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A.P. News Briefs

New Mass Gov Angers Gays

Acting Gov. Jane Swift's blunt remarks about same-sex marriages have angered some of her supporters in the gay community, which has been an important source of support.

The gay community is a critical bloc of the socially liberal, fiscally conservative coalition Swift is trying to build. But her comments, made less than 24 hours into her tenure as acting governor, disappointed some of them, including Michael Duffy, the former state director of consumer affairs and a longtime Swift ally.

"I've known Jane Swift for a dozen years, and this was different from what I would have expected from her," Duffy, who is gay, told The Boston Globe.

Swift, apparently worried about the gay community's reaction to her comments, dispatched an aide to speak to some members of that community and explain her remarks. Swift supports domestic partnership benefits, and said she would consider extending them beyond government workers.

"I'm proud of my record in supporting protections for same-sex couples," Swift said. "I'm being candid that I'd extend domestic partnership benefits but I would not go so far as to support same-sex marriage."

"In this state at this time, you're not going to get mainstream politicians to move too far beyond what the line is," said Mark Goshko, a Swift supporter and former president of the Massachusetts Log Cabin Republican Club.

The presence of chief secretary Abner Mason, a top adviser who is gay, bolstered hopes that Swift would be more sympathetic about same-sex

Pastor warns congregation about gay-owned restaurant

The owners of an Erie County, Pennsylvania restaurant said their business is hurting after a pastor warned his congregation not patronize the night spot because the owners are lesbians.

The Rev. Patrick Kennedy, an assistant pastor at First Baptist Church in North East, told the Erie Times-News newspaper that he told parents to keep their teen-agers from going to the South Shore Inn "because of the potential for recruitment into the homosexual lifestyle."

As a result, South Shore Inn owners

Patricia Graham and Danielle Hazen said they have seen a decline in business, especially on nights when the inn hosts a teen-age dance club.

"I would say we have no business at all now," Graham said. "It's been killed off. We only have about five teens at our dances now, whereas we used to have about 50. But as long as we have any coming at all, we'll stay open."

The borough and township of North East, with a population of just under 11,000, sits between Erie and the New York State line on the shores of Lake Erie.

North East Mayor Alison Schmidt said the community is tolerant of all lifestyles.

"I can only hope that the restaurant would be judged on the quality of its food and service," Schmidt said. "I truly hope that there isn't an effort to undermine a North East business based on rumor and innuendo."



Rev. Louis Sheldon

Frank and Baldwin Go After Rev. Sheldon

Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., and

Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., are calling for the removal of two ministers appointed to a congressional faith-based summit because of anti-gay comments they've made.

The Rev. Louis Sheldon, chairman of the Traditional Values Coalition, and the Rev. Reggie White, a former professional football player, are among 30 religious leaders selected to participate in the upcoming House-Senate Republican Faith-Based Leadership Summit.

Frank and Baldwin, both openly gay, wrote to House Republican Conference Chairman J.C. Watts, R-Okla., asking him to rescind the invitations. A Watts spokesman said the congressman would not comment.

Sheldon last year said a gay rights rally in Washington was "designed to target children and teen-agers for recruitment to the gay lifestyle." He encouraged parents to "vigorously protest this sexual exploitation of children by homosexual activists."

Sheldon also denounced former Massachusetts Gov. Paul Cellucci for "trampling on parents' rights" by doubling the budget of the state's Gay

and Lesbian Youth commission. He said the funds were used for "homosexual recruitment."

"Sticks and stones may break your bones, but names will never hurt you,"

Gore to Make First Appearance in Florida Since Election

Former Vice President Al Gore plans to make his first public appearance since the presidential race in the state that cost him the election.

Gore will address the Travel Industry Association of America's International Pow Wow meeting in Orlando on May 9.

Gore spokeswoman Kiki McLean couldn't be reached for comment.

"All I've been told is that he's going to be talking about the American political scene," said TIA spokesman Mike Pina.

Last November, Gore conceded the presidential election to George W. Bush by 537 votes in Florida after weeks of recounts and court challenges.

Tom Cruise Files Gay Defamation Suit

Tom Cruise has filed a \$100 million defamation lawsuit against a pornography actor who allegedly claimed he had a gay affair that broke up Cruise's marriage.

Chad Slater told the French magazine Actustar that "he had a continuing homosexual relationship during Cruise's marriage and that the relationship was discovered by Cruise's wife, who ended the relationship," according to the lawsuit filed last Wednesday in Los Angeles Superior Court.

"Cruise is not and never has been a homosexual" and "does not even know" Slater, the lawsuit said.

Cruise's attorney, Bert Fields, said Actustar has agreed to publish a retraction.

Slater uses the stage name Kyle Bradford. There was no telephone listing for either name in the Hollywood area.

Cruise filed for divorce from Nicole Kidman in February after 10 years of marriage. They have two adopted children.

The divorce case is pending, but Cruise's divorce lawyer, Dennis Wasser, issued a statement Wednesday that "the children are his life and he will always provide for them and their security. Tom will provide Nicole with one-half of the community property, consisting of tens of millions of dollars."

Urdan Drag Queen

By Billy Rayon

THESE HEAVY-DUTY PANTY HOSE FOR DRAG QUEENS HAD BETTER MAKE MY LEGS LOOK SLIMMER.

WOW! THEY'RE A BIT TIGHTER AND HARDER TO GET ON THAN I EXPECTED.

GEE, THEY'RE SOOO TIGHT BUT MY LEGS DO LOOK SLIMMER.

HMM... THEY SEEMED TO HAVE SQUEEZED THE ENTIRE MASS OF MY LOWER BODY UP INTO MY HEAD.

LATER...

DOG, MISS THING, THAT'S A DRAMATIC NEW LOOK 'YOU GOT GOIN' ON!'

THANKS TYRONE, BUT NOW MY WIG IS TOO SMALL.

FORGET THE WIG, HONEY CHILD LET'S MAKE A TURBAN FOR YOU OUT OF YOUR BED SHEETS.

GREAT IDEA CHOCOLATE DELIGHT!

WAIT A MINUTE, TYRONE. HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT THIS SHEET WILL FIT ON MY BIG HEAD?

DUH! THE LABEL SAYS "QUEEN SIZE."