



BGLAD Newsletter

April, 2000

Bisexuals, Gays, Lesbians and Allies At DuPont

Contact: BGLAD.BGLAD@usa.DuPont.com

See us at www.DuPontbglad.com

Late Breaking News: *Vermont: Gay and lesbian Americans may form civil unions -- entitled to all 300 or more benefits (see page 3 and 11)*

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Partner Benefits Paper Updated

DuPont does not offer employee benefits to the partners of DuPonters: spouses, yes...partners...no. *So how come?* The case for and against providing domestic partner benefits has many angles: ability to attract and retain staff, cost, perceptions, equality and fairness. The first version of a position paper on partner benefits was produced by BGLAD in 1997. BISC just updated the paper, which you can download from the BGLAD web site (www.dupontbglad.com). Here's a summary:

WHY SHOULD DUPONT OFFER PARTNER BENEFITS?

- Retain employees -- more gay and lesbian couples are having children -- benefits is often a "survival issue"

(Continued on Page 2)

Couples: Two Families

What is life like for DuPont lesbian couples? What are the special joys and trials of jobs, children, parents, siblings, sports, and housework? Here are two portraits of DuPont lesbian families. What would you conclude about the advantages and hardships of being a DuPont family with same sex partners?

Couples: Pam, Deb, and Lindsey

News: Pam, you have a long family involvement with DuPont?

Pam: My dad joined DuPont when he got out of the Navy and had a great 26-year career in international finance. I was born in 1962 in Wilmington and I spent a good bit of my childhood in Buenos Aires

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This Newsletter is published by BGLAD--Bisexuals, Gays, Lesbians and Allies at DuPont. If you wish to receive the Newsletter, please send a confidential email to BGLAD.BGLAD@usa.DuPont.com or via paper mail to P. O. Box 2192 Wilm., DE 19899-2192. All mail received by BGLAD is confidential. The leader of BGLAD (the Network Liaison) is Carol Lowrie (carol.l.lowrie@usa.DuPont.com). The editor of the Newsletter is Michael Leach (michael.b.leach@usa.DuPont.com) and an assistant is being sought. The Newsletter is published six times per year. Submission of relevant articles and information is very welcome. See us at www.DuPontbglad.com

Partner Benefits Paper Updated (Continued from Page 1)

- Attract bright, talented new employees -- folks graduating from university are often more in touch with their sexual orientation and savvy about benefits -- the lack of domestic partner benefits -- whether the person is gay or not -- can be a "knock out" for DuPont
- Increase productivity and reduce illness -- employees with benefits are less preoccupied with concerns for their partners and children
- Comply with DuPont's Non-discrimination Policy -- If you are married and get benefits, you get more total compensation for equal work than someone who has an equally lasting relationship, but is not married. To some, this is an issue of fairness or equity.

When we speak of domestic partner benefits, the scope need not be only gay and lesbian couples -- it can be any couple that is in a committed relationship but not married.

Q. What is our competition doing? A. Many of our competitive frame-of-reference companies offer benefits, including **DuPont Canada**, IBM, HP, Andersen Consulting, Aetna, American Express, AT&T, Bell Atlantic, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Cisco, Eastman Kodak, Episcopal Church, Genentech, Glaxo Wellcome, Intel, Lucent, Microsoft, Milbank-Tweed, Merrill Lynch, Northern Telecom, Reuters, SmithKline Beecham, Sun Microsystems, Time Warner, US Healthcare, Visa, Disney, Xerox...

Included in benefits are: medical, dental, and vision plans; pension, SIP, accidental death and dependent life insurance, disability, severance, health and dependent care spending accounts, leaves of absence, employee assistance, family leave and the host of other advantages of being of DuPont. Some of these already benefit partners, such as designation as an employee life insurance beneficiary and vacation buying.

Q. Won't all those AIDS patients increase DuPont's cost? A. The majority of domestic partners who register for benefits are lesbians, a group that has a discernibly low incidence of AIDS and HIV. The lifetime cost of treating AIDS is about the same as an acute heart attack episode. The most expensive medical benefit is still childbirth.

Q. How much will it cost? A. DuPont estimates the cost would be between 1/10 - 5/10 of one percent of health-care cost, a vanishingly-small amount. There are no adverse tax consequences to DuPont.

