

Marriage Rights Sought in Taiwan

by PlanetOut News Staff

Chi Chia-wei has gone all the way to the top of the legal ladder in his quest for legal same-gender marriage in Taiwan. He claims there is nothing whatever in the civil code to prohibit it, and on September 21 he filed papers asking the Council of Grand Justice (Judicial Yuan) to consider the constitutional aspects of the question. He spoke to the media about his crusade on October 18 because in addition to his legal goal he has an ideological goal of winning recognition of homosexuality as a normal human variation.

"Taiwan's law deprives homosexuals of their basic rights. The Grand Justices should declare the law is unconstitutional and make an interpretation in our favor," Chi told reporters. He said that twenty nations now extend legal recognition to same-gender couples but that Taiwan's "government is still clinging to old cus-

toms" despite growing public acceptance of gays and lesbians. Just last month the city of Taipei was a sponsor of a major gay and lesbian festival and Taiwan's President Chen Shui-bian met with two foreign activists who were speaking there (see PlanetOut News of September 5).

Chi, 40, is a long-time activist for gay and lesbian civil rights who runs a hotline and raises funds for AIDS treatment and prevention. Earlier this year, he and his life partner sought a marriage license from the Office of Notaries Public in Taipei. When their application was rejected, he appealed to the Taipei District Court, which said that allowing two men to marry would "impair social morals and tarnish traditional ethics." Chi then filed a complaint against the Taipei District Court with the Taiwan High Court, which found that even though it is not explicitly

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GAPSN Monthly Rap

There will be no more-monthly rap this year.

Annual Private Party At Six Flags Magic Mountain

by Odyssey Adventures

This is Odyssey Adventures 2nd annual private party at Six Flags Magic Mountain, Saturday, November 18, 2000, from 7:30 PM - 1:00 AM.

Come enjoy a fun-filled evening of rides, roller coasters, and dancing. Including new for 2000 is the Goliath, the giant among giants. This is Six Flags Magic Mountain's 1st steel mega coaster that climbs to heights of over 26 stories. The Goliath plunges down at 85 mph into the total darkness of 120 feet down to an underground tunnel.

The park will be closed to the general public for this event.

Tickets can be purchased at the ticket booth at the Village in the Ed Gould Plaza. The hours are Monday - Friday from 10 AM - 9:30 PM and Saturday from 9 AM - 6 PM. The cost is \$31(cash only). The parking is free.

For more information regarding the event, including hotel accommodations, visit the website at, www.odysseyadventures.com.



GAPSN 2000

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GAPSN

Mission Statement

The Gay Asian Pacific Support Network is dedicated to providing supportive environments for gay and bisexual Asian/Pacific Islander men to meet, network, voice concerns, foster self-empowerment, and advocate on issues of significance to the gay API community.

Chairs Message

Already it is November and GAPSN is working hard behind the scenes.

Although GAPSN hasn't had a high profile recently, rest assured we have been very, very active.

GAPSN has been working diligently to find additional funding for our coming out and tolerance projects. Unfortunately, our estimates for translation costs have been quite a bit higher than we originally anticipated. As a result, some alternations have been made to accommodate these increase in prices. We will announce how these changes affect our plans as soon as they are finalized.

Our awards ceremony is coming along well. GAPSN will be saluting "Women of Distinction" for our Pacific Bridge Awards on Saturday, January 13, 2001. We've already confirmed half of our awardees and have hired a fundraiser to help advise us on the process of increasing our fundraising efforts.

With regards to upcoming elections, we have been discussing the structure of GAPSN for the upcoming year and you may be pleasantly surprised with the direction that we'll be taking in the future. The GAPSN Board will be offering a proposal for discussion next month. Please keep in mind that it is only a proposal and can be modified.

Unfortunately, GAPSN will not be celebrating Thanksgiving together as we have in the past. We have too much on our plate currently. There are many other queer API organizations who will be celebrating the festivities and we recommend that you celebrate with them.

On that note, let's give thanks for all that we have and how far the queer API movement had progressed (and how far it still has to go.)

Happy Thanksgiving!

Patrick and Pei

CALIFORNIA ALLIANCE FOR PRIDE & EQUALITY (CAPE)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, October 19, 2000

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CAPE UNVEILS 2000 CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE VOTING RECORD Voting Record Will Help Californians to Choose Fair-minded Lawmakers

Sacramento - Less than three weeks before the November 7th general election, the California Alliance for Pride and Equality (CAPE) released its legislative voting record for the 2000 session of the California Legislature. The analysis will assist California voters in electing fair-minded legislators who would help advance the cause of equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered Californians.

"This scorecard will enable California voters to see how each member voted, show who has been our champions and detractors, and decide which legislators should come back next year who will make sure our struggle for equality and basic rights moves forward," said Jean Harris, CAPE's Executive Director.

The voting record reveals individual votes of the Assemblymembers and State Senators on various bills that affect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered Californians including domestic partnership rights, ban on gender-based discrimination in employment and housing, and hate violence prevention programs.

There are 80 members in the State Assembly with one current vacant seat. Out of the 79 members, 40 Democrats, 1 Independent and 1 Republican received an outstanding to good overall record. Another Republican joined three Democrats in the moderate category. The rest of the members received poor to failing grade including thirty Republicans and three Democrats. In the State Senate with 40 members, 24 Democrats garnered an outstanding to good overall record. One Democrat and one Republican received moderate rating. The rest of the Senators, 14 Republicans, got poor to failing grade.

"This analysis shows how incredibly close the votes were when it came to legislation that affected the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. We must work hard to elect supportive lawmakers. Our votes are so crucial in this election and every election. We can provide the margin of victory in many of these tight races," added Harris.

According to the exit polls in the March 7th primary election, six percent of the California overall electorate self-identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual.

The California Alliance for Pride and Equality is a nonprofit, statewide grassroots-based advocacy organization whose mission is to ensure the dignity, safety, equality and civil rights of all lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered Californians.

California Alliance for Pride and Equality (CAPE)
2000 California Assembly Legislative Voting Record

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stated in the law, it is understood that marriage is contracted only between a male and a female.

Chi is not alone in seeking recognition for his relationship. Taiwan's first gay and lesbian church, Tong-Kwang Light House Presbyterian -- which despite its name is not affiliated with any denomination -- will be celebrating the fifth anniversary of its founding Jonathan Fellowship group on October 22 with a "Rite of Lesbian/Gay Partnership Blessing." Pastor Elias Tsang called it "an occasion for two people in love to openly declare before God their promises of love for each other... and receive the blessing and support of the gathered congregation." In order to receive the rite, couples must have been together for at least a year, be willing to make a public declaration, and undergo a month of the equivalent of premarital counseling.

A widely reported wedding was celebrated in Taipei in 1996 between a Taiwanese writer and his partner from the U.S., with four hundred guests and live national television coverage.

Upcoming Events

**November 10, 2000, Friday
8:00 P.M.**

Salon for Queer Pinays
The Village @ Ed Gould Plaza,
1125 N. McCadden Place, LA
CA 90038

Salon of Queer Pinay
Expression, Light Refreshments,
great conversation & tsimis
about what's going on around the
nation...

For More Information: Alison @
bibibabae@hotmail.com, 310-
608-8818

January 13, 2001, Saturday
Pacific Bridge Awards (PBA)
El Rey Theater
5515 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90036

STD In The News

by Michael Lou

"Unsafe-Sex Storm Brews in San Francisco"

Advocate (www.advocate.com)
(09/12/00) P. 16; Romesburg, Don
A report in San Francisco about increasing HIV rates among gay men has led to a debate over HIV. The report showed that unsafe sex among gay men appears to be rising in the city, leading to 573 projected new transmissions of HIV this year, compared to 283 in 1997. Public health department director Mitch Katz says that several studies indicate the rise, but critics feel there are no hard numbers standing on their own. Katz said the new report indicates the need for a "new phase in HIV prevention. This is not about blame; it's about ownership." However, with over \$16 million a year being spent on HIV prevention by area AIDS organizations, some activists are questioning how the funds are being spent. The report suggested new methods for prevention, such as condom distribution that focuses on HIV-positive "tops" and HIV-negative "bottoms."

"AIDS Misconceptions Spawn Coca-Cola Remedy in Malaysia"

Kyodo News Service (home.kyodo.co.jp)
(10/19/00)
Lack of knowledge regarding AIDS is

creating unsafe misconceptions in Malaysia. According to the Sun newspaper, the Sarawak AIDS Network (SAN) said that some prostitutes believe they can prevent HIV infection by using Coca-Cola as a disinfectant. The sex workers and their partners reportedly spray the soda on their genitals before having sex, possibly believing that the cola bubbles can kill HIV, SAN's Dr. Andrew Kiyu explained. Kiyu, the deputy director of the Sarawak health department, noted that other myths in the Borneo Island state involve ways to identify HIV-infected individuals based on their appearance or body odor.

InformAsian is a monthly newsletter for the members and supporters of the Gay Asian Pacific Support Network (GAPSN). Publication of any person's name and/or photographs is not to be construed as an indication of sexual orientation. Opinions expressed are those of the contributor and are not presented as the views of InformAsian, its editor, or GAPSN. First name and last name by initial are printed unless otherwise instructed. Annual membership fees for general and supporting members are: Single: \$24.00, Couple: \$40.00, Student: \$25.00. There will be a \$12.00 charge for overseas postage. Checks (U.S. funds, no cash) to be made payable to GAPSN. Send to:

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GAPSN Message Boards

GAPSN's message boards are now open. If you have something (or someone) to sell, or if you would like to make an announcement to GAPSN membership, GAPSN will have new message boards open starting next month in our monthly newsletter. Just e-mail your messages to Gordon at ghara@asianhome.net or mail them to our mailbox. All senders are kept in confidence unless noted otherwise.

GAPSN Seeks Any And All Submissions

GAPSN is seeking submissions for our newsletter. As a voice for the gay or bisexual Asian male, we'd like any stories, poetry, jokes, etc. that you would care to send us. Authors retain all rights to their work (and you can brag that you've been published.)