

SACLEGAL NEWSLETTER

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CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT TO DECIDE IN RE MARRIAGE CASES

The California Supreme Court heard oral argument in the In re Marriage cases on March 4, 2008.

The Court heard from several advocates on both sides including: Terry Stewart, Attorney for the City and County of San Francisco; Shannon Minter, Legal Director of the National Center of Lesbian Rights; Michael Maroko and Waukeen McCoy, counsel for individual plaintiffs; Deputy Attorney General Christopher Krueger; Kenneth Mennemeier, counsel for the Governor; Glen Lavy, counsel for the Proposi-



tion 22 Legal Defense Fund; and Mathew Staver, counsel for the Campaign for California Families.

One of the most memorable moments of the argument was when the Court asked Terry Stewart whether California's existing domestic partnership laws already gives same-sex couples substantially

the same rights as marriage, thereby distinguishing this case from the progeny of interracial marriage cases.

Stewart artfully replied that "[t]his case is not about whether the domestic partnership law is fair or equal. This case is about whether denying marriage to gays and lesbians is equal."

In re Marriage Cases is a lawsuit seeking marriage equality on behalf of eleven same-sex couples, Equality California, and Our Family Coalition. The Justices must issue a de-



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: JEFFREY BEDELL

Each newsletter we will feature a different SacLEGAL member. This month our Member Spotlight focuses on SacLEGAL board member Jeffrey Bedell.

Tell our members something interesting about yourself.

I lived and worked in Dublin, Ireland and Santi-

ago, Chile before attending law school. Also, during my first time to the U.S. Supreme Court, I almost got in trouble for climbing on some statues on either side of the steps leading up to the Court.

What is your favorite movie, book, and song?

My favorite movie is Who's Afraid of Virginia

Woolf because it's funny, has great acting, and the dialogue is completely unique. My favorite book is The Alienist by Caleb Carr because it's a gripping bit of historical fiction/murder mystery set in turn of the century in New York City. My favorite song is You Turn Me On, I'm a Radio by Joni Mitchell because it's a genius bit of songwriting.



While there are only four million people in Ireland, there are nearly 40 million Americans who claim Irish heritage.

IRISH SODA BREAD RECIPE BY (ST.) PATRICK HOLSTINE



March is my favorite month of the year. The days get warmer, the evenings get lighter, spring arrives, and best of all I get to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. Since I am named after Ireland's patron saint, I always look forward to celebrating his special day every March.

While there are only four million people in Ireland, there are nearly 40 million Americans who claim Irish heritage. Most of those Irish-Americans, along with millions of others in the United States, are familiar with traditions such as corned beef and cabbage, drinking Guinness, and marching in the St. Patrick's Day parade.

Lucky for me (and now you) I am familiar with another Irish tradition that is not as well-known in the United States. Having had the good fortune to have spent nearly three years in Ireland where my mother was born and raised, it is my pleasure to share that tradition with you this St. Patrick's Day: Irish Soda Bread.

There are many versions of the traditional recipe, most of which are delicious and passed down through generations of

Irish families. The recipe I am sharing with you here is one that is easy to make and tastes great. It is not a dessert, but rather a complement to your meal. It will take just a few minutes to prepare, and around 45 minutes to bake. Enjoy it hot and fresh with your corned beef, cabbage, and Guinness this St. Patrick's Day!



Ingredients:

3 cups of all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon of baking soda
2 tablespoons of sugar
1/2 cup of raisins
1 cup of buttermilk
2 tablespoons of melted margarine
1 beaten egg
1/2 teaspoon of salt

Directions

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease a cast iron skillet.

Mix the flour, sugar, salt, and baking soda together in a medium bowl. Then

add the raisins into the flour mixture until coated.

Make a well in the center to add the buttermilk, melted margarine, and egg. Stir until all the dry ingredients are absorbed.

Turn the dough out onto a floured surface. Knead it just enough to even out the dough. Try not to handle the dough too much.

Pat it into a flat circle and use a sharp knife to cut an



"X" into the top of the loaf (some say this wards off evil, while others say it makes it easier to cut the loaf into four pieces when finished).

Place it into the prepared pan and bake the bread in the preheated oven for 40-45 minutes until the edges are golden brown.

Be sure to serve it along with some butter or margarine and enjoy your new St. Patrick's Day tradition!

REMEMBER LAWRENCE KING

Lawrence King was a 15 year-old junior high school student attending school in Oxnard, California. On February 12, 2008, as he was on his way to his morning computer lab, he was brutally shot by another student. The death is a tragedy not only because he was taken so young and unexpectedly, but also because he was likely the target of a hate crime.

King self-identified as gay and occasionally wore makeup and jewelry to school. As a result, several students began to ridicule him, including the student who shot him.

The student who shot King was charged with murder with enhancements of use of a firearm and a hate crime. If convicted, he faces a sentence of 52 years to life in prison.

Several community centers, including the Lambda Community Center in Sacramento, held vigils in King's memory.

Out of this tragedy, several organizations are finding ways to honor Lawrence King's memory by raising awareness of the dangers that LGBT youth face.

DUE PROCESS: JUSTICE FOR YOUTH, BY YOUTH

With the recent events leading to the tragic death of Lawrence King, the need for school safety for LGBT youth is even more apparent.

One group that is dedicated to improving school safety for LGBT youth is Ally Action. Ally Action has developed a student-led program: Due Process: Justice for Youth, by Youth. Due Process is an intensive five-day curricular experience designed to engage students in critical thinking and conflict resolution skills. Students participate in a mock trial stemming from a fictional hate crime at school against a transgender youth of color.

The purpose of Due Process is to engage students, teach them how social identity impacts their safety at school, and provide a space for students to explore ways that they can actively change their school to be safer for all students.

Ally Action reports that based on project pilots at two Bay Area high schools

- Nearly 50% of the students significantly increased their knowledge of how their sexual orientation and/or gender identity/expression impacts their sense of safety at school;
- 67% of the students gained a deeper un-

derstanding of their rights and responsibilities under the California Student Safety & Violence Prevention Act (AB 537);

- 26% of the students reported an increased overall sense of safety at school;
- 25% of students reported an increased willingness to make their school safer for LGBTQ youth; and
- 39% of students reported they were more likely to consider themselves as allies to LGBTQ people than before.

Visit www.allyaction.org and find out how you can help make our schools safer for LGBT youth.

39% of students who participated in Ally Action's Due Process program were more likely to consider themselves allies to LGBTQ people

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What is the best piece of advice you have ever received?

It was from my mother who told me "never drive behind an old man wearing a hat."

What is the biggest challenge facing LGBT individuals today?

Battling stereotypes (some shared by others in the LGBT community) and showing that GLBT persons are not all the same in the way they think or live their lives.

Jeffrey works for the California Attorney General's Office as a Deputy Attorney General in the Government Law Section. He is a recent transplant to the Sacramento area after practicing for a private law firm in Monterey.