How would the "permanency" of a non-marriage relationship be measured? How would one guard against fraud? A. What prevents such fraud in heterosexual couples? The enrollment process has been tested at numerous other companies and works like this: the couple attest, in writing, that they

- are each other's sole domestic partner and intend to remain so
- have joint responsibility for each other's welfare and financial obligations
- are of the age of consent (state defined)
- are not married
- are not related by blood such as to prevent marriage if they were permitted to marry by law (see <http://www.aclu.org/library/aagaymarriage.html>).

For your complete copy of "Domestic Partner Benefits at DuPont", go to www.dupontbglad.com.

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

www.hrc.org

April 21, 2000

WASHINGTON – The Vermont Senate voted 19-11 in favor of a "civil union" bill today that would give same-sex couples the same rights and benefits afforded married couples under state law. This historic legislation represents a monumental leap forward for the legal recognition of same-sex unions, according to the Human Rights Campaign.

"The Vermont legislature has shown real leadership in choosing to embrace gay and lesbian families and go further than any other state in offering fair and equal benefits to all of its citizens," said HRC Executive Director Elizabeth Birch. "While this bill is not perfect, it is a victory for families and the beginning of a new age where our relationships receive the legal recognition and respect they deserve."

In March, the Vermont House voted 76-69 in favor of a comprehensive civil union bill which Gov. Howard Dean (D) has indicated that he will sign into law. The bill allows for gay and lesbian Americans to take part in civil unions, just as heterosexual couples can marry. Same-sex couples will be entitled to all 300 or more benefits available under state law to married couples - including medical decisions, estate inheritance, overseeing burials, transferring property and certain tax breaks. Town clerks would be authorized to give same-sex couples licenses, and clergy, justices of the peace or judges would make their unions official. Family divorce courts would handle the dissolution of civil unions.

Opponents of civil unions unsuccessfully tried to stymie the Senate bill by introducing a pair of constitutional amendments. One tried to overturn the state Supreme Court ruling that the Vermont legislature must design a system of benefits that does not discriminate against same-sex couples. The other would have enshrined in the state constitution that the definition of marriage is a union between a man and a woman. Neither amendment received a simple majority.

In December 1999, the Vermont Supreme Court handed down a decision that mandated that same-sex couples must be offered the same "benefits" and "protections" that married heterosexual couples now receive. In its ruling, the court directed the Vermont legislature to decide whether these benefits will come through traditional marriage or through a similar arrangement such as a "civil unions" bill.

There is evidence that public opinion towards same-sex marriage may be slowly changing, as people become more familiar with same-sex couples and the challenges they face. A September 16, 1999 NBC/Wall Street Journal poll reported that two-thirds of all Americans believe that gay and lesbian people will win the freedom to marry. Gay and lesbian Americans continue to be denied civil marriage in all 50 states.

Couples: Pam, Deb, and Lindsey (continued from page 1)

and Dusseldorf. It was a fantastic environment to grow up in, because the white anglo-saxon families were just one of many different ethnic and religious backgrounds represented in the international community in Dusseldorf. My parents and their friends founded the American International School in Dusseldorf with an initial enrollment of 30 kids in grades 7-12...Today with an enrollment of over 600, it covers grades pre-kindergarden through 12. We returned to the U. S. in 1974 where dad was Finance VP at Endo Labs, a DuPont joint venture. Dad lost the battle to colon cancer in 1976 at age 48. It was wonderful the way DuPont looked after us -- we had the best medical care and survivor benefits and the constant personal concern from Tom Casadevall and Howard Siers and their families for years after dad's death.

News: Your schooling was quite varied.

Pam: The international school and environment influenced my thinking when I was in elementary school. In Garden City and then Wilmington, I was a typical teenager. I graduated from AI DuPont High School second in my class and was really happy to have made the All State Volleyball team. I went to the University of Delaware and just couldn't handle the independence -- (you know the story: parties, rock and roll, sleeping late) -- and I ended up on academic probation at the end of the first semester. I finally finished my undergraduate degree in 1988.

News: So you went to work?

Pam: While I went to school at night, I got a job in the mailroom of the DuPont Freight Payment group in Finance and starting working my way into more responsibilities. In 1985 I became a programmer's assistant in the information resources group that supported Finance and subsequently was assigned as an accountant in CR&D, where I finished up my Accounting degree. I then went on to finish my MBA while working as an accounting analyst first in General Services and then with DuPont-Merck Pharmaceuticals starting in 1991. I'm now the Accounting Manager at DuPont Pharmaceuticals.

