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Annual Report

June 30, 2000

Human Rights

Human Rights Commission of Palm Springs, California

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The Mission Statement

The mission of the Human Rights Commission of Palm Springs is to promote improved human relations, civic peace, inter-group understanding and the full acceptance, respect and participation of all persons in all aspects of community life so that we will be equal in the eyes of each other.

Goals & Duties of the Commission As set forth by City Ordinance No. 1426:

- **Develop community education programs**
- **Investigate and mediate instances of discrimination**
- **Bring persons and groups together in common support of human rights issues**
- **Acquire fiscal and human resources to accomplish these goals**
- **Report regularly the status of inter-group relations in the City**
- **Generate semi-annual reports on Commission activities**
- **Address proactively current inter-group relations**
- **Provide conflict resolution services to residents of Palm Springs for complaints of discrimination**
- **Maintain data on practices, activities, hate crimes, and other human rights violations to eliminate prejudice and discrimination**

City of Diversity

Our Palm Springs community is known for its diverse and multi-cultural society, as much as it is known as a resort destination. The city's name evokes images of a sun-soaked vacation paradise. Tourists from all around the world are attracted to this area by a multitude of cultural activities, civic events, and conventions, as well as for our wonderful climate. Even in the summer, thousands of tourists will flock to the area for their "fun in the sun" adventures.

Surprisingly, this world famous area is a year-round home for more than 41,000 people of all ages, races, genders, religions, and sexual orientations. The diversity of our famous city is well known worldwide.

As people from different and functionally diverse groups take on the challenge of interacting with one another, cultural differences and values sometimes come into conflict. The challenge we have as individuals is to learn to collaborate across cultural lines and establish links that will help us communicate better outside the boundaries of our own individualism.

One of the main goals of the Human Rights Commission is to facilitate inter-group communications and understanding, and work openly to improve relations among the citizens of our community.

To quote Abraham Lincoln in his famous *Gettysburg Address*, "Our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

To believe this, is to believe in our inalienable right to be equal in the eyes of each other. To accomplish this, we need to work together to protect the rights of others, regardless of the color of our skin, our age, our sex, our religion, or our sexual orientation. The City of Palm Springs has taken the first step toward solidification of these goals, by creating the Human Rights Commission and beginning the process by which we can learn to accept and respect each other.

It has been the work of the commission to uphold and defend these ideals.

Year of Accomplishments

The Fiscal Year July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000 was a year of several major accomplishments.

Early in the year, documents regarding the Domestic Partnership Ordinance, the Human Rights Equal Benefits Ordinance, and the Declaration of Policy on Human Dignity were presented for distribution to the City Council for their review and approval.

On October 20, 1999 Resolution #19670, "Resolution Adopting a Policy for the Protection of Human Dignity and Prevention of Hate Crimes," was unanimously approved by the City Council.

On January 5, 2000, the City Council also gave their unanimous approval to Ordinance #1578 to establish a policy extending to unmarried domestic partners certain rights afforded married couples. The ordinance allows gay or heterosexual partners, older than 18, to register with the city, giving them rights to health care or jail visitations, and the right to sign city applications, permits, or licenses on their domestic partner's behalf.

On May 3, 2000 Resolution #19781, "Adopting a Policy for Addressing the Issues of Poverty and the Homeless," was unanimously approved by the City Council, culminating the efforts of the Human Rights Commission to address homeless issues in the City.

Along with the successful implementation of the new ordinance and resolutions, the Commission also established the creation of an annual Maurice Call Human Rights Award.

The thought of an annual awards program, to honor people in this community who work hard on behalf of human rights issues, had been discussed several times in the past years. After the passing of Commissioner Call, who worked diligently on a variety of human rights issues in our community, it was voted to honor his memory by naming a community service award after him.

The first awards ceremony will be held in December, on or near Human Rights Day. Any member of the community who has been instrumental in facilitating improvements in the area of equality and human rights, or who has distinguished him or herself as a leader in the area of human rights, can be nominated for this award. A committee will be formed to judge the entries, and the public is encouraged to participate. The award is open to all residents of the City of Palm Springs. Nomination forms will be available at City Hall by September 2000.

ORDINANCE NO. 1578

The Domestic Partnership Ordinance

(Text of document follows)

ORDINANCE NO. 1578

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING CHAPTER 2.45 OF THE PALM SPRINGS MUNICIPAL CODE TO ESTABLISH A POLICY EXTENDING TO UNMARRIED DOMESTIC PARTNERS CERTAIN RIGHTS AFFORDED MARRIED COUPLES.

WHEREAS, the City of Palm Springs, in adopting a Human Rights Commission ordinance on October 21, 1992, to deal with discrimination against protected groups, including discrimination based on marital status, and in establishing a Human Rights Commission to implement the ordinance, has been a leader in the country in protecting human rights; and

WHEREAS, on October 20, 1999, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 19670 encouraging vigorous enforcement of state law against hate crimes, and embraced additional education and training concerning hate crimes; and

WHEREAS, other California cities, including Alameda, Berkeley, Cathedral City, Laguna Beach, Oakland, Petaluma, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz and West Hollywood have officially recognized that a domestic partnership between two consenting adults is a legitimate form of a family unit; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Palm Springs recognizes that domestic partners who live in an intimate and committed family relationship are often denied public and private sector benefits because no mechanism has been established for registering their relationship; and

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Palm Springs recognizes that there are many rights and privileges afforded to married couples, which are not afforded to unmarried domestic partners; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Palm Springs acknowledges that there are certain legal obstacles to extending to unmarried domestic partners all of the rights and privileges afforded to married couples; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Palm Springs, however, desires to provide certain rights and benefits afforded to married couples, which can legally be extended to unmarried couples or domestic partners, who reside in the City of Palm Springs and who desire to register their domestic partnership with the City of Palm Springs; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Palm Springs desires to provide domestic partners the opportunity to make a documented public commitment to one another and to receive some official recognition of validity of their commitment to one another from a public agency; and

WHEREAS, the City Council intends, through meet and confer negotiations, to offer the same employee benefits to domestic partners as to marital partners; and

WHEREAS, the City Council intends that this Ordinance be interpreted to be consistent with the Domestic Partnership Act of 1999 (Family Code Section 297, et seq.).

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS HEREBY ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Section 2.45.050 shall be added to Chapter 2.45 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code, which Section 2.45.050 shall be read as follows:

> "2.34.005 Public Policy. It is hereby declared as the public policy of the City of Palm Springs that it is necessary to protect and safeguard the right and opportunity of all persons to be free from all forms of arbitrary discrimination as that term is defined herein."

Section 2. Section 2.45.010 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code is hereby amended as to Subsection (3), which shall replace that Subsection bearing the same number and shall read as follows:

> "2.34.010 Definitions. For the purpose of this chapter:
>
> ...
>
> (3) "Discrimination" means the treatment of or distinction against a person based on group, class or category to which that person belongs rather than on individual merit and contrary to federal, state or local law. Discrimination can include discrimination because of race, religion, color, ancestry, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, medical condition, marital status, parental status, source of income, HIV status, or any other arbitrary factor."

Section 3. Section 2.45.010 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code is hereby amended by adding the following new subsections (4) and (5), before the current subsection (4), and renumbering each existing subsection (4) through (8) thereafter to (6) through (10), respectively, to reflect the addition of the new subsections (4) and (5), with the remaining provisions of Section 2.45.010 being unchanged and in full force and effect:

> "2.45.010 Definitions. For the purpose of this chapter:
>
> ...
>
> (4) "Domestic Partnership" means two adults who have chosen to share one another's lives in an intimate and committed relationship of mutual caring and refers to those persons who have registered as domestic partners pursuant to valid and current Statement of Domestic Partnership on file with

the City of Palm Springs under this Chapter 2.45 and where all of the following requirements are met:

(a) The partnership is between no more than two persons, each of whom is eighteen (18) years old or older;

(b) The persons are not related by blood in a way which would prevent them from being married to each other in the State of California;

(c) The persons are not married or a member of another domestic partnership;

(d) The persons have agreed to be jointly responsible for their common care, welfare, and basic living expenses in that each partner has agreed to provide for the other partner's basic living expenses if the partner is unable to provide for herself or himself;

(e) Each of the persons is competent to enter into a contract or consent to the domestic partnership;

(f) Both persons' domicile are in the City of Palm Springs and they share a common residence, but this does not require that the legal right to possess the residence be in both names;

(g) Neither person has officially declared to the City of Palm Springs that he or she has a different domestic partner nor has previously made and concurrently maintained such declaration to any other jurisdiction; provided that any such prior declaration has been terminated, and, further provided that this shall bar any such concurrent declaration filed with the Secretary of State of California if such declaration is for the same partner at the Palm Springs domicile;

(h) The persons have been cohabitating for a period of at least six (6) moths; and

(i) The persons will complete, sign under penalty of perjury and personally submit to the City Clerk a statement of domestic partnership in the form prescribed under this Chapter 2.45.

(5) "Domicile" shall mean the one location the respective person considers to be his or her most settled and permanent location, the place where he or she intends to remain and to which, whenever he or she is absent, to which he or she has the intention of returning."

Section 4. Section 2.45 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code is hereby amended by adding subsections 2.45.070 through 2.45.180 to read as follows, with the remaining provisions of Section 2.45 being unchanged and to remain in full force and effect:

"2.45.070 Statement of Domestic Partnership.

(a) Domestic partners, who meet the qualifications of a Domestic Partnership under this Chapter may make an official record of their Domestic Partnership by completing, signing and submitting in person to the City Clerk, on the form prescribed by the City Clerk, a 'Statement of Domestic Partnership' stating that they meet the requirements of this chapter.

