

# The Jamaica OutPost

Established in June 2004 ISSN 0799-172X

Kingston, Jamaica **NOVEMBER 2004**

## Global Headlines

- Lebanese gay rights group launches the first public offensive in the Arab world to confront the country's ban on homosexuality.
- Trinidad & Tobago's Friends For Life (FFL) gears up to challenge the country's harsh anti-gay laws.
- France's first gay television station went on air on October 25. The channel will also feature the world's first transgender sports caster.

## The Jamaica OutPost

P.O. 5540, Kingston 6, Jamaica  
Tel: 876-864-1856  
Email: jamaicaoutpost@hotmail.com

A publication by GL Publishing

## SUBSCRIBE TODAY

Get your copy of this newsletter delivered to you each month.

Contact us for more information

## COMMUNITY BOARD

The Jamaica OutPost wishes to thank Tony Hron, who bids farewell to Jamaica in early November, for his contributions to the Jamaican GLBT Community. (Read more online)

We are now online. Visit us at:  
[www.jamaicaoutpost.com](http://www.jamaicaoutpost.com)

## U.S. GRANTS ASYLUM TO JAMAICAN GAY ACTIVIST

Larry Chang, the co-founder and General Secretary of Jamaica's first gay rights organisation, has been granted political asylum by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security due to persecution on grounds of his sexual orientation. The confirmation of asylum was conferred on October 15, after three years of uncertainty for Chang. In a release statement, Chang who now resides in Washington D.C., expressed his overwhelming joy for the support he had received from many people. Chang is a descendent of Chinese immigrants to Jamaica during the period of British colonization. His ethnicity made him an easy target for homophobic attacks, which led him to be a founding member of the Gay Freedom Movement in 1977. Chang also was very instrumental in the founding of yet another gay rights organisation, the Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, All-sexuals and Gays (JFLAG), following the demise of the Gay Freedom Movement some years before. In 2001, a disillusioned Chang fled the island to protect his sanity and his life. This marked the end of a long struggle by Chang to influence the



Larry Chang Source: Washington Blade (Photo by Luis Gomez)

Jamaican Government to change the Jamaican laws to offer equal protection for the lesbian, all-sexual and gay (LAG) community of Jamaica. Coincidentally, the government also refused to include sexual orientation in the anti-discrimination clause of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Constitutional Amendment) Bill that was being penned to replace

Chapter III of the Jamaica Constitution during 2001. Chang's energy has taken on a new angle since his departure from Jamaica. He now focuses on providing information for LAG community members on how to seek political asylum to escape homophobic persecution. Maybe one day the "Gay Star-liner" will come sailing into the ports of Jamaica.

## POLITICS AND THE GAY COMMUNITY

Where does the PNP or JLP stand on homosexual issues? Are there any gay-friendly MPs? Have you ever checked with your local MP to get his views on gay right issues? It is without a doubt that many in our society would eagerly answer these questions, including

members of our own lesbian, all-sexual and gay (LAG) community. There are, however, a few questions we need to ask ourselves. Where do we stand on political issues? Can our votes really change our fate? A recent poll conducted by The Jamaica OutPost has indicated

a pattern in the political inclination of the local gay and lesbian community. According to the findings, the LAG community equally supports both the JLP and the PNP parties. On the other hand, a small percentage of the community does

(Continued on page 2)

FAQ

**Should I disclose my sexuality to my Doctor?**

This is an important question conditions, this may not be a and one that has far reaching problem. However, some condi- implications. In an ideal world, tions may affect LAG individu- no one would have to worry als more commonly and by about this question. Unfortu- withholding this information, nately, some health care provid- you may make it more difficult ers right here in Jamaica still for your doctor to effectively allow their personal biases to diagnose your health condition influence the quality of patient or properly treat you. If you care, whether consciously or aren't comfortable discussing not. As a result, many of us your sexuality with your doctor keep our sexuality a secret from directly, then it is probably time our doctors. For many health to find a new one. You may

want to ask friends for a refer- ral. Another source of referrals is the J-FLAG Helpline, 978- 8988. They keep a list of gay- friendly healthcare providers. It may take some effort and a bit of courage on your part, but the potential benefits of an open and comfortable relation- ship with your doctor could be life saving.