News: When did you realize your sexual orientation wasn't hetero?

Pam: In high school I dated like most people. I didn't even actively know that lesbians existed! I fell in love with my boyfriend in college and planned to marry him. When I quit going to school full time, he stayed at the University of Delaware and then moved to Indiana and the next time we saw each other he told me he was gay! You could have knocked me over with a feather. I tried to "save him" but to no avail. When I started work at DuPont, I also started playing industrial-league softball. I met a woman on the team and we had a 45-day whirlwind romance that started with a kiss -- until then I had no clue I was a lesbian. It's funny, after I came out to my mother in 1991, she couldn't believe we didn't realize my orientation years sooner because of the intense relationships I've always had with women. My mother did all of her personal soul searching about my sexual orientation in private, and has remained as loving, accepting and supportive of me as she ever was before I came out.

In 1985, I moved in with a great woman and although we lived together for six years; the last three were a platonic cost-sharing arrangement. Our relationship ended in 1991 soon after I met Deb.

News: Deb, what's your story?

Deb: My upbringing couldn't have been more different! I was born in 1965 near Allentown, PA. We lived out in the country -- life was simpler there, uncomplicated. I went to the local elementary school and when I was eight years old my life changed dramatically when my parents and the neighbors across the street divorced,

swapped mates, and remarried. My dad was distressed by his "sins" arising from the swap and became a born-again Christian. His fundamental religious beliefs increasingly strained his relations with my brother and me. We lived with my mother and stepfather. I went to the local high school and things got back to normal. I played piano, marched with the band, sang with the choir and was valedictorian of my graduating class. My first deep emotional same-sex relationship happened when I was a high school junior, although it was not a physical relationship. My mom didn't approve and sent me to a psychologist to ensure that I didn't become "one of them", she was afraid that her divorce might have affected my ability to relate to men. I didn't see myself as a lesbian at all, just someone who needed a friend.

News: Your parents attended Moravian College. Did you go there also?

Deb: I went to Villanova, starting in chemical engineering and finishing with a BA in mathematics and a minor in philosophy. I was in the glee club and very involved with the Catholic Church as a lay minister and church musician. My dad didn't approve of Catholics and compared the Church to "other common vices faced by college students -- sex, drugs...". The majority of my friends were actively involved in the church and music on campus. Looking back, I realize that a lot of them were gay. In college, I fell deeply in love with Richard and we were engaged in 1986. It was wonderful! We got to the pre-Caana stage and went through the marriage class and I began to have doubts. I didn't doubt my feelings for him, I just realized I was more comfortable, trusting, and able to relate to my maid of honor, Karen, than to my boyfriend. At this time, it was inconceivable to have a lesbian relationship..."these things just weren't done". After a lot of reflection, I called off the wedding to sort out my feelings. When I later moved in Karen, and began to experience myself as a lesbian, my father said that I was "possessed by the Devil" and refused to talk to me for seven years -- it was not my vision of Christian charity. Today he accommodates me to the point where he can "love the sinner but hate the sin": he is working out a sort of acceptance that reconciles his deeply held religious convictions, while acknowledging that he likes my partner and loves my daughter.

News: So it was off to work?

Deb: My first job was teaching high school back in Allentown, but after the wedding plans were terminated, it was time to move out of the Lehigh Valley. When Karen graduated the next year, we got our first apartment, in Media, Pennsylvania. A year later we shared a house with a gay male couple who were good friends of ours from college (one-half of which is a DuPonter). Those two did the cooking and it remains the best regular food I have ever had! With their urging, I applied for a temporary position at DuPont and in a few months Henry Tatnall hired me. I worked in expense ledger accounting and in 1990, as a result of decentralization, was sent to Medical Products to continue that work in the business. I was still living with my friend and we had moved into a house together, but when she started going to law school at night, we grew further apart: our relationship was not getting the right attention from either of us.

News: And then you met Pam?

Deb: It happened in a very offhand way. I got a call from this woman (Pam) in DuPont-Merck, asking for help with a systems problem (by then I had moved into a position as a financial systems analyst with Medical Products). The call was nothing special, except Pam was very articulate and witty...she left a considerable impression on me, and I was glad to be helpful. I found out later that Pam's reaction to me was different: she fell in love on the phone call. Pam's the logical, practical, organized one of us and I'm the emotional, empathetic, tranquil, people-oriented one. We both love a searching intellectual and conceptual challenge. When we met a few days later through a common friend, I was impressed: she was cute, together, competent...my intellectual equal and potential soul-mate. The chemistry was there! When my other relationship ended, we dated for six months and then moved into my house as lovers and later partners. A year

later, I transferred to DuPont-Merck too, and our offices have remained within walking distance for nine years. I provide technical consulting and process engineering support for the finance organization and now I'm a six-sigma black belt for DuPont Pharmaceuticals until 2002.

News: The Church was a big part of your upbringing; are you active?

Pam and Deb: We have strong spiritual needs and we started attending an Episcopal church in the Philadelphia area. We were welcomed immediately as two people and later as a couple. It was really neat to watch people grow in their understanding of homosexuality in a way that was non-threatening and really quite a surprise to themselves. We moved to another Episcopal church and were again welcomed and accepted as a couple. We're the only lesbian couple we know in our church, but we are so accepted that nobody notices.

News: Tell us about Lindsey

Pam and Deb: We always wanted children, both of us. Adoption was a possibility, but we really wanted to have the whole experience, from pregnancy through delivery. Deb was better able physically to have a baby and so we decided to pursue artificial insemination. We searched for a fertility clinic and found a great doctor at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital. We had two volunteers to be the father, but we decided that it would be too difficult for the father to be uninvolved with his child if he knew, so we opted for an anonymous sperm donor. Lindsey was born almost two years ago now. She is the light of our lives!

News: You both work in DuPont Pharmaceuticals. Is benefits an issue?

Pam and Deb: Lindsey is covered by Deb's benefits. We're thinking hard about having another child. It's a big decision for us: the change in life style, the uncertainties about jobs and health and the economy. Although both of us are career-oriented, in an ideal world we'd like it if Deb could be "Donna Reid" and stay home with the children. DuPont Pharmaceuticals' management has been wonderfully flexible and accommodating in all of the areas where flexibility is allowed. DuPont Pharmaceuticals has truly lived up to its shared value: "Everyone deserves special treatment". We're really hoping that partner benefits will come so we can have the choices that married couples do.

News: You sound like you're very happy.

Pam and Deb: Our life is truly like any other couple's -- we work on making lunch, playing with Lindsey, deciding whether to talk a walk... We're completely out at Church and DuPont and in our neighborhood and families. It feels good, and we're very blessed. (mbl)

Couples: Leslie, Rosie, and Dillon

It's 8:00 p.m. and Dillon is winding down. Dinner is over, the dishes are almost done and it's time for a quiet mother-son moment: in this case, two moments with Dillon's two moms. Dillon is almost two and full of energy and the desire to explore and experience everything. He's sometimes a bit of a challenge...like kids everywhere.

News: So, how did this family come together?

Leslie: It's a long saga. I was born and raised in Wilmington. My dad owned a local sporting goods store and our family didn't move around like some DuPont families. My school career was typical north Wilmington in the sixties: local elementary school, Brandywine high school, even went to the Senior Prom and the after-prom party in Rehoboth with my boy friend of four years. We went to separate colleges, and our romance followed suit.

News: What did you study in college?

Leslie: At college, I majored in education and history, with a minor in English and NCAA Division Three basketball and softball. Greek life kept me busy, but I did have a steady boy friend through all of college.

News: So until your early twenties, you were a recognized heterosexual. What was happening with your lesbian side?

Leslie: I fell in love with my best friend in high school. It was nothing more than any other high school romance -- male or female -- at that time...a "crush" of sorts. That I might be *queer* just never occurred to me, or to anyone else. In college I had another short relationship with a woman but was very much in love with a boy I was dating, so I ended my relationship with the woman. After college she came back into my life and I decided to move in with her as her emotional and sexual partner. That's when I came out to my parents.

News: What were their reactions?

Leslie: My mother was horrified and banished me from the family except for obligatory family gatherings. Dad always tried to stay in touch and quietly support me.

News: How did you come to DuPont?