(b) The Statement shall establish the location of domicile and be signed by both partners under penalty of perjury, with both signatures being notarized.

(c) Each domestic partner who submits a Statement of Domestic Partnership with the City Clerk agrees to notify the City of Palm Springs of any change in the status of their domestic partnership.

(d) A Statement of Domestic Partnership may be amended to reflect changes, such as a change in address of the partners, by filing in person a new Statement of Domestic Partnership.

(e) No person who has a Statement of Domestic Partnership on file with the City Clerk may file another Statement of Domestic Partnership until a Statement of Termination of Domestic Partnership is filed with the City Clerk in accordance with this Chapter.

(f) No Statement of Domestic Partnership shall be deemed effective unless submitted to the City Clerk in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter.

2.45.080 Termination of Domestic Partnership.

(a) A domestic partnership is terminated when one of the following occurs: (1) one partner dies or is married, (2) the partners no longer have a common residence, or (3) one partner gives the other written notice by certified mail of termination. Upon the occurrence of such event, at least one former partner shall file with the City a Statement of Termination of Domestic Partnership.

(b) Any member of a domestic partnership may terminate the domestic partnership by jointly or unilaterally completing, signing under penalty of perjury and submitting in person to the City Clerk a Statement of Termination of Domestic Partnership in the form prescribed by the City Clerk.

(c) A domestic partnership shall be deemed terminated thirty (30) days after the filing of the Statement of Termination of Domestic Partnership and, if applicable, proof that the Statement of Termination was either mailed to, served on or personally delivered to the former partner, when such former partner did not appear personally in the City to file the Statement of Termination of Domestic Partnership.

(d) No termination of Domestic Partnership shall be deemed effective unless submitted to the City Clerk in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter.

2.45.090 Fees.

(a) No Statement of Domestic Partnership or Statement of Termination of Domestic Partnership shall be accepted by the City Clerk unless accompanied by payment of the filing fee in an amount which may be established from time to time by resolution of the City Council.

(b) Payment of filing fees shall entitle the person filing the subject statement to have two (2) copies of said statement certified by the City Clerk.

(c) The cost of certification of additional copies of a statement shall be an amount per copy as established by resolution of the City Council.

2.45.100 Maintenance of Records; Notary

The City Clerk shall maintain adequate records of all Statements of Domestic Partnership and all Statements of Termination of Domestic Partnership along with a Register of Domestic Partnerships. No Statement of Domestic Partnership or Termination shall be valid and binding without the signature and seal of acknowledgment by a notary public.

2.45.110 Legal Effect.

(a) Registration as a domestic partner under this chapter shall not be evidence of, or establish, any rights existing under law other than those expressly provided hereunder.

(b) The filing of a Statement of Domestic Partnership hereunder shall not change the character of property, real or personal, or interest in real or personal property owned by either domestic partner or both of them, and the formation of a domestic partnership shall not, in and of itself, create any interest in or rights to, any property, real or personal, owned by the partner in the other partner, including but not limited to, any rights similar to community property rights or "palimony" rights under common law.

(c) The formation of a domestic partnership hereunder shall not change the individual income or estate tax liability of each partner prior to and during the partnership, unless otherwise provided under another state or federal law or regulation.

(d) This chapter is not intended to make the California Uniform Partnership Act (California Corporations Code Section 15001, et seq.) applicable to domestic partnerships.

(e) At the election of the partners, they may enter into a durable power of attorney for any authorized purposes, including but not limited to, health care or the disposition of personal effects at the time of death, provided that the statement complies with the requirements of the Uniform Durable Power of Attorney Act (Article 3, commencing with Section 2475, of Division 3, Part 4, Title 9 of the California Civil Code).

2.45.120 Health Care Facility Visitations.

All health care and psychiatric care facilities located in Palm Springs, including but not limited to hospitals, convalescent facilities or other long-term care facilities, shall allow a domestic partner of a patient to visit the patient unless the applicable rules of the facility prohibit all visitors.

2.45.130 Jail Visitation Rights.

A domestic partner of an inmate in the City of Palm Springs jail shall be allowed to visit the inmate unless (1) the applicable rules prohibit all visitors, or (2) the Police Department decides that a particular visitor is a threat to the security of the jail.

2.45.140 City Applications, Licenses and Permits.

Persons registered with the City of Palm Springs as domestic partners are entitled to file, on behalf of their domestic partner, any applications, approvals, licenses or permits that the City allows to be filed for any person by that person's spouse. This includes, but is not limited to, all business applications, licenses and permits; all planning, building and land use applications, licenses and permits; all health, safety and regulatory applications, licenses and permits; and all other municipal applications, licenses, and permits, whatsoever.

2.45.150 Civil Actions.

Any person or entity defrauded by a false representation in a Statement of Domestic Partnership, an amendment to such Statement of a Statement of Termination of Domestic Partnership may bring a civil action against either or both partners pursuant to the laws of the State of California to recover his, her or its actual losses, damages or injuries.

2.45.160 Reciprocity.

The provisions of and the rights and benefits accorded by this Chapter 2.45 shall be applicable to person registered as domestic partners in any other jurisdiction with a comparable domestic partnership enactment."

Section 5.SEVERABILITY.

The City Council declares that, should any provision, section, paragraph, sentence or word of the ordinance be rendered or declared invalid by any final court action in a court of competent jurisdiction by reason of any preemptive legislation, the remaining provisions, sections, paragraphs, sentences or words of this ordinance as hereby adopted shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 6. STATE LAW.

This Ordinance is intended to be and shall be interpreted to the greatest extent possible so as to be consistent with applicable State laws.

Section 7. REPEAL OF CONFLICTING PROVISIONS.

All provisions of the Palm Springs Municipal Code, as heretofore adopted by the City of Palm Springs that are in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 8. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This ordinance shall take effect thirty (30) days following passage by the City Council and shall supersede any conflicting provision of any City of Palm Springs ordinance.

Section 9. CERTIFICATION.

The City Clerk shall certify to the passage of this ordinance and shall cause the same to be published according to law.

ADOPTED this 5th day of January, 2000

AYES: Members Hodges, Jones, Oden, Reller-Spurgin, Mayor Kleindienst
NOES: None
ABSENT: None

ATTEST:

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA

By /s/ Patricia A. Saunders
City Clerk

/s/ William G. Kleindienst
Mayor

REVIEWED & APPROVED AS TO FORM:

City Attorney

RESOLUTION NO. 19670

Policy on Human Dignity & Prevention of Hate Crimes

(Text of document follows)

RESOLUTION NO. 19670

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS ADOPTING A POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN DIGNITY AND PREVENTION OF HATE CRIMES.

WHEREAS, the City Council ("City Council") of the City of Palm Springs ("City") acknowledges that its residents are diverse in their ethnicity, nationality, lifestyles and religious beliefs, which diversity contributes to the City's rich and varied cultured heritage;

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that each of its residents has a right to be treated with courtesy and respect, regardless of the resident's background;

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that there is a need to protect and safeguard the rights and opportunities of all persons to be free from all forms of arbitrary discrimination and hate;

WHEREAS, the City Council considers acts of hate and discrimination committed against its residents an act against the entire community;

WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to establish a policy to protect its residents against any and all hate crimes within its jurisdiction, which hate crimes include any criminal act or attempted criminal act against another which is motivated by the victim's race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender, AIDS/HIV status, physical challenges, religion or religious practices; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to commit resources of the City to investigate and apprehend any and all persons who participate in hate crimes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Palm Springs as follows:

Section 1. Recitals. The above recitals are all true and correct.

Section 2. Public Policy The City finds that the establishment of a policy to protect its residents from hate crimes is in the public interest and necessary to safeguard the rights and opportunities of all persons to be free from all forms of arbitrary discrimination and hate.

Section 3. Policy Against Hate Crimes.

The City wishes to adopt the following zero tolerance policy to protect its residents against hate crimes.

1. Definition. "Hate Crimes" shall have the same meaning as California Penal Code Section 422.6 and shall mean the use of force or threat of force to willfully injure, intimidate, interfere with, oppress, or threaten any other person in the free exercise or the United States because of the other person's race, color,

religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, gender, or sexual orientation, or because of the perception that a person has one or more of those characteristics.

2. City Action.
   a. The City resolves to vigorously pursue, through means reasonably available to the City and the City's Police Department, a course of investigation, apprehension of any and all persons who participate in hate crimes.
   b. The City, through its City Manager or his or her designee, shall recommend to the Riverside County District Attorney's Office the prosecution, conviction and incarceration of any and all persons who participate in hate crimes.
   c. The City shall take appropriate steps to train all law enforcement personnel as to the investigation of hate crimes and apprehension of all persons who perpetrate or participate in hate crimes.

3. Education. The City resolves to support the efforts of the Human Rights Commission of Palm Springs to educate its residents regarding the nature of hate crimes, efforts to combat hate crimes, and developing a sensitivity toward peoples' race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender, AIDS/HIV status, physical challenges, religion or religious practices.

Section 4. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage and adoption of this Resolution and enter it into the book of original resolutions.

ADOPTED this 20th day of October, 1999.

AYES: Members Barnes, Hodges, Reller-Spurgin and Mayor Kleindienst
NOES: None
ABSENT: Member Oden

ATTEST:

By /s/ Patricia A. Saunders
City Clerk

/s/ Dallas Flicek
City Manager

REVIEWED & APPROVED AS TO FORM:

/s/ David Alshire
City Attorney

RESOLUTION NO. 19781

Policy on Issues of Poverty & Homeless

(Text of document follows)

RESOLUTION No. 19781

OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING A POLICY FOR ADDRESSING THE ISSUES OF POVERTY AND HOMELESS.

