

1994: Lavender Sweep II?

by Michael Colbruno

The November 1990 election in San Francisco was dubbed "The Lavender Sweep" as gays and lesbians scored a series of historic victories: Domestic partners became law, **Carole Migden** and **Roberta Achtenberg** were elected to the Board of Supervisors, **Donna Hitchens** defeated an incumbent Superior Court Judge and **Tom Ammiano** received the most votes of any candidate for the Board of Education.

Today Tom Ammiano is a leading contender for the Board of Supervisors; Carole Migden is widely expected to be the top vote-getter in the Board of Supervisors race, which would make her the Board's president and position her as a leading challenger to conservative Mayor Frank Jordan in 1995; Roberta Achtenberg is an assistant secretary

of Housing and Urban Development in the Clinton Administration; a San Francisco ballot initiative campaign in November is expected to extend benefits to domestic partners.

That's a pretty successful Class of 1990, and 1994 is off to an even better start.

While Migden and Achtenberg have become recognized figures on the local, state and national levels, with their stock on the rise, a generation of new leaders is poised to follow in their footsteps.

Achtenberg was succeeded on the Board of Supervisors by **Susan Leal**, an executive with Health Care COMPCARE Corp. and former staff member of the Assembly Ways and Means Committee, where she drafted the state's health budgets in 1982 and 1983.

Although appointed by Mayor Jordan, Leal has

established herself as a thoughtful and independent legislator. She has taken the lead on a variety of gay and lesbian issues, most notably the successful effort to get First Interstate Bank to reinstate protections based on sexual orientation in its non-discrimination policy.

Tom Ammiano, the popular teacher and comedian who last year served as president of the of the San Francisco School Board, has become a major electoral force in a very short time. In 1990 his first-place finish over three incumbents surprised many political observers. This year Ammiano is polling ahead of Susan Leal and Annemarie Conroy, the Republican Supervisor appointed by Mayor Jordan who also is seeking re-election.

Carole Migden has won widespread respect for her effectiveness and accomplishments as the Chair of the San Francisco Democratic Party, as Chair of the State Party

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Delaine Eastin Battles the Radical Right

By Robert Barnes

They helped repeal gay/lesbian rights laws in the cities of Irvine and Concord. They were fined \$2000 for illegal contributions to defeat San Francisco's Prop K — the Domestic Partners proposition. Now they've set their sights on our schools.

Who are "they"? The radical right, in the form of Lou Sheldon and his "Traditional Values Coalition." Founded in 1983, the TVC boasts connections to 25,000 evangelical churches, including 6,500 members in California. With offices in Sacramento, Anaheim and Washington, DC, the TVC is one of the largest and most powerful forces on the radical right.

Sheldon is credited with being instrumental in persuading Governor Pete Wilson to veto AB101, which would have prohibited job discrimination based on sexual orientation. As a recognized leader of the religious right, Sheldon also participated in White House meetings with then-President George Bush.

In recent months Sheldon has claimed the spotlight in his efforts to impose his radical religious philosophy on California's schools.

Sheldon and his Tradition Values Coalition were behind the infamous controversy over eliminating stories by Pulitzer Prize-winning authors Alice Walker and Annie Dillard from a statewide English exam for 10th graders.

One story, "Roselily" describes the musings of a black woman from the South as she prepares to marry a Muslim and move to Chicago. Sheldon and the radical religious right criticized the story as "anti-religious" because the Muslim man blames the woman's Christian crowd for following "the wrong God," and she thinks of his religion in the context of ropes, chains and handcuffs.

Thanks to the efforts of Assemblywoman Delaine Eastin, all three stories were restored to the test. Eastin stood up immediately to the radical right — strongly criticizing censorship and calling a hearing to review the

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Platform Committee and as a member of the Democratic National Committee. She has emerged as one of the most influential Democratic Party leaders in California.

Last year she chaired the powerful Budget Committee of the Board of Supervisors and established herself as a no-nonsense advocate for both preserving vital public services and imposing strict fiscal accountability.

Not only did she lead in forging the City's budget in the face of a \$100 million deficit crisis, she has taken the lead on crime, proposing an innovative Drug Court; sponsored significant Charter reforms to make government more efficient; devised ways to reduce the City's labor costs; uncovered new revenue sources to save important health, public safety and social services; and even called on George Bush's re-election campaign to reimburse the City for \$20,000 in extra security expenses caused by his attending a \$1 million Republican fundraiser.

Two candidates also are running for the San Francisco Community College Board — former Human Rights Commissioner **Lawrence Wong** and attorney **Leslie Rachel Katz**.

Wong was fired by Mayor Jordan after speaking out publicly against the mayor's attacks on immigrants and Jordan's support of a human rights commissioner who called homosexuality "an abomination against God."

Katz is a longtime party activist who served as Senator Barbara Boxer's Northern finance chair for her successful 1992 campaign.

Across the Bay, openly-gay community activist **Jeffrey Leiter** was appointed by the Berkeley City Council to fill that city's vacant mayoral seat.

In Southern California, where **Chris Kehoe** recently won election to the San Diego City Council, a Lavender Sweep II may be in the works.

Patty Moore, who owns an insurance agency in Long Beach, is making a strong bid to join her city's City Council this June.

The big stories down south are **John Duran** and **Sheila Kuehl**, who are considered frontrunners to win Assembly seats.

Duran, who unexpectedly won 49% of the vote in a 1990 race for the State Senate in Orange County, and who also ran a solid race against incumbent Assemblyman Burt Margolin in 1992, is now one of the top two candidates to succeed Margolin, who is running for state Insurance Commissioner.

Ironically, if he wins the primary against eight challengers, the longtime civil rights attorney will face GOP challenger Bob Davis, a member of the gay Log Cabin Club, making this the first ever state legislative election showdown between two openly gay candidates.

In an adjoining district, Sheila Kuehl, remembered fondly for her role as the lovelorn Zelda Gilroy on the Dobie Gillis Show, is counting on her 15-year tenure as a law professor at Loyola, and her accomplishments as the managing director for the California Women's Law Center, to help her win an Assembly seat.

Kuehl is the only woman amid six candidates, and that should work to her advantage in the primary. She is running for the seat currently held by Terry Friedman, author of AB101, the gay rights bill vetoed by Governor Pete Wilson. Friedman is running for Superior Court Judge.

Democrats have a 51% to 36% registration advantage, and the GOP has put up only a token candidate.

The biggest news of 1994 is **Tony Miller**, who became acting Secretary of State when March Fong Eu resigned to become an Ambassador. Miller served as Eu's chief legal counsel from 1976 to 1981, when he became her chief deputy.

Tony Miller currently is the first and only openly gay person in the nation to hold statewide office. If he wins the June primary against Assemblymember Gwen Moore and former L.A. Councilmember Michael Woo, he will become the first ever to be *elected* to statewide office.

Lesbian/Gay and Jewish Democrats

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the gay/lesbian leