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More On Same Gender Marriage Or Can You Say Tidal Wave

by Jonathan Wilson

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CALENDAR

- ▼ The FFBC will not meet in July because of the Fourth of July holiday.
- ▼ A joint event with PROS on Saturday, July 19 at the home of Michael Thompson and Allen Vander Linden, 7500 Benton Drive, Urbandale, will replace the July meeting.

Thanks to the California Supreme Court, it's about to get even more interesting watching the progress toward full recognition of same-gender marriage across the United States. It started with the Massachusetts Supreme Court finding unconstitutional the use of "marriage" as shorthand for granting special rights to straight citizens. The California Supreme Court agreed. Each was interpreting the respective state constitutions, so each was the court of "last resort" on the state constitutional question. There's no appeal to the US Supreme Court in either case. The US Supreme Court is the court of last resort on the interpretation of the US Constitution but has no say in the interpretation of the respective state constitutions.

The impact of the California decision will be critically important in two respects, one not very obvious to most people and the other less obvious and even more important.

The first important impact of the California decision arises from the fact that it comes just as there is pending before the Iowa Supreme Court a similar, state constitutional test. As we in Iowa all know, an Iowa District Court held that Iowa's preferential treatment of straight citizens is unconstitutional, and that decision is on appeal to the Iowa Supreme Court. There was already a reasonable possibility that the Iowa Supreme Court would do the right thing and uphold the lower court ruling. With the concurring, comprehensive, compelling California decision, the Iowa District Court judge finds himself in remarkably good company, and the stage is set as favorably as it can be for a similar decision by the Iowa Supreme Court. Appropriately, state courts give credence to decisions of other, credible state courts on similar questions. On controversial matters, those decisions can be particularly helpful by neutralizing somewhat the human reluctance of any court to hand down a decision that is potentially unpopular with a vocal and well-organized minority. In short, the Massachusetts and California decisions, like supportive book-ends, will strengthen spines to do the right thing in the Bible Belt.

The less obvious and more important impact of the California decision arises from the element of the ruling that, unlike the one in Massachusetts, eliminates a residency requirement to get a state license and marry. That's huge. It's huge not merely because it opens the door to countless additional couples, beyond California residents, longing for legal recognition of their committed relationships. It's really huge because it reframes the constitutional issue to be decided in future cases.

Until now, cases seeking to challenge the constitutionality of exclusive opposite-gender marriage have had to rely upon the "equal protection" clauses of state and federal constitutions. While equal protection, and the equal treatment of citizens that it purports to require, might seem obviously compelling when one group of citizens has undeniably been able to enjoy privileges denied to others, it can still be a hard sell. It can be a hard sell because there are so many permis-

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sible distinctions constitutionally made among citizens ranging from differential tax rates, to tax breaks, to minimum drinking ages, and even to separate (but equal?) bathrooms for men and women.

Now, however, with probably at least one same-gender couple from each of the other 49 states going to California, marrying, and going home again, the analysis in future cases will shift to the “full faith and credit” clause of the US Constitution. Every fifth grade government student should know that states are required to recognize the laws and official acts occurring in other states. They also should know that Congress, despite the meaningless Defense of Marriage Act, is powerless to override that constitutional mandate. Unlike “equal protection,” there is really only one exception to the full faith and credit clause; a state is not required to recognize the legality of things that are *criminal* under the state’s laws. For example, prostitution is legal in Nevada, but a Nevada pimp and prostitute traveling across Iowa, who get into a dispute over their “contract,” cannot resort to Iowa courts for enforcement.

Thanks to the US Supreme Court in Lawrence v. Texas, same-gender intimacy and, therefore, same-gender relationships, are no longer criminal in any state. When legally married, same-gender couples go home from California and, as with all other couples legally married out-of-state, they should be able to expect recognition of their unions. Full Faith and Credit requires it.

The stage is set for separate test cases in 49 states, test cases that can rely upon the easier constitutional standard afforded by the mandate of full faith and credit. Watching those cases unfold will be interesting, maybe even fun. ▼

Incoming fire has the right of way.

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more circumspect about naming the names of his male partners.