WHEREAS, the City Council ("City Council") of the City of Palm Springs ("City") acknowledges that the City and the Coachella Valley are similar to communities throughout the country with a growing class of disenfranchised citizens who live in poverty and are homeless; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that a dramatic change in our economy, with a greater emphasis on education and technical skills, has exacerbated the problem; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that an accelerated growth in the use of legal and illegal drugs resulting in chemical addiction has increased the complexity of the problem; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that a dramatic change in the State of California's program for the treatment of mental illness in the early 1970's put a large number of people on the street; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that the increased number of homeless individuals has become dependent upon the generosity of strangers and charitable organizations; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes and believes that each of its residents has a right to be treated with courtesy and respect, regardless of the resident's wealth or living status; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that a group of concerned citizens and organizations, including Catholic Charities, Well in the Desert, West Valley Interfaith Association, and MainStreet Business Association, as well as representatives from County Supervisor Roy Wilson's office, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments, the Riverside Department of Mental Health, the Riverside County Department of Public Social Services, the Palm Springs City Council, the Palm Springs Police Department, the Palm Springs Planning Department, and the Palm Springs Human Rights Commission, came together to create the Palm Springs Homeless Task Force ("Homeless Task Force") in 1999; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to acknowledge the work of the Homeless Task Force and establish a policy in support of the Homeless Task Force's Mission Statement and Goals contained in its report entitled, "Lost in Paradise or Homeless in Palm Springs."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Palm Springs as follows:

Section 1. Recitals. The above recitals are true and correct.

Section 2. Public Policy. The City finds that the establishment of a policy addressing issues of poverty and the homeless is in the public interest and necessary to answer the concerns of the downtown business community regarding the general behavior of the homeless.

Section 3. Policy Promoting Community Services to the Poor and Homeless. The City wishes to establish such public policy by adopting the "Homeless Task Force Goals" to increase public tolerance and to promote an opportunity for a decent living environment for all, as follows:

1. Definition. "Homeless Task Force Goals" shall be substantially the same as those above adopted by the Palm Springs Homeless Task Force, as follows:

    a. Gather representatives from groups that have often found themselves on different sides of the Homeless issue and collaborate on solutions.

    b. Educate local businesses, residents, and tourists on appropriate means of assisting the homeless and needy.

    c. Support and promote actions to lease, buy or build a facility to offer comprehensive services that meet the immediate as well as long term needs for our homeless population, so that many may move from destructive to productive roles in our community.

    d. Provide the avenue for local businesses and residents to make a difference through advocacy, volunteering, employment opportunities, and contributions.

2. City Action:

    a. The City resolves to vigorously pursue, through means reasonably available to the City and its Departments, a course of action to promote the above goals of the Homeless Task Force.

    b. The City shall take appropriate steps to train all City personnel relative to the suitable treatment of all residents, regardless of wealth or living status.

3. Education:

    a. The City supports the education of its citizens on issues regarding poverty and the homeless.

Section 4. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage and adoption of this Resolution and enter it into the book of original Resolutions.

ADOPTED this 3rd day of May, 2000.

AYES: Members Jones, Hodges, Oden, Reller-Spurgin and Mayor Kleindienst
NOES: None
ABSENT: None

ATTEST: THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA

By /s/ Patricia A. Saunders
City Clerk

/s/ Dallas Flicek
City Manager

REVIEWED AND APPROVED AS TO FORM:

/s/ David Alshire
City Attorney

Community Education Forums

During the last fiscal year the Human Rights Commission hosted several interesting and educational forums to help make the public aware of a variety of different human rights issues in our community.

A very important part of the Human Rights Commission's duties, and one we take very seriously, is to develop community education programs. At the beginning of the year we decided what issues we wanted to address, and each one of our commissioners organized a forum. The following is a brief outline of the forums that were presented. Every forum was video taped by our local public television station, Channel 17, and a copy of the tape can be borrowed from the Palm Springs Public Library, or purchased directly from Channel 17.

October 28, 1999 - Elder Abuse

Forum panel members consisted of: Kathy Roney and Margo Hamilton, from the Riverside County CARE (Curtailing Abuses Related to the Elderly) team; Detective Tony Greer, a Sheriff's detective in charge of investigating cases of Elder Abuse; Ellen McGuire, from Adult Protective Services; and James Schell, Sr., who is on the advisory council for the Riverside County Office on Aging.

Their discussions included how to watch out for signs of Elder Abuse; ways to help prevent abuse; who to contact when abuse is suspected; and what seniors can do to protect themselves from fraud. Both physical, emotional, and financial abuses were explained, as well as descriptions of popular scams that have been perpetrated against Seniors recently.

December 9, 1999 - Human Rights Day Celebration

Probably the most powerful and moving forum the Human Rights Commission has ever held, speakers from a wide variety of backgrounds came to speak about their personal histories with discrimination.

Forum panel members consisted of: Lilli Joseph, James Jessie, Cherry Ishimatsu, Trino Del Toro, Mr. & Mrs. Marchand, and Daun De Vore.

Lilli Joseph, a Jewish woman, survived three concentration camps. Her personal story of survival from one of the worst human rights violations of all times was poignant and moving, as we listened to what she went through during that time.

James Jessie, longtime Palm Springs resident and director of the Highland Desert Gateway Unity Center, told of the pain he still feels about the situation known as "Section 14" where predominantly poor, African-American families were forced to vacate their leased homes to make way for commercial development. Their homes were "red-tagged" and when they came home they found their belongings outside their homes.

Cherry Ishimatsu, a Japanese American born in the United States, lost her home and property at the start of World War II and was placed in an internment camp in Arkansas. All she was allowed to take with her was what she could carry. After the war the government gave her $100 to relocate.

Trino Del Toro, a Hispanic-American, is a decorated soldier who fought in Vietnam. He remembers what discrimination was like as a child in Texas, where he grew up. "Our responsibility was to move aside on the sidewalk when white people came down it." He moved to California in 1965 to escape the racism, but still carries the scars of racial discrimination with him today.

Mr. & Mrs. Marchand are the parents of a gay man. They shared their story of what discrimination was like for them, and recommendations they have for other parents who face the same discrimination issues that they did.

Daun De Vore is a professional businesswoman who has traveled to many foreign countries during her career. She spoke of the problems she faced with discrimination that she faced simply because she was a woman. She reminded us that many foreign countries still treat women as second class citizens.

February 24, 2000 – Understanding Mental Health Issues

Forum panel members included: Dr. Milton Edelman, MD; Maxine Stallop, Alliance for the Mentally Ill; Commander Gary Jeandron, Palm Springs Police Department; Cathy Penny, Riverside County Department of Mental Health; and John Hancock, Desert Star Foundation.

The open discussion was designed to increase public awareness of what can and is being done to enable people living with mental challenges to live active and productive lives. In addressing mental health issues, the Commission hopes to be able to help those individuals in the community that need medical attention, but don't know where to go, or how to get help. As more information is available to us about mental health problems, these type of educational forums can help to erase the perception of discrimination against the mentally ill that has been so prevalent in the recent past.

March 23, 2000 – Help for the Homeless

Forum panel members included: Julie Bornstein, Director, State of California Department of Housing & Community Development; Andrew Green, Chair, Palm Springs Homeless Task Force; Sergeant Dennis Graham, Palm Springs Police Department; Cathy Welborn, Manager, Homeless Programs for Riverside County; and Al Robinson, County of Riverside Department of Mental Health.

Panel members described the homeless situation in Palm Springs, and what services are currently available for the homeless. We were made aware of different problems and needs that homeless men and women face, and the problem they have when they have children with them. Many homeless persons have mental problems that can be dealt with on a medical basis. Presently there are too few places in the Coachella Valley where the homeless can go for a shower, a hot meal, or shelter. The Homeless Task Force is looking into providing a drop in center for the homeless.

April 27, 2000 – Care Givers

Forum panel members included: Marcia Nacinovich, Eisenhower Medical Center Hospice Program; Kay Green, Desert Regional Medical Center, Home Health Care; Richard See, Medical and Mental Health Services, Desert AIDS Project; Ilona Kopacz, Ilona's Healing Center; Sylvia Crawford, Riverside County Health Department; Gordon West, Chaplain, Eisenhower Memorial Hospital; and Dr J. Evosevich, Marriage and Family Counselor.

This forum centered on informing the public about the problems of long term care and terminal illnesses and explaining services that are available in our community. Hospice care can be provided once a doctor has determined the patient has only a short time to live, and can be a very helpful tool for the family of a terminally ill relative.

May 25, 2000 – Domestic Abuse

Forum panel members included: Detective Karen Borders, Palm Springs Police Department; Lynn Moriarty, Shelter From the Storm; and Commander Gary Jeandron, Palm Springs Police Department.

This was a very educational forum that promoted a public dialogue on domestic abuse issues facing individuals, families, and the community. Utilizing the expertise of the Police

Department as well as the director of the local battered women's shelter, the Commission focused on providing information that will promote a greater understanding of the issues and cycles of abuse that are involved. This is the second time Lynn Moriarty has spoken about Domestic Abuse for the Commission this year. After speaking at one of our regular meetings earlier in the year, we invited her back to participate in this more in depth forum on the subject of Domestic Abuse.

June 22, 2000 – Update on Hate Crimes

Forum panel members included: Rey del Rio, California Department of Justice; David Greenberg, Riverside County Assistant District Attorney; and Commander Joe Rodriguez, Palm Springs Police Department.

A hate crime is a criminal offense committed against persons, property or society that is motivated, in whole or in part, by an offender's bias against an individual's or a group's perceived race, religion, ethnic/national origin, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation. Hate incidents are those actions by an individual or group that, while motivated by bias, do not rise to the level of a criminal offense.

Although the Department of Justice's 1999 Annual Report on Hate Crime in California was not ready at the time of the forum, the 1998 Annual Report was discussed and reviewed extensively.

In 1998 the type of hate crimes statewide involved 31.2% property crimes and 68.8% violent crimes. In Riverside County those numbers are 28.6% and 71.4% respectfully. Another interesting statistic involves the time of day the crime occurred in 1998. In Riverside County 19.1% of hate crimes are committed from 6:01 AM to Noon; 36.2% from 12:01 to 6 PM; 29.8% from 6:01 PM to Midnight; and 14.9% form 12:01 to 6 AM.

Discrimination Complaint Program

Residents of the City of Palm Springs can utilize the Discrimination Complaint Program if they feel they have been the victims of discrimination, when they have no other legal recourse to resolve their problem.

A Complaint of Discrimination can be filed with the City and will be followed up by the Mediation Committee. If both parties agree to mediation, the Commission can offer our services to help them resolve their problem through the mediation process.

Once the complaint form has been filed, it is forwarded to the Commissioner in charge. After reviewing the complaint, the Commissioner will contact the complainant for further information, and if necessary contact the offending party to further investigate the situation. If the problem cannot be solved through ordinary channels, a mediation session can be scheduled, if both parties agree, to take place in a neutral location, most likely a conference room at the City Hall.

The goal of the mediation process is to work out an agreement between the two disputants that will be acceptable to both. This is done through discussions with the mediator. Each individual will be given the opportunity to state their position to the mediator privately. The mediator's job is to be impartial and not offer a solution, merely allow the disputants the opportunity to solve the problem themselves.

Discrimination Cases Pending and Resolved

During 1999/2000 the Commission received ten complaints that have been referred to our Mediation Committee. Some of the cases are still open and pending resolution due to the fact that they have been received very recently.

The following is a list of cases and their status:

Case # 55 – David Sizemore – Resolved
Case # 56 – Carlos Castillo – Resolved
Case # 57 – Rodger Garrett – Pending
Case # 57a – Neeraja Lockart – Pending
Case # 57b – Paula Taylor – Pending
Case # 57c – Rosemary Morris – Pending
Case # 57d – William Mark & Penny Waters - Pending
Case # 57e – Michelle Paladine - Pending
Case # 58 – Dean Suzuki – Pending

News Paper Articles About & Letters to the Commission

- **July 26, 1999** – Letter from Michele A. Smollar regarding the Homeless
- **August 17, 1999** - "Workshop uses sample skits to give insight into the mediation process"
- **September 7, 1999** – Letter from Elizabeth Baker regarding Domestic Partnership Ordinance
- **October 18, 1999** - "Speakers will discuss elder abuse at seminar"
- **October 21, 1999** - "Palm Springs council adopts hate-crimes policy"
- **November 16, 1999** – Letter from Louis Calabro regarding CAHRO meeting
- **November 25, 1999** - "Human Rights Commission sets up collection box"
- **December 10, 1999** - "Human rights event in valley brings out stories of prejudice"
- **December 16, 1999** - "Council Oks ordinance on domestic partnership"
- **January 5, 2000** – Letter from David Aleshire, City Attorney regarding Domestic Partnership Ordinance
- **February 9, 2000** – "Courageous AIDS activist Call dies" (reprint of article and obituary)
- **February 24, 2000** – Letter from Norma Christmas regarding the Homeless
- **March 16, 2000** – Letter from Charles Boyd regarding Commissioner Hill comments on the 1010 KNWZ news radio program
- **March 17, 2000** - "New task force to discuss billboard"
- **March 21, 2000** – Letter from Patrick Stewart regarding the Project USA billboard
- **March 21, 2000** – Letter from Jeanne Reller-Spurgin, Mayor Pro Tem, regarding the Census 2000 program held by the Human Rights Commission
- **March 24, 2000** – Letter from Yeh Ling-Ling, Diversity Alliance for a Sustainable America, regarding immigration issues
- **May 17, 2000** – Letter from Diane Morgan, City of Palm Springs Arts Administrator, regarding participation by Commissioner Kauffman on the City Entryway Signage project.
- **May 25, 2000** - "Human-rights group plans forum today to spotlight services"

(Copies of the letters and newspaper articles follow)

MICHELE A. SMOLLAR
560 South Beverly Drive
Palm Springs, California 92264
Phone: (760) 320-6715
Fax: (760) 320-8966
E-mail: MASGRANT@AOL.COM

July 26, 1999

Dean-Stephen Kauffman, Chair
City of Palm Springs Human Rights Commission
Palm Springs City Hall
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Dear Mr. Kauffman,

As a relatively new resident of Palm Springs I was most interested to watch the recently televised meeting of the Human Rights Commission (July 22, 1999) and learn that the City was studying the problems of the homeless here and how to best meet their needs.

As you can see from my resume, attached hereto, I have a great deal of experience in working with this target population. Specifically, I spent some thirteen years as director of two agencies serving the homeless in Los Angeles--one in Skidrow and one in West L.A. I have particular expertise with start-up programs and grantwriting to garner financial support from both the public and private sectors.

I am currently self-employed as a grantwriting consultant. My experience with operating homeless-service programs runs the gamut from day center activities to emergency shelter to transitional and permanent housing development, along with job training and placement.

At your convenience I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how I might lend my skills and experience to your efforts on behalf of the homeless in Palm Springs. Please feel free to contact me at the address and/or telephone number shown above.

I look forward to hearing from you soon and to working together to help those in need in our community.

Sincerely,

Michele A. Smollar

Michele A. Smollar

Communities Page Editor Debora Britz
Telephone 341-6211 Fax 341-6201
Email dbritz@palmspri.gannett.com

Communities
NEWS FROM YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Workshop uses sample skits to give insight into the mediation process

By Penny Litz
Special to the Desert Sun

FOCUS: PALM SPRINGS

PALM SPRINGS — Imagine that you have just purchased a bolt of fabric found while on vacation in Europe. It's one-of-a-kind and just what you've spent months looking for.

You have a sofa at home that has been in your family for years, and your plans are to upholster it with the new fabric. You visit a furniture upholstery shop, arrive at an agreement with the owner, give him a deposit and drop off the sofa and fabric.

Three weeks later, you return to the shop to pick up your sofa. When you see it, however, your excitement turns to surprise, your lower jaw hangs open, and your eyes are the size of saucers.

"What have you done to my sofa?" you ask. "You've ruined my fabric!"

"What are you talking about?" the shop owner says.

An argument ensues and you leave yelling, "See you in court!"

This scenario was the subject of a public-education forum offered by the Riverside County Dispute Resolution Center in Palm Springs City Council Chambers in the form of a skit. The players were volunteer mediators from the center.

Mediation, an alternative to small-claims court, is relatively new in the Coachella Valley, Sylvia Zelnys, DRC volunteer mediator said.

Most people are unaware of the services, she said.

The end goal of mediation is for both parties to leave the table with a "win-win" solution.

"As the dockets get bigger and bigger, this form of mediation helps reduce cases," Zelnys said. "The services are free; there are no income limitations. However, both parties must agree to the mediation and to the outcome."

Zelnys estimates that mediation has a 50 percent success rate.

The handful of attendees at the workshop also saw the scenario from the shop owner's perspective:

A new customer arrives at your shop with her own fabric and an antique couch, eager to have quality work done at the cheapest possible price. You perceive her to be "a little difficult" from your first meeting.

You know that you do quality work, so you are not worried. As you tackle the project, the fabric is hard to work with, and the work takes longer than expected.

When the customer arrives to pick up her sofa, she, in your opinion, "flips out."

Showing the interchange between the customer and shop owner gave attendees an idea of how mediation works.

In this situation, the shop owner agreed to sell the customer new fabric at his cost, and the customer agreed to take the new fabric and old couch to another upholstery shop. The customer lost money on the original purchase of the fabric; the shop owner lost money trying to please the customer.

But the shop owner didn't have to waste any more time with a customer he couldn't please, and the customer left with new fabric and her couch.

"I could tell how hard it was for the mediator; it was very challenging to come up with a solution to satisfy both parties," said Debbie Logan of Palm Springs, who attended the workshop. "They did a good job playing the roles."

PENNY LITZ, SPECIAL TO THE DESERT SUN

Avoiding court: Dispute Resolution Center volunteer mediators Brian Tomsney (from left), Stan Greene and Sylvia Zelnys illustrate the conflict-resolution process through a skit at a Palm Springs workshop.

ELIZABETH BAKER

ATTORNEY AT LAW

Called 9/16/99

September 7, 1999

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
3200 EAST TAHQUITZ CANYON WAY
PALM SPRINGS CA 92262

I thought you would find it interesting that The Gas Company, now Sempra, extends benefits to domestic partners, but only if they are registered in the City in which they live.

I have a client who would like to register his domestic partner so that the partner can get health insurance, but cannot do it because we do not have a registry.

Sincerely yours,

Elizabeth Baker

cc. File
Enclosures: None

1321 East Adobe Way • Palm Springs California 92262-2307 • (760) 320-3556 \ FAX (760) 325-9425

Speakers will discuss elder abuse at seminar

PALM SPRINGS — The Palm Springs Commission will be presenting "Elder Abuse Is a Crime" from 6-8 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 28, at the Palm Springs City Hall Council Chambers.

Presenters will include representatives from C.A.R.E., Curtailing Abuses Related to the Elderly, the Riverside County Office on Aging, and the Hemet Sheriff's Department. Information: 323-3586

Have Information for Across the Valley? Call The Desert Sun City Desk at 778-4618; fax, 778-4654.

Thursday
October 21, 1999
50¢

Good Morning!
TODAY'S VALLEY HIGH, LOW
95° 65°
Warm and wonderful
Complete forecast, A12

Palm Springs council adopts hate-crimes policy

By Jennifer Liebrum
THE DESERT SUN

PALM SPRINGS — Rev. Patrick Lee O'Brien watched Wednesday night's council meeting with a heavy but hopeful heart.

The council was being asked to adopt a policy against hate crimes that would bring with it training of police officers in how to identify and properly handle such crimes.

O'Brien said his partner was beaten July 23 by a man who hated gays, but what was worse, was that that man went free because the police failed to recognize the gravity of the crime.

"Palm Springs doesn't know how to handle a hate crime," he said before the council voted unanimously to endorse the policy. "Please, for the people, straight and gay, let's get hate crime under control."

Dean-Stephen Kaufman, chairman of the city's Human Rights Commission, which worked with the city's attorney, David Aleshire, to draft the policy said, "This does address it. It says zero tolerance for hate crimes and calls for training for police.

"I hope you will put your attention to this so that these things will be addressed."

Under state law, a hate crime is a use of or threat of force to cause injury, intimidate, interfere with, oppress or threaten any person for their race, color, or religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, gender or sexual orientation, or because of a perception that a person had one or more of those characteristics.

Commissioner Goldman Jacobs said the policy "sends a resounding message that hate crimes will not be tolerated here."

With that, the council voted unanimously for the policy's adoption. Ron Oden was absent.

No plan for training was provided, but it did not stop the enthusiasm of the supporters.

"Thank goodness, I am so glad," O'Brien said as he and Kaufman shook hands. "We just couldn't have things continue the way they are."

Kaufman said O'Brien's partner's case was heard by the commission, which referred it on to the American Civil Liberties Union.

European/American Issues Forum
CW Kuhn, Secretary--CW Johns, Treasurer--FP Williams, Sgt. at Arms
Louis Calabro, President------Clarice Gault, Vice-President

November 16, 1999

Dean-Stephen Kauffman, Chair
Human Rights Commission of Palm Springs
2560 North Hermosa Drive
Palm Springs, Ca. 92262-2323

Dear Chairman Kauffman,

Thought I would drop you a line about the CAHRO meeting in Los Angeles on November 4th.

Thank you very much for standing up. You were the only person at that meeting who had the courage to stand up for what was right. It is difficult to comprehend the California Association of Human Relations Organization rejecting Resolutions that were called attention to European Americans as victims of bigotry and hatred.

They are not reluctant, and properly so, to pass resolutions and publish articles in the Newsletter wherein other racial/ethnic groups are victims of racial animus.

Quite frankly we do not know what to do at this point. This episode, coupled with other experiences we have had with the San Francisco Human Rights Commission and government agencies leave us very troubled and concerned about where America is headed.

For, if the Human Rights Commissions are hostile to one group while literally helping to form coalitions of other racial/ethnic groups that no doubt are hostile to European Americans we are in very deep trouble. Among other issues, how could a California Administrative Law Judge become intimate with a group forming coalitions that are limited to some racial/ethnic groups. What does this all mean?

Sincerely,

Louis Calabro

Louis Calabro

Thanks again

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(650) 952-8489 Fax (650) 869-7215 eaif@aol.com www.eaif/org

Communities Page Editor Darrell Smith
Telephone 778-4619 **Fax** 778-4654
E-mail dvsmith@palmspri.gannett.com

Human Rights Commission sets up collection box

PALM SPRINGS — The Human Rights Commission of Palm Springs has set up a collection box for community donations of holiday gifts and toys to be given to the women and children at Shelter From The Storm.

If you would like to help, please bring your unwrapped gift to City Hall by Dec. 17.

Lynn Moriarty of Shelter From the Storm was the guest speaker at a recent Human Rights Commission meeting held Nov. 18.

Commissioner Gloria Hill will coordinate the collection of gifts and has volunteered to pick up any toys or gifts donated by Palm Springs business owners who can't make it to City Hall.

Information: 323-3586.

Human rights event in valley brings out stories of prejudice

STAFF REPORTS

Their stories had a common refrain: tales of hatred, bigotry and prejudice.

They were survivors of the Japanese internment camps and the Holocaust; they told of the prejudice and hard feelings that remained in the Coachella Valley and around the country.

Together, they spoke out at Palm Springs City Hall on Thursday night as part of International Human Rights Day.

Cherry Ishimatsu of Indio lost her home and property at the start of World War II and was placed in an internment camp in Arkansas. After the war, the government gave her family $100 to relocate. They came to Indio 50 years ago.

"There was subtle racism in the U.S. before World War II. At the start of the war, we lost our home. All we were allowed to take was what we could carry," she said.

For longtime Palm Springs resident James Jessie, director of the Highland Desert Gateway Unity Center, the city's "Section 14" program still carries a measure of pain.

As a youth, Jessie's family and others in a predominantly poor, predominantly African-American section of the city were forced to vacate their leased homes to make way for commercial development.

"Our homes were red-tagged. We didn't know where we were going. People came home and found their belongings outside their homes," Jessie said. "The trust factor with the city government will never heal."

Trino Del Toro of La Quinta was a decorated soldier who fought in Vietnam when he returned to his hometown of Corpus Christi, Texas.

He moved to California in 1965 to escape racism in the Gulf Coast, but he said, even now, he still encounters racism in Southern California.

"As a child, in Texas, our responsibility was to move aside on the sidewalk when white people came down it," he said. "There is still subtle racism in the Coachella Valley. It is rampant."

WADE BYARS, THE DESERT SUN

Moved: La Quinta's Trino Del-Toro listens to emotional testimony from Cherry Ishimatsu, who spent time in a Japanese-American internment camp

Ishimatsu

Jessie

Across the valley B4
Communities B3
Editorials B5
For the record B2

Council OKs ordinance on domestic partnerships

Palm Springs still must give final approval

By Mark Armstrong
The Desert Sun

PALM SPRINGS — Residents cheered a City Council decision Wednesday to approve the language in its long-awaited, domestic-partnership ordinance, which gives rights to domestic partners and asks the city to provide them the same insurance and benefits as married couples.

After almost six years of work on the issue, the Council unanimously approved the first reading of the ordinance. A final decision is expected to be made in January.

The ordinance would allow gay or heterosexual partners older than 18 to register with the city for a fee — which would then give them rights to health care or jail visitations, and the right to sign city applications, permits or licenses on their partner's behalf.

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS: The Council also added a proclamation calling for city officials to include domestic-partner benefits during contract labor negotiations next year. The move came after many complained that the city's original version of the ordinance did not go far enough.

Goldman Jacobs, former chairman of the city's Human Rights Commission, called for new language urging local companies to offer domestic partners the same benefits as married couples. And though the city's union negotiations won't take place until next year, Jacobs said the city needed to put its commitment to equal benefits in writing.

"I feel the City Council should make a statement that says it will support domestic-partner benefits during contract labor negotiations," Jacobs said prior to Wednesday's decision. "What we actually have is not addressing the needs of the community."

STATE LAW: The rest of the ordinance, as written for Palm Springs, would change little within the city, after a similar registration program was passed by Gov. Gray Davis in September. The law, which will go into effect Jan. 1, allows those who are gay, or over the age of 62, to register with the state as domestic partners for hospital and jail visitation rights.

Similar ordinances have been passed in cities such as Laguna Beach, Berkeley, Santa Barbara and Cathedral City — the first Coachella Valley community to do so.

Officials there, however, say the reaction to their two-year-old domestic-partnership ordinance has been underwhelming. Since 1997, 16 couples have registered for domestic partnerships — three of whom were city employees receiving benefits under the new status.

"I thought they would be lined up around the block," said Donna Velotta, city clerk for Cathedral City.

But to those who have been fighting for the domestic-partnership ordinance in Palm Springs, it has become a matter of principle. Many said the city needed to pass an ordinance to voice its support for domestic partnership in the city.

"This is an important first step," said resident Joane Garcia-Colson, "but it's not the last step."

Mark Armstrong covers Palm Springs and Desert Hot Springs for The Desert Sun. He can be reached at 778-4652.

1 copy to file.
1 copy each to
HRC Commissioners.

COPY

February 24, 2000

The Palm Springs Human Rights Commission
Jan Dorr
Panelists:
Julie Bornstein
Rev. Andrew Green
Sgt. Dennis Graham
Cathy Welborn
Al Robinson

First of all I would like to commend The Palm Springs Human Rights Commission and the panelists for taking the time and consideration to address the concerns of the homeless, increasingly visible in our small but great city of Palm Springs.

To introduce myself; I am Norma Christmas , originaly from Chicago, Ill.,came to Los Angeles in 1979, I am now a eleven year resident of Palm Springs. I relocated to Palm Springs from Hancock Park,which is relatively close to a certain blighted area of Hollywood. My daughter attended Christ The King School,My greatest fear was upon her graduation, she would be forced to commute through an undesirable area of Hollywood to attend the Catholic High School . Being a single parent , my desire was to have my children, ages twelve and seventeen at this time in a safe and healthy environment. We sold our home and moved to Palm Springs. She was now to attend St. Theresa, which did not have a school bus. However, I thought I would never have to drive my daughter to school again. . . . . .Wrong! . . . . .The very first morning she was to take the "Sun Bus" to school, she had a very rude awakening. It was 7AM on Indian Ave. It was here she encountered Prostitutes, derelicts, panhandlers, unkempt people of of all denominations. Never having been exposed to this element, she was devastated. She returned home and asked me to drive her to school, which I did for the following two years until she graduated from St. Theresa. She is currently attending Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo,therefore I no longer have this problem.
What I have revealed to you is not irrelevant to the issue of today. This situation transpired eleven years ago and as of today it still exists, only worse, as the homeless population has multiplied.We find them in front of our Main Post Office on Amado Ave. with signs around their necks "Homeless-Will Work For Food". In the Las Palmas area at Our Lady Of Solitude Church - every morning and afternoon waiting in line for food and other "Hand-Out Stations" throughout the city. Not a pretty sight for our Residents and Tourists to see.
The big question is where do these homeless people sleep at night? I have heard of "Camp Sites" under the TRAM, under the streets by Gateway Av. in vacant lots under the trees, abandoned hotels and houses, parks, parking lots.What a disgrace to our city. I am sure The Homeless Task Force and the Palm Springs Police Department are aware of this.

The second big question is How to resolve this issue?

I personally feel there should be a law **enforced** prohibiting this **StreetLife Style of living.**

When these unfortunate people are encountered by the Homeless Task Force and the Police Dept., they should be taken into a facilty where they can be mentally and physically evaluated,entered into a 30 day rehabilitation trial program and given every opportunity to have a better quality of life if they so desire.

The last question is Where can a facility of this type be established?
We certainly are not inclined to build a "Homeless Resort".

However, there is an abundance of land and wealth here in the desert, if only someone will take the initiative to become involved and consummate this project

I am sure there are some special people willing to donate for a worthy cause, such as this. Bearing in mind, to bring Palm Springs back up to par, enhancing our city, and giving us all that great Quality of Life our Mayor, Will Kleindienst is so diligently achieving for us.

Best Regards,

Norma Christmas

Norma Christmas

If I can be of any assistance in developement of this project,-please feel free to call -

(760) 325 8633

E Mail: nnatali@aol.com

Copy :
Mayor Will Kleindienst

Date: March 16, 2000

Attn: Dean-Stephen Kauffman, Chair
Palm Springs Human Rights Commission
CITY HALL, PALM SPRINGS, CA.

Re: Commissioner Gloria Hill

Subj: Response and Reply to K-1010 News
Lou Penrose / Morning Talk-Radio Show.

Dear Commissioner Kauffman,

Immediate recognition followed by a letter of commendation is in-order regarding Human Rights Commissioner, Mrs.Gloria Hill, for her professional and well-informed manner, in-which she addressed Mr. Penrose of Lou Penrose, K-1010 Talk-Radio Show Thursday, March 16, 2000 regarding inappropriate allegations and false assumptions, as noted and 'aired' previously over the Lou Penrose's radio show concerning the 'profile' of appointed officials which make-up the current Human Rights Commission Executive Committee.

Commissioner Gloria Hill, is a 'professional' in every sense of the word! Her timely and much needed 'clarification' as well as setting-the-record straight for the concerns of all Coachella Valley residents and Lou Penrose listeners was indeed handled in such a manner befitting a person of her position. I'm so proud to have participated by actively attending several of the Human Rights Commission meetings, over the last few months. And thus, such actions has inspired me to indeed submit my application for a position on the Human Rights Commission Executive Committee.

What I'm still in 'awe' about, is the fact that just two weeks prior, I, as a local resident of Palm Springs, was somewhat alarmed over Mr. Lou Penrose's radio show regarding the Ruth Hardy Park public bathroom controversy. And how 'slanted' some of the listeners comments were, which Mr. Penrose allowed to 'air' yet not fairly and properly maintain a 'balance' regarding the issues-at -hand, thus allowing persons of 'different lifestyles' to be blatantly, viciously and stereotypically attacked! Furthermore, when I attempted to 'call-in' to Mr. Penrose's talk-show, to both 'reason' and defend people of various and differing lifestyles; Mr. Penrose replied; "Oh! I'm pretty much burned-out with the whole subject-matter, O.K.?"
At that point, I became infuriated and pondered over what my next choices were as to how I could prevent and not allow such public matters and issues go 'un-checked'!
And 'bingo'! Here comes Commissioner Gloria Hill to the rescue in the name of keeping all Human Rights issues and matters-of-concern, 'in-balance and in-check'!

Sincerely,

Charles H. Boyd
Tel. (760) 327-2474 / Email Address: PRCY2K@gateway.net

Across the valley

New task force to discuss billboard

Some see freeway sign as promoting hateful message

By Adriana Chavira
The Desert Sun

PALM SPRINGS - One of the first tasks a new committee addressing hate crimes will face is dealing with billboards that some say promote hate.

The newly formed Palm Springs Task Force for the Prevention of Hate Crimes, which will meet as early as April, will discuss an anti-immigration billboard by Project USA that has angered many Coachella Valley residents.

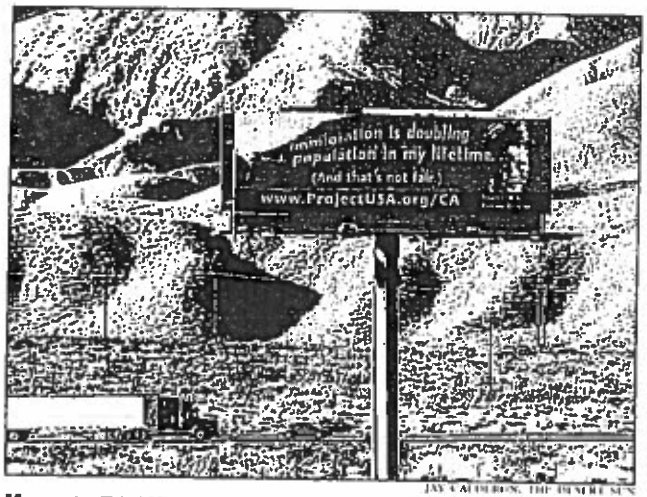
"It appeared to be the most appropriate committee or task force ... to look at the issue and see whether or not the Human Rights Commission should be involved or address the issue," said Dean-Stephen Kauffman, commission chairman.

The task force, which is a city commission created by the City Council, will hold educational forums and enforce the city's zero-tolerance on hate crimes, a policy adopted in October.

BY BUSY ROAD: The controversial billboard, which was on Highway 111 near Interstate 10, featured a boy with the quote "Immigration is doubling U.S. population in my lifetime. (And that's not fair.)"

A few days after a group of about 50 people called for its removal, the billboard was taken down because its contract expired, according to a billboard company official.

"The contract is over," said Fred Leathers, a sales representative for Heywood Co., a San Bernardino-based outdoor advertising company.



JAY CALDERON, THE DESERT SUN

Message: This billboard near Interstate 10 and Highway 111 reads: "Immigration is doubling U.S. population in my lifetime. (And that's not fair.)"

Palm Springs resident Ron Loya, who brought the billboard controversy to the Palm Springs Human Rights Commission, wants Heywood to remove all of its Project USA billboards.

Leathers said Heywood has contracts for four Project USA billboards in Southern California, but opponents estimate there are as many as 11 billboards.

"We're going to mount pressure on Heywood," said Loya, a former member of the Human Rights Commission and current member of the Riverside County Equal Opportunities Commission. "We will go to local businesses who advertise with Heywood and ask 'Do you really want to be affiliated with a company that doesn't listen to its community?' "

Loya and more than 50 residents, law-enforcement officials, educators, clergy and politicians last week called for the removal of the billboards, which they say are offensive and don't belong anywhere.

"This type of divisive message damages our community," Loya said. "We see the effects of hate-based messages. ... Today, it's an anti-immigrant message. Tomorrow whose it going to be?"

The discussions that the controversial billboards have generated is what Craig Nelsen wanted when he began Project USA in 1999.

"The purpose of Project USA is strictly to bring immigration to the center of national debate, where an issue of its significance belongs," said Nelsen, founder and president of the New York-based organization.

SEVERAL STATES: The organization, which wants to decrease legal immigration, has at least 100 billboards displayed in several states. Although the billboards have generated controversy, New York is the only place where a Project USA billboard was removed after city officials said it did not have the proper permit.

Nelsen does not see the sign campaign as picking on one ethnic group.

"Overpopulation hurts everybody," Nelsen said. "I think those people who see immigration in racial terms are preventing our country from thinking clearly about this issue."

But local leaders who have worked to ease racial tensions throughout the community say the sign's message is something the valley could do without.

"I was just fearful that they would come into our area to get sympathizers and foster this type of attitude," said the Rev. Miguel Ceja, pastor at Our Lady of Solitude Catholic Church in Palm Springs. "We are working so hard in our community to get a sense of tolerance and respect."

Adriana Chavira covers Indio and La Quinta for The Desert Sun. She can be reached at 775-4206.

March 21, 2000

Patrick Stewart
41-18 29th Street Apt. 4D
Long Island City, NY 11101

Task Force for the Prevention of Hate Crimes
Palm Spring Human Rights Commission
3200 Tahquitz Canyon
P.O. Box 2743
Palm Springs, CA 92263-2743

Dear Sir:

I recently read in the Palm Springs Desert Sun (March 17, 2000) that your task force will have on its agenda the billboards that have been posted by Project USA. Apparently posting billboards with statistics published by the federal government have now been elevated to the status of a hate crime if I understand correctly the purpose of your task force. I am a supporter of Project USA because of their position of lowering legal immigration levels to a sustainable level that will not lead to population sizes rivaling China or India. A level that will not cause excessive population growth and its attendant problems of overcrowding, urban sprawl, and environmental degradation (probably some of the major reasons many of your city's citizens left Los Angeles). Our democratic tradition allows and encourages the exchange of ideas which we may not always agree with but are the vital signs of a free society.