Leslie: I was hired in 1973 by DuPont at the height of the energy crisis and assigned to coordinate transportation of scarce materials. In 1976 I started training as a sales representative and sold pigments until 1981. It was a big territory, from the Ohio River to the Atlantic, half of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and western Maryland and Virginia. I went to Photo Products and had the interesting job of being the U. S. advocate for the German part of the Photo business -- the old Adox Photowerke. In 1984 I was assigned to a distribution study working for a person I just could not establish even a civil relationship with, so I tried to quit. After having my arm twisted several times by the Director, I accepted a transfer to Clifton, NJ as an account representative, which job I did until 1988. When the OE initiative hit DuPont, I became an OE "black belt" and moved back to Wilmington. The Employee Assistance Program hired me in 1992 as a counselor and I'm still happily there.

News: And along the way you met Rosie; Rose, tell us about your upbringing.

Rosie: I was born in 1947 in the Olney section of Philadelphia. It was a very interesting neighborhood, with all sorts of white people and religions. I remember vividly how the local Rabbi would come out on the street looking for one of us gentile kids to turn the lights on, as this was forbidden for the members of the (orthodox) congregation.

News: What was life like at home?

Rosie: My parents worked very hard and long hours. My older brother did the cooking so that dinner would be ready when everyone came home. I had very few high school male friends or romances. I graduated from high school in 1965, but my life was sports: I'd often be the only girl playing with the boys. When the kids were choosing sides, there was a rule that my brother and I couldn't be on the same side...unfair competition. I got eleven sports letters in high school in field hockey, basketball, and softball. I loved softball and joined the east

coast amateur fast-pitch league and later was offered a pro position by a team in Connecticut, but I couldn't live on the \$125/week salary.

News: The popular stereotype of women's sports is that it's a lesbian haven. Is it true?

Rosie: Absolutely. When we were playing amateur basketball, we would travel on the weekends and I would stay with team members. On one of those weekends, one of my teammates made a "pass" at me, which I declined. Two weeks later I fell for another teammate whom I had been emotionally attracted to for a couple of years. Later I played for a fast-pitch softball team in Telford, PA, and had a secret liaison with the shortstop for one season. Imagine my surprise when our affair came out to find that practically everyone on the team was gay! Eventually I settled down with one woman in 1977 and we bought a house together; the relationship ended in 1982.

News: How did you meet Leslie?

Rosie: I had been working at the Philadelphia Inquirer only a short time when friends invited me for dinner the day after Thanksgiving, 1982. It turns out they had "set me up": Leslie was the other invited guest. We liked each other, and both of us had just ended other relationships. Leslie's relationship ended in a nasty fight over possessions and she was afraid to contemplate a serious relationship with me. After a few months of dating, I went to North Carolina to see my family and the sudden distance between us somehow galvanized a reaction and we got more serious. Still, Leslie was terrified to invite me to live with her, so I bribed my way into the house by offering to buy a microwave oven! It worked! About this time (1984) Leslie was transferred to Clifton, precipitating a crisis: the result was that we moved together to a house half-way between our jobs and realized we were deeply in love. We've been partners since.

News: Had you two always wanted children?

Leslie: Rosie and I have wanted children since we were teenagers. After Rosie and I had been together for a few years, we started talking about children: the impact on our life-style, the responsibilities, our ages, etc. Rosie tried the artificial inseminations first, but without success. Then I tried three times and didn't conceive. The doctor suggested that conception would be no problem if I had surgery, but this so scared us that we stopped the attempts. Several years later we decided to adopt a baby.

The adoption process is long and torturous. In spring 1997 we started the "home study" phase: the social worker began the visitations and documentation of our lives and the determination of our fitness as potential parents. We got the "third degree": it's something that anyone contemplating raising a child probably should do! We narrowed the possibilities of donor country to one in which the children are reared from birth in a foster home (as opposed to an orphanage) and selected an adoption agency in Denver. After some weeks of discussion, we were again on the search for an agency because the Denver agency would not deal with a single parent. We contacted DuPont Life Works and found an agency that worked with Guatemala and that was supportive of good homes for children with married or single parents.

Dillon was born on April 24, 1998 and after five months we got the call from the agency confirming an appointment at the U. S. Embassy to finalize the paperwork. We flew to Guatemala and Dillon came home with us!