Once the Goldwyn contract was behind him, Granger went to New York to study with The Actors’ Studio. He made many stage appearances and did live television dramas, preferring that work to film acting. He did, however, continue his film career in order to pay the bills. He particularly enjoyed working with Luchino Visconti in the 1954 Italian film, **Senso**. Granger fell in love with Italy and lived there for many years before returning to the U.S.

I will leave my copy of **Include Me Out** on the book lending table for the August meeting in hopes that others will enjoy reading it as much as I did.

—Steve Person

PFLAG Executive Director Addresses June’s Scholarship Awards Meeting



Jody Huckaby

The guest speaker at our annual Scholarship Awards meeting in June was Jody Huckaby, since 2005 the executive director of Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG)—a particularly good choice in view of the attendance at that breakfast of many parents and family members of the young awardees.

Originally founded in 1972 in New York, PFLAG has grown exponentially in its 35 years, to embrace over 200,000 members and supporters in over 500 affiliate chapters in 13 regions throughout the United States. The network is supported and serviced by the national office located in Washington, D.C.

Acknowledging that “it’s vitally important now that we speak our truth and tell our stories,” Huckaby regaled us with some details of his youth: He grew up in a highly conservative Republican and Catholic family of eight kids (half of whom have since identified as gay!), in a little town of a few thousand people in the heart of south-central Louisiana’s Cajun country, halfway between New Orleans and Houston. He earned his bachelor’s degree in psychology from the University of Dallas in Irving, Texas, then took courses toward a divinity degree at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake in Chicago. Career-wise, he has served as executive director of New Mexico AIDS Services in Albuquerque and came to PFLAG after working as executive director of the Washington Humane Society.

Local PFLAG chapters provide support to people with children or siblings who are gay or lesbian. They counsel teenagers who are struggling with their gender orientation or gender identify, and sponsor tolerance-education programs at high schools and colleges nationally. As the rights of gays and lesbians have become an increasingly high-profile issue in the national political debate, the organization has also been raising its profile as an advocacy group on issues such as gay marriage, on-the-job discrimination, and the extension of Social Security benefits to domestic partners.

PFLAG’s vision for parents, families, and friends of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons is to celebrate diversity and to envision a society that embraces everyone, including those of diverse sexual orientations and gender iden-

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The ultimate diet food: you use more calories eating celery than the celery contains.

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tities. It has stated strategic goals:

- ▼ To build the capacity of our organization at every level so that we may have all the resources, in the form of information, people and funding, necessary to move forward
- ▼ To create a world in which our young people may grow up and be educated with freedom from fear of violence, bullying and other forms of discrimination, regardless of their real or perceived gender identity or sexual orientation
- ▼ To make our vision and our message accessible to the broadest range of ethnic and cultural communities, ending the isolation of families with gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender family members within those communities
- ▼ To work toward full inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons within their chosen communities of faith
- ▼ To create a society in which all GLBT persons may openly and safely pursue the career path of their choice
- ▼ To create a society in which all gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons may enjoy, in every aspect of their lives, full civil and legal equality and may participate fully in all the rights, privileges and obligations of full citizenship in this country.

In closing, Huckaby extended his obviously heart-felt congratulations to FFBC for its leadership role, and to the parents and friends attending the ceremony, and most of all to the scholarship winners. “We need your energy and talent,” he said to them, “and we look forward to your becoming leaders—persons of power and vision—in working for our shared goals.”

—Bruce Carr



Scholarship winners from left to right: Corey Cox, Mer-sad Arapovic, Natalie Roush, Vice President Allen Vander Linden, PFLAG Executive Director Jody Huckaby, Kaitlin Walker, and Briana McGeough.

Never mind looking for easy ways out; they've already been mined.

Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull

A Review by Gary Kaufman

Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull is a bit of a disappointment. Steven Spielberg has put together major components generally associated with an Indiana Jones movie: a



quest for an artifact that will render unto its possessor untold power through supernatural means; a calculatedly mean leader, in this case played expertly by Cate Blanchett as the dark-haired, ruthless, sword-bearing Russian, Irina Spalko, a favorite of Stalin in the area of psychic research, especially those with paramilitary applications; KGB agents; an A-bomb explosion; ride on a rocket sled across the desert; a jeep chase; a jeep and amphibious vehicle chase; an attack of the giant red ants; a pre-Columbian looking tribe in South America; quick sand; ancient levers to secret passages; desiccated corpses; retracting stairways; a little bit of a Tarzan movie; and even aliens! All of these I am sure looked great on the story board, but the plot connecting the action sequences was really pretty thin. Thus the overall impression was less than the sum of its parts.

Harrison Ford was fine in the action sequences, but in the acting scenes he seemed extremely old. Makes you wonder if we will eventually be seeing Indiana Jones with a walker still looking for artifacts and adventure in the next installment. But I think that might be avoided. If you like action sequence movies, then you will probably enjoy this one. And perhaps you will want to see the film to get a glimpse of what might happen to the franchise in the future. Will there be a Young Indiana Jones coming up? I think Steven Spielberg has tried that once before on television. Looks like we might be heading that way in the future in the movies as well. ▼

BRIEFS & SHORTS

The First Friday Breakfast Club will not meet in July because the Fourth of July falls on the first Friday. A joint event with PROS on July 19 at the home of Michael Thompson and Allen Vander Linden, 7500 Benton Drive, Urbandale, will replace the July meeting. Participation is free to FFBC members.

Thanks to Scott Klinefelter for introducing our June speaker, Jody Huckaby, National Director of PFLAG.

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*First Friday
News & Views
Des Moines, Iowa*

JULY 2008

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From the Editor

Thanks to Samuel Goldwyn

Brad Pitt. Ben Affleck. Matt Damon. Jude Law. Richard Gere. Johnny Depp. Mel Gibson. Hugh Grant. Ewan McGregor. Will Smith. Warren Beatty. Montgomery Clift. Clark Gable. Kevin Costner. Sean Connery. Paul Newman. Rock Hudson. Kirk Douglas. Errol Flynn. Burt Lancaster. Sidney Poitier.

Reflect on all those handsome Hollywood leading men. Then consider Farley Granger.

Farley who?

Of all those mentioned above, the one who could match any of them for physical beauty and screen appeal was none other than Farley Granger. So why have most people not heard of him? Unless fans of Hitchcock or old movies, the name probably doesn't mean much to them. To those folks, I would recommend Farley Granger's new autobiography, **Include Me Out**, the title taken from one of Samuel Goldwyn's famous fractures of the English language.

Hollywood mogul Samuel Goldwyn "discovered" Granger in the early 1940s when the actor was just seventeen years old. Not understanding the complexities of the studio system, Granger, with his parents' blessing and no legal representation, signed on with the Samuel Goldwyn Studio in 1943. The contract was an open-ended one that stipulated that any time spent away from Goldwyn would be added to the contract.

Granger made his first film for Goldwyn, a World War II drama, **The North Star**. Though not the star of the film, others took notice. On loan to Twentieth Century Fox, Granger's second film was another war time drama, **The Purple Heart**. After that film's completion, Granger joined the Navy. The time he spent in the Navy was added onto his contract with Goldwyn, making a seven-year contract even longer. It was while he was in Hawaii, before being shipped elsewhere, that Granger lost his virginity twice in one evening—first with a woman and later with a male pilot in the Army Air Corps, both trysts in the same hotel. That in itself makes the book worth reading! That particular night established his life-long sexual experiences as a bisexual.

Upon the war's conclusion, Granger headed back to Hollywood. Goldwyn, aware that this handsome young actor could bring more money to his studio by lending him out, did just that. Granger made only the money that his Goldwyn contract stipulated while the famous producer made big bucks by "selling" his young star to other studios. Granger tried many times to break his contract with Goldwyn but did not succeed for many years until he finally took all of his savings and bought out the contract. During this time, however, he made two of his most famous films—**The Rope** in 1948 and **Strangers on a Train** in 1951—both with Hitchcock. The former included strong undertones of homosexuality, and the latter became one of Hitchcock's masterpieces.

Granger writes openly of his affairs with Hollywood stars, including Ava Gardner and Shelly Winters. He is much

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