Sincerely,

Patrick Stewart

City of Palm Springs

Office of the City Manager

3200 Tahquitz Canyon Way • Palm Springs, California 92262

TEL: (760) 323-8201 • FAX: (760) 323-8207 • TDD: (760) 864-9527

March 21, 2000

Dean Stephen Kauffman
Palm Springs Human Rights Commission
P O Box 2743
Palm Springs, CA 92263

Dear Mr. ~~Kauffman~~: Dean

Thank you for participating in the Census 2000 meeting last night. It is extremely important that the City do what we can to facilitate a full count. The input received at the meeting last night will help us to accomplish that end.

Since the meeting, the staff has contacted both Our Lady of Solitude and St. Theresa's Church and asked that they make announcements concerning Census 2000 at the Spanish masses. Both churches have agreed. Staff has also contacted the Census officials about expanding the hours of the Questionnaire Assistance Center at the library and establishing additional centers at the churches in the Desert Highland neighborhood. Unfortunately, there is not money to accomplish this with paid staff, but Census officials are willing to train volunteers. Our task is to now find the volunteers!

Staff is following up with the Palm Springs Boys and Girls Club and the Coachella Valley African American Chamber of Commerce in identifying ways of continuing to circulate information about Census 2000.

Thank you again for helping the City of Palm Springs in achieving a Full Count! Please stress the importance of the Census to your friends, neighbors, and co-workers. If you have new ideas of ways the City can do more to encourage our residents to fill out their Census forms, please contact our Planning Division at 323-8245.

Sincerely,

Jeanne

Jeanne Reller-Spurgin
Mayor Pro Tem

ASA is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating residents across the U.S. about the impact of rapid population growth and record levels of immigration.

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Executive Director

Yeh Ling-Ling

Affiliations provided for identification purposes only

Diversity Alliance for a Sustainable America

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E-Mail: yehlingling@diversityalliance.org
Web Site: www.diversityalliance.org

March 24, 2000

Dean-Stephen Kauffman, Chair
Palm Springs Human Rights Commission
BY FAX: (760) 320-0998

Dear Mr. Kauffman:

I am faxing you the two accompanying news articles I mentioned to you on the phone. A recent opinion piece of mine is also attached. I hope you'll find time to read the articles an help us forward them to other members of your Commission. I would be happy to addres the Palm Springs Human Rights Commission on this very complex issue.

For your information, Mario Obledo, co-founder of Mexican American Legal Defense an Educational Fund (MALDEF), has made statements similar to those indicated by th Hispanic professor interviewed in the attached article. In 1988, Obledo said on the nationa Tom Leykis radio show: "Eventually, we are going to take over all the political institution of California...." Mr. Obledo is a former California Secretary of Health and Welfare.

Also, national syndicated columnist Georgie Ann Geyer warned in 1997 that there are som pro-immigration Hispanic groups in the U.S. that want to take over the Southwest. She sai that politically, we are in an extremely dangerous situation that unfortunately mo: politicians do not realize.

I have spent 10 years helping people immigrate to the U.S. Also, two of our Board c Directors, Drs. Morris and Matloff, have spent years helping minorities.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Yeh Ling-Ling
Executive Director

PS: In February 2000, AsianWeek published a positive cover story about my work.

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City of Palm Springs

Department of Economic Development

3200 Tahquitz Canyon Way • Palm Springs, California 92262

TEL: (760) 323-8259/8197 • FAX: (760) 322-8325 • TDD: (760) 864-9527

May 17, 2000

Mr. Dean-Stephen Kauffman
2560 N. Hermosa Dr
Palm Springs CA 922621

Dear Mr. Kauffman: Dean-Stephen

The Public Arts Commission would like to thank you for attending the Commission meeting on Thursday, May 11, 2000. The input and the ideas you offered will greatly benefit this Commission in their efforts on the City Entryway Signage project.

In continuing our work we need help from people like yourself who care about the quality of life in Palm Springs. Your outstanding contribution on this project is evidence of what can be accomplished through working together for the greater good of the City.

Kind regards,

Diane

Diane Morgan
Arts Administrator

DM:pjs

Post Office Box 2743 • Palm Springs, California 92263-2743

Human-rights group plans forum today to spotlight services

5/27 B4

BY JENNIFER LIEBRUM
THE DESERT SUN

PALM SPRINGS — In an effort to offer an alternative to a court battle, the Human Rights Commission offers free mediation services in cases of discrimination.

The problem is, too few people know that.

To remedy that, the commission is holding a public forum today to let people in on an unintentionally well-kept secret.

"I think there are a lot of people in this city that are not even aware of the services that the Human Rights Commission offers," Commissioner Gloria Hill said recently. "But mediation is on the rise and people should know that we offer these services for free."

The commission began in 1992 after hearing complaints of disparity and discrimination felt by the local gay community.

Still, few people are aware of the services available. Some of the mystery lies in the fact that discrimination is hard to pinpoint, Hill said.

"I think the fact is a lot of people just don't realize that they have fallen into the line of discrimination. These issues can exist in jobs, housing, products, any number of ways," she said.

Residents of Palm Springs who think they have been discriminated against as a result of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, physical disability, medical condition, sexual orientation, marital status or any other factor can file a complaint with the commission.

From that point, the commission will launch a preliminary investigation.

If it falls within the city's purview, the commission will contact the parties and set up a meeting at a neutral location.

Then, a third party acts as a buffer between the individuals to help explore options, ideas and compromise.

The entire process is free and confidential.

Goldman Jacobs, chairman of the commission, said the message today will be delivered through a skit and presentations, but it will not be limited to what the commission has to offer.

The Riverside County Dispute Resolution Center will also be on hand to explain its services.

"This is a big deal," Jacobs said. "We want to make the public aware."

To know more

The forum will be held at 6 p.m. today at the Palm Springs City Hall chambers. It also will be televised live on Channel 17.

1999-2000 Human Rights Commissioners

The Commission consists of nine members appointed by the City Council. Commissioners serve, without compensation, for a three-year term. If a vacancy on the Commission occurs, the new commissioner appointed to that vacancy serves out the remainder of the term of the past commissioner they are replacing.

Acceptance of an appointment to the Commission represents a significant commitment of time, personal resources and involvement. In addition to attending regular meetings, that are held the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month, Commissioners are asked to attend a monthly Executive Committee meeting on a rotating basis, as well as an annual planning retreat. Preparation for meetings, presentations, and report giving add significantly to the demands of Commissioner time. During community functions, activities and meetings, Commissioners will be asked to represent the Commission and prepare a written report of their activities.

For the past several months, the Commission has not had a full appointment of members. In January Commissioner Ray Baca resigned stating time constraints, and in February Commissioner Maurice Call passed away. The following pages will provide the reader with a short biography of each of the Commissioners that served the full year.

Chair	**Dean-Stephen Kauffman**
Vice Chair	**Gloria Hill**
Members	**Ray Baca (Resigned)** **Maurice Call (Deceased)** **Marvin Goldberg** **Denise Goolsby** **Goldman Jacobs** **Paul John Yoh** **Sylvia A. Zelnys**

Dean-Stephen Kauffman, Chair

Dean-Stephen has served as Chair of the Human Rights Commission for the past year and has done an excellent job of keeping everyone up to date on pertinent current issues and community events with his informative and timely reports.

A strong leader of Human Rights issues, Dean-Stephen has successfully spearheaded three proposals through City Council approval: a Resolution for the Protection of Human Dignity and Prevention of Hate Crimes; an Amendment to Ordinance #1578 to include Domestic Partnership rights; and a resolution addressing the rights of the homeless.

Dean-Stephen instituted the Education Forum Series 2000, plus obtained speakers who attended our regular meetings to update us on topics such as: the Census, Voter Registration, and the Friendlier IRS. For more details about the forums, refer to Section 4 of this report.

On a personal note, Dean-Stephen moved to Palm Springs in 1994 after nearly 20 years as a federal government attorney. He has worked for four federal agencies during his professional career, including the Peace Corps in Guatemala; Internal Revenue Service; U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; and the U.S. General Accounting Office.

He currently is a volunteer Chaplain at Eisenhower Medical Center and spent almost three years volunteering at the Special Care and Hospice unit at Desert Regional Medical Center. He has served as Treasurer of Mary Magdalene Project; Director of Valley Migrant League Day Care Center; Intern, Oregon State Legislature; and has been a member of the California State Bar since 1976.

Gloria Hill, Vice-Chair

Gloria began her three-year term with the Human Rights Commission in July 1998. A year later she was elected Vice-Chair and became a member of the Executive Committee.

She was one of three commissioners to attend the annual conference for the California Association of Human Relations Organizations (CAHRO), held in Los Angeles in November 1999. The event included many excellent speakers and provided excellent leadership training on Human Rights issues.

Gloria has been active in the Human Rights arena with her involvement with life skills classes she taught at Shelter From the Storm, a battered women's shelter. She is a past president of Soroptimist International Palm Desert- Sunrise, and has donated her time to help the House of Hope, a program for substance abuse problems.

Gloria has over 20 years of management experience. She is Enrolled to Practice Before the Internal Revenue Service and runs her own Accounting and Income Tax service in Palm Springs. She is a member of the National Association of Women Business Owners, and a member of both the National Society of Accountants and the National Association of Enrolled Agents. She is married and has four sons, and four grandchildren. She and her husband moved to the Coachella Valley in 1990 and have lived in Palm Springs for the last six years.