Send your question to: [jamaicaoutpost@hotmail.com](mailto:jamaicaoutpost@hotmail.com)

*(Continued from page 1)*

not support either party. These results come from two separate anonymous polls, which did not take into account where in Ja- maica the participants reside or their gender. Interestingly enough, the results from each poll had the same ratio of 2:2:1. This means that for every five members of the LAG community here in Jamaica, two support the PNP, another two support the JLP and one supports nei- ther party nor any other party.

**LETTERS FROM OUR READERS**

When: Oct 15 2004  
From where: St. Ann

I would like to say thanks to this website for disseminating infor- mation to me and all other ho- mosexuals. This in indeed an informative website that keeps us in contact with what's hap- pening with our status in the world. On behalf of the LAG Community, THANK YOU JA- MAICA OUTPOST for every- thing, as I will continue to visit the website and support.

**Last Month's OutPoll Results**

Should all gay people boycott a company that sponsors anti-gay dancehall artists?  
**Agree - 67%** Disagree - 22%  
Not Sure - 11%

**Monthly OutPoll**

**Question:**  
Is it okay to "out" public figures?

Yes / No / Not Sure

**Vote online:**  
[www.jamaicaoutpost.com](http://www.jamaicaoutpost.com)  
Please click on: OutPoll

**Any comments?**  
Please send to [jamaicaoutpost@hotmail.com](mailto:jamaicaoutpost@hotmail.com)

Health & Wellness

**CREATING A BALANCED HEALTH REGIME** Part 3 of 3

In this final part of the series, we will explore a technique that supports all aspects of our health – physical, mental, emo- tional and spiritual. It has been called by many names over the years by advocates who come from every walk of life. Chris- tians call it "focused prayer", doctors call it "the relaxation effect", and students of Eastern spirituality call it meditation. Al- though there are different ap- proaches to this technique, they have one goal in common: at- taining a mental state during

which the normal mind-chatter of daily life is set aside. One such approach provides a visual focus, another an auditory focus, and a third a tactile focus. In the first instance, you can visualize a sa- cred image, a candle flame, or any object that is personally meaningful. This visualization can be done with the imagination, or by looking at the actual object. The auditory focus is similar. You can listen to (or hum/sing, or imagine) relaxing music, calming Gospel songs, meaningful words (like 'love') or names (like 'Lord'),

or simple tones or beats. The final strategy involves repetitive movement or tactile stimulation. Tapping your leg, walking, or other kinds of ritualised dancing can provide this. After some ex- perimentation, it's best to choose one and practice it regularly, daily if possible, until it becomes like second nature to you. While it may take some time to achieve this goal, the health benefits be- gin immediately and will only improve with practice.

International News

**GUYANA'S BATTLE TO ABOLISH ANTI-GAY DISCRIMINATION**

On January 4, 2001, a bill that was set to guarantee the Guy- anese homosexual community safety from discrimination based on their sexual orienta- tion passed the National As- sembly of Guyana with a 55 to 0 vote. The proposed bill, which was the result of many recom- mendations by Constitution Re- form Commission (CRC), was returned to the parliament by President Jadgeo for reconsid- eration. To date, the bill is yet to be approved by the President. This, according to reports, fol-

lows uproars from citizens who allegedly seek to maintain so- cial order on the premise of reli- gious doctrines. During Octo- ber, however, renowned Guy- anese human rights activist, Dr. Bertie Ramcharan, called upon the government to amend the Guyana Constitution to abolish discrimination based on sexual orientation. Dr. Ramcharan de- scribed this matter as a "vexing" issue of conscience that threatens the ideals of the United Nation. He further stressed the importance of in-

clusion within a society while highlighting his pride in the attempt by some of his coun- trymen to put an end to dis- crimination against members of the society based on sexual orientation. Under Sections 351, 352 and 353 of the Crimi- nal Law (Offences) Act, homo- sexual acts are punishable with sentences ranging from 2 years to life imprisonment. Section 353, equates anal intercourse (heterosexual or homosexual) with intercourse with animals.