissal would be based on allegations by the defense that prosecuting attorney Kathryn Myerscough engaged in "prosecutorial misconduct" during the trial by coaxing a witness to disclose that Price had a prior encounter with police.

The accusations against Myerscough, who denied acting improperly, climaxed a sometimes acrimonious trial in which court rules prohibit the prosecution from informing the jury that Price had been arrested numerous times in the past for allegedly robbing Gay men in P Street Beach and in Gay bars in the Dupont Circle area.

Schaut testified that he was approached by Price, who wielded the knife, and Caldwell as he walked through

Continued on page 7

D.C. Council trims current AIDS budget	3
AIDS incubation period may be 10 years	13
Christian group protests series' Lesbian character	16
A life-long search for women's virtues	21
Exactly what is a family?	31

Barbara Bush embraces man with AIDS

by Lisa M. Keen

First Lady Barbara Bush focused media attention on AIDS this week and startled some city activists when she hugged a Gay man with AIDS in deliberate view of a field of news cameras.

Bush had just finished visiting a local shelter called Grandma's House, for babies with AIDS, Wednesday morning when she escorted a small group of AIDS activists outside to a waiting corps of press photographers and reporters. According to Lou Tesconi, a Gay man with

AIDS who heads up another shelter for people with AIDS, Bush made a statement about AIDS "and then gave me a great big hug in front of everybody."

Tesconi and Jim Graham, administrator of the Whitman-Walker Clinic and one of the other activists who briefed Bush on AIDS during the visit, said they considered the First Lady's hug to be an important symbol.

"This was really a splendid opportunity," said Graham, "for the First Lady to indicate her general concern about people with AIDS. Her holding Lou Tes-

coni was historic. It was totally on her own impetus, she came forward, it was very emotional but warm, she gave him a real body hug."

Tesconi said Bush was clearly responding to his suggestion during the briefing inside the shelter that the First Lady use her visibility and position to "collectively hug people with AIDS in front of the world." Tesconi said Bush hugged him while they were inside the shelter, too.

Wednesday's meeting was initiated by

Continued on page 9

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