Marvin Goldberg, Member

After Marvin's retirement two and a half years ago from 18 years in the private investigative business, he and his wife became permanent residents of Palm Springs. It was during a five-year period that they were part-time residents that they fell in love with this valley and decided to settle here for a more laid back way of life.

Previously, Marvin was a retired Detective Sergeant from the Oakland Police Department. He was also an investigator for the California State Bar for two years. Marvin has served as President for the Fremont Rotary Club and as a volunteer mediator with the Riverside County Small Claims Court. He has also served as Chair of the Mediation Committee for the Commission for the past year.

Denise Goolsby, Member

Denise is a long time resident of the valley and owner of the Bee Charmer Inn in Palm Springs. She was recently awarded the Desert Business Association's Business Person of the Year.

Last April, Denise and her partner, Joane Garcia-Colson, received the Private Citizens of the Year Award from the Desert Stonewall Democratic Club. She serves as the liaison to the Palm Springs Police Department. She also holds the position of Secretary on the Police Advisory Committee. Recently, she was named Chair for the Homeless Task Force. She has also participated in the Palm Springs Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Citizen's Advisory Committee and the County of Riverside's 2000 HUD Super NOFA Ranking Committee. She is currently the president of the Desert Gay Tourism Guild, Vice President of Greater Palm Springs Pride, Chief Financial Officer of the Palm Springs Hotel and Hospitality Association, and serves on two other tourism related committees.

In her "spare time," she enjoys writing, studying history, especially World War I & II, and occasionally sneaking in a game of golf.

Goldman G. Jacobs, Member

Goldman Jacobs joined the Human Rights Commission in 1996, and is a past Chair. He has been active in several Human Rights organizations in Southern California, and has served on numerous boards and committees in San Diego, Palm Springs, and Riverside.

Some of those include the City Heights Planning Committee, of which he was both a founder and chairman; the San Diego County Human Relations Commission; the City of Riverside Affirmative Action Task Force; and the Palm Springs Policy Advisory Committee.

He has taken an active role in forming the commission's Hate Crimes Task Force, and has served as chair for the Community Relations Committee. He is currently working to develop a student's civil rights project at Palm Springs High School. Jake is also a member of the State Task Force for AB537, the bill that provides safe schools for gay, lesbian, transgender, transsexual students and their families. He is also a member of the State of California, Department of Education's, Hate-Bias Motivated Crimes policy committee.

Jake has attended several universities in Orange, Irvine, Fullerton, San Diego, and Portland, to further his education. He is Assistant Manager at Wells Fargo Bank in Palm Springs. He represented the Bank as team leader for the Desert Aids Walk, and participates in local Chamber of Commerce activities on their behalf.

Paul John Yoh, Member

Paul John Yoh, O.D., has served on the Humans Rights Commission since 1997, participating in various activities such as: designing the Human Rights Commission's Web Site; becoming a certified mediator for the Mediation committee; and helping with the joint project with the Palm Springs' Art Commission called "Diversity in Art."

He has degrees in Psychology, Biology, and Spanish, from Elmhurst College in Illinois. After completing his education at Elmhurst, Paul continued onto UC Berkeley in California, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Physiological Optics in December 1990 and a Doctor of Optometry in May 1992. Paul practices at Milauskas Eye Institute handling primary care optometry with therapeutics, post sugical cataract care, pre and post surgical care for LASIK, contact lenses, binocular vision, geriatric and children's vision and has performed eye exams in English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Italian and Chinese (Shanghai dialect).

He has been a member of the Palm Springs Lion's Club since 1992, where he has served as Secretary, Newsletter Editor, and Sight Conservation Chairman. He is also an associate member of the "Friends Across the Border" project, in Mexicali, performing free eye exams and providing eye glasses for the poor.

Sylvia A. Zelnys, Member

Sylvia A. Zelnys serves as President of Management Dynamics, Inc., a management and human resources consulting firm located in Palm Springs, California. Sly graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Detroit with a Bachelor's Degree in Communications and is a certified Mediator.

As an active community member, Sly is involved with various groups in both formal and informal capacities. She was appointed in 1999 to a three-year term to the Palm Springs Human Rights Commission. Sly also serves as Secretary on the Board of Directors of the Palm Springs/Desert Communities chapter of Parents, Friends and Families of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), as well as serving as that organization's business consultant. She is a volunteer mediator with Riverside County's Small Claims Court. Sly also holds the elected position of Program Chair for her local district of Professionals in Human Resources Association, and participates as a member of the Palm Springs Chamber of Commerce and the Desert Business Association.

Vision for the Future – A Look Ahead

During this fiscal year we have seen many of the goals of the Human Rights Commission come to fruition. The passing of ordinances to help dissolve the perception of discrimination; the televised educational forums to keep the community informed on issues of importance; and the inter-group connections we have made to enhance the effectiveness of the Commission. This has been a year of accomplishments, made solely through the hard work of a few dedicated individuals who have volunteered their time for the benefit of the City of Palm Springs.

During the last decade, the Commission has taken seriously the vision and forward thinking of the City Council to be the leader in advocacy of Human Rights issues in the Coachella Valley. Major inroads have been made into identifying areas of concern, promoting understanding among diverse groups, and working to bring about changes that will have a positive impact on the residents and visitors to Palm Springs. We have set the wheels into motion for several future projects that the Commission will continue to pursue.

The Hate Crimes Task Force is in its forming stages, with plans to actively work with other organizations in the community to achieve the diversity it needs to bring about effective solutions to a most disturbing trend. One of the goals of the Task Force will be to work on creating programs that will assist victims of hate crimes.

Another area of importance to the Commission is its interaction with the Palm Springs Unified School District. In view of the recent publicized problems at the High School level, developing a program to strengthen the working relationships with the Unity Project will be a major area of concern in the coming year.

Major steps were taken between the Commission and the Homeless Task Force to develop an effective means to address the issue of homelessness in our community. The Commission has vowed to continue to support the efforts of this group to work toward achieving the goals of developing the grants needed for projects that will have a major impact on the future needs of the homeless residents of this city.

As we review our accomplishments of this past year, a clear picture comes into view of what needs to be done in the future to help keep us focused on the needs of the community. Through interactions with other groups, and the development of policies to uphold the ideals of fairness and equality, the Human Rights Commission of Palm Springs will set the example for other communities to follow in years to come.

RUTAN
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*A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

January 5, 2000

Mr. D. Stephen Kauffman
2560 N. Hermosa Drive
Palm Springs, CA 92262-2323

Dear Mr. Kauffman:

Thank you for your holiday note and expression of gratitude concerning the Domestic Partnership Ordinance. It was an interesting experience since we were criticized by a number of speakers for not going far enough. However, our goal was to take a first step and get a 5-0 vote, and, lo and behold, we did get a 5-0 vote.

So I think our strategy was sound. I appreciate your showing your gratitude. I think it was a good accomplishment.

Best wishes for the New Year.

Sincerely,

RUTAN & TUCKER, LLP

David J. Aleshire

David J. Aleshire
City Attorney
City of Palm Springs

DJA:el

276/014084-0001/3311740. m01/05/00

'Courageous' AIDS activist Call dies

By Ronnie Lynn
The Desert Sun
February 9th, 2000

Whenever Maurice Call strode into the Desert AIDS Project in his white shirt and black slacks, he reminded staff of the cool, courageous alien crime fighters in the Will Smith movie, "Men in Black."

Call, 42, was gentle and understated, but he was a fighter, all right. He fought to educate children, adults and politicians about life with AIDS. He fought to find ways of easing the lives of friends with AIDS. But after his own 10-year battle with the disease, Call died early this week, leaving local friends and colleagues with a salient reminder of just how tough, and necessary, the fight is.

"He took a very proactive role in statewide issues as far as funding. He was a good ombudsman for other people living with HIV," said Alex Christensen, Executive Assistant at the Desert AIDS Project." He's a loss to me as a personal friend, but he's also a loss to this community and agency."

Although Rep. Mary Bono, R-Palm Springs, worked with Call on AIDS issues over the past few years, the relationship became more personal than it was political. "He was my friend," she said. "Aside from that, he wanted me to know a lot about AIDS and know exactly what it was. He wanted to educate me, but it was always in a loving and kind way. Strength, courage and kindness -- those are three traits I admire so much in people, and he had them all."

Maurice Call
February, 2000
Maurice D. Call, 42, died on Feb. 7, 2000, at Fountain Valley Regional Hospital. He was born Sept. 11, 1957, to Willie P. and Lorice Andrews Call, in New York City. He was married to Sayuri Kobayashi on Sept. 6, 1999, in Los Angeles. Mr. Call was a technician anesthetist for 15 years. He was last employed by Riverside Community Hospital. He is survived by his wife, Sayuri of Palm Springs and Toyko, Japan; one son, Shunichiro Kobayashi-Call, of Palm Springs and Toyko, Japan; his mother, Lorice of Manhattan, NY; three sisters, Marie of Burlington, VT; Jessica of New York City; Lavada Patterson of Chicago, IL; one brother, Michael of New York City; one surrogate brother, Simon Kearney of Palm Springs. He was preceded in death by his father, Willie, in 1985 and his sister, Michele, in 1997. Visitation will be from 4 to 8 pm today at St. Theresa Catholic Church in Palm Springs. Services will be held at 10 am on Monday at Palm Springs Mortuary in Cathedral City. Graveside service will be held at 12:30 pm on Monday. Burial will be in Olivewood Cemetery in Riverside with Palm Springs Mortuary of Cathedral City in charge of arrangements. The family suggests donations to the Desert Aids Project, PO Box 2890, Palm Springs, CA 92263.