News: What part did DuPont employee benefits play?

Leslie: With both of us working, we had no major concerns with benefits. My benefits did not cover infertility at first, but when the coverage was added, it gave us a chance to carry our own baby. We've just found out that our second child -- Samantha Lyn -- was born April 11th and she will come to live with us in August! It would be great if Rosie could stay home to care for the children. Unfortunately, if something happened to me, she'd have no medical care and no survivor benefits. We have joint custody of Dillon -- the first such arrangement in Delaware -- but my benefits don't extend to Rosie. In fact, The Inquirer does cover domestic partnerships -- if Rosie wasn't the natural caregiver for our family, I should quit DuPont and raise the children. But DuPont's benefits are better -- especially the pension -- so we're kind of "in limbo" about our family future.

News: You're been together now for 17 years; any regrets?

Rosie and Leslie: We were cautious when we met. We often said "one day at a time": the credo has worked for us. We have traveled, played golf, and enjoyed life. Dillon and Samantha Lyn send us in a whole new direction: little ones at the center of our relationship. Our lives together have become everything we imagined but could have never predicted. It's joyful! mbl

BGLAD MEMBER NEWS

PRIOR PROMOTED

"I am pleased to announce that effective February 1, Pam is promoted to the new position of Accounting Manager, reporting to the undersigned. The Accounting Manager is responsible for the Wilmington based accounting activities and the global consolidation of accounting data. Pam brings to the position a wealth of accounting experience at DuPont and DuPont Pharmaceuticals Company along with recent experience as a key contact with our subsidiaries and new legal entities on accounting and consolidation matters. In her new capacity, Pam will continue as a member of and U.S. liaison to the European Financial Leadership Team and will also continue to lead the Financial Consolidation Team of IBSOT. Effective with Pam's promotion, the reporting lines under the Controller have been realigned as noted below. Please join me in congratulating Pam and wishing her success in her new assignment. -
Controller"

JOY AND LIL ANNOUNCE COMMITMENT CEREMONY

We are excited to announce as a public testimony to our love and commitment for each other that we are having a Commitment Ceremony. We are both so very happy, and excitement is growing as we make plans for June 10th. Joy and Lil

JOY TO CONSULT ON TRANS-SEXUAL ISSUES

I have been asked by General Motors to conduct a training session on "Transsexuals In The Workplace" for General Motors' Western New York E.A.P. staff this coming fall.

I have been invited to contribute my experience "transitioning in the workplace" for an upcoming book from Gender Sanity. Joy

MID ATLANTIC CHAPTER

There is another group in DuPont that is associated with BGLAD. It's called the Mid Atlantic Chapter. This chapter was basically created to focus on those of us in BLGAD who live on the East Coast, primarily in the tri-state area: Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

I am the 'coordinator' for this group. My primary function is to receive information from outside groups and members of the Chapter and forward that information to the rest of the Chapter members. Every once in a while, I'll also try to organize something for the group, but that hasn't been very successful. I will also help anyone who wants to organize a group activity or event.

The information that I pass along includes things about monthly Monday Night gay bowling, the AidsDelaware walk, Millenium March in Washington, DC, a men's support group, political issues, current issues, etc.

If you're interested in becoming a member of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter, send me a note and I'll add you to the distribution list. Just like BGLAD, membership information is totally confidential.

Liz O'Neal
Elizabeth A Oneal/AE/DuPont,

SAME SEX PARTNERS: MAKE YOUR FAMILY COUNT IN 2000

In March and April 2000, the United States Census Bureau will mail a census form to each American household. This year, as in 1990, the Census form will include a question critical to our ability to determine the scope and shape of same-sex couples and their children who share a household. The form allows for two adults who are living together to designate their relationship as "Unmarried Partners". When the census is completed, information about the numbers and demographics of same-sex unmarried couples will be available.

When the census was taken in 1990, the Census Bureau did not count any answer by a same-sex couple who marked "spouse" to describe their relationship. The Bureau considered it a mistake because it is legally impossible for same-sex couples to marry. This year the Census Bureau has indicated that it will simply re-categorize the answer from "spouse" to "unmarried partner" so the data is not lost. The safest bet for being counted is to describe a same-sex relationship in its legal term "unmarried partner". This will ensure that your family is counted. For more information go to <http://www.WeCount.org>.

SO IT MIGHT HELP SOMEONE ELSE -- OR HELP SUPPORTERS UNDERSTAND

Secrets -- how harmful to one's self they become. My partner and I kept our "other" life a secret for 26 years...until his death. We only had a small circle of friends and family who knew. Being a DuPonter for 30 years...the lies, the cover stories, etc. What a waste of energy. My partner worked for a local company that was very conservative and he thought he would be fired if they found out. What a shame.

He even put his life insurance in a family member's name so they wouldn't ask questions...I didn't know that until after his death; later it would prove to be disastrous for me, and I'm still paying the consequences. After the stroke, the hospital visits...making excuses to spend time there....if only!

I've been reflecting on my 30 years with DuPont recently. "What ifs" just keep coming up. If only I could have been myself, honest with my co-workers etc. Fear of rejection, name calling, snickers, you name it. Fear and loneliness, it's real.

I love my job; I enjoy coming to work most days. DuPont has been good to me. But only if... My partner and I never discussed what ifs; if one of us died...I can't believe we didn't prepare. I didn't manage the finances, he did. I wasn't very good at it -- I'm still not good at it. Where do I go from here? That's what I keep asking myself.

I trying to move ahead, but I'm not doing very well.

I'm still keeping secrets.

What a shame.

Bob

(Bob came out to his work group on April 13th and received an overwhelmingly positive reception. mbl)

GAY WORLD NEWS

VERMONT COURT FAVORS BENEFITS TO GAY PEOPLE

By Christopher Noble

February, 2000

BOSTON (Reuters) - The Vermont Supreme Court ruled on Monday that gay people are entitled to the same marriage benefits as heterosexuals, in a groundbreaking decision likely to spur renewed debate across the country about gay marriage. The court said it was now up to the Vermont Legislature to decide whether to allow gay marriages, to set up a legal system of domestic partnership or make some other legal provision for same-sex couples. But the result must offer benefits and protections to same-sex couples equal to those for heterosexual married couples, the small New England state's highest court ruled in a decision suspended to give time for lawmakers to act.

The court's five justices ruled unanimously that the state must offer equal protection to same-sex couples, but was split on the remedy, with one arguing that marriage licenses should be issued immediately and another differing on the approach while supporting the overall conclusion of the court.

While two other American states -- California and Hawaii -- have limited domestic partnership systems, and several European countries and Canada have extended legal protections to gay couples, no other court anywhere had ever said gay and traditional couples were entitled to absolute equality under the law, legal experts said. Gay advocates hailed the ruling, saying it would have a profound impact on a growing national debate about the rights of same-sex couples.

While the decision had no impact on federal law, it had profound implications for state law on many fronts, including adoption, inheritance and health care. Vermont Gov. Howard Dean said through his spokeswoman that lawmakers were already drafting

domestic partnership bills, which he hoped could be enacted by May.

Critics attacked the decision as an assault on the family that was "troubling" and "tremendously disappointing." "This is the first court in the country that has mandated same-sex marriage," the American Center for Law and Justice said in a statement. "And while this legal decision is designed to elevate the status of same-sex couples, it really represents a slap in the face for marriage between a man and a woman," it said. The court's ruling used clear and direct language that lawyers said left no doubt about its intent. "We hold that the state is constitutionally required to extend to same-sex couples the common benefits and protections that flow from marriage under Vermont law," the court said. "Whether this ultimately takes the form of inclusion within the marriage laws themselves or a parallel 'domestic partnership' system or some equivalent statutory alternative, rests with the Legislature. Whatever system is chosen, however, must conform with the constitutional imperative to afford all Vermonters the common benefit, protection, and security of the law," the decision said.

The ruling followed a Dec. 10 decision by Hawaii's top court that dismissed a lawsuit seeking to allow same-sex marriage, saying it was rendered moot by a 1998 amendment to the state's constitution that allowed the legislature to enact a law banning gay marriage. In an earlier ruling before the state constitution was amended, justices found that Hawaii's denial of benefits and protections to same-sex couples was unjustified.

In California, where a March ballot initiative seeks to ban gay marriage, the decision drew quick reaction. "California's right to define marriage for itself is now in grave danger," said Robert Glazier, communications manager of the "Protection of Marriage" campaign. Mike Marshall, who leads a campaign opposing the initiative, said the Vermont decision showed that "discrimination against same-sex couples is unconstitutional."

STUDY LINKS FINGER SIZE AND SEXUALITY

By JEFF DONN, Associated Press Writer

A provocative study of finger lengths found that lesbians are more likely than other women to have a subtle masculine trait, while gay men may display that same characteristic more than heterosexuals. The research adds to an expanding body of evidence that sexual orientation is at least partly a matter of biology - and not simply a choice or a result of cultural or psychological influences. It also provides evidence for the theory that exposure to higher levels of male sex hormones in the womb can help make a person lesbian or gay, despite the stereotype of effeminate gay men, the researchers say.

The researchers at the University of California at Berkeley built their study on an already known quirk of human anatomy: Men tend to have shorter index fingers than ring fingers. In women, those two fingers tend to be about the same length. Scientists believe that men's higher levels of androgens - the male sex hormones such as testosterone that are found in both sexes - produce this and many other sex differences. In the study published in the journal *Nature*, the Berkeley researchers interviewed 720 adults at three street festivals in San Francisco, asked them their sexual orientation and measured their fingers. The fingers of lesbians were closer to the typical male configuration - with the shorter index finger - than the fingers of other women. The finding points to higher levels of male sex hormones in early life for lesbians, the researchers said.

The researchers also found indirect evidence of a similar trait in gay men. They found that, in keeping with earlier research, men with more older brothers were more often gay, possibly from escalating levels of androgens in the womb for successive boys. The researchers then went a step further, showing that those same men with older brothers also had relatively shorter index fingers -- the hormonal male pattern -- than other men. The researchers suspect that if they had looked at larger

numbers of people, they would have found that gays overall indeed show a more masculine finger pattern than other men. Some earlier researchers have also tied male homosexuality to unusually strong masculine traits.

"This calls into question all of our cultural assumptions that gay men are feminine," said psychologist Marc Breedlove, who led the Berkeley study. He cautioned that finger-length differences hold up only as averages in large populations, not for individuals. The differences involved just fractions of an inch. Paula Ettlbrick, an activist at the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force said some gay men would welcome such findings because "they argue very strenuously that their sexual orientation is very well defined and biological." But she said ultimately the question of cause should not bear on the equal rights debate.

Some earlier research already suggests slight anatomical differences between gays and other men, including variations in brain structure and bigger penises for homosexuals. The Berkeley study "is among the better lines of direct evidence of a possible hormonal cause of homosexuality," said psychologist Ray Blanchard, a sexuality researcher at the Center for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto. Many researchers, including those in the Berkeley study, suspect that homosexuality stems from a complex interplay of biological, social and psychological factors. "I think only a fool would say that we know for sure it's biological. And I think that clearly only a fool would say it has to do only with the way we were raised," said Bernard J. Gallagher III, a psychiatric sociologist at Villanova University.

Breedlove's other research:

<http://ls.berkeley.edu/dept/psychology/breedbio.htm>
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Our membership is steady at 242.

BGL's: 119 B: 4
 G: 55
 L: 60
 A's: 123 Advocates: 56
 Supporters: 67

By location:

	<u>BGL's</u>	<u>A's</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>sites</u>
Wilmington area	81	101	182	22
All other US sites:	36	20	56	29
non-US sites:	3	2	5	3

Top three: Barley Mill 46 members
 Nemours Bldg 30
 Exp. Station 30

By Business/Function:

	<u>BGL's</u>	<u>A's</u>	<u>Total</u>
SBU's	54	53	107
Staff	22	48	70
Other (CR&D, JV's)	31	10	41
Learning Partners	11	13	24
Top four	CPC	26 members	
	DPC	21	
	FIN	17	
	HR	16	

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES SINCE 1/1/96

	<u>Gained</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Net</u>
BGL's	61	50	+11
Allies	91	27	+64
Total	152	77	+75

Reasons for leaving network:

- Left company 35
- Sold business 23
- Retired 9
- Request 5
- CTP'd 5

Remember that you can stay connected to BGLAD after you retire if you can receive email at home! Just send us your address!

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 Want information on BGL events in the Delaware Valley area? You should be on the Mid-Atlantic Chapter's mailing list. The contact is Elizabeth.A.Oneal@usa.dupont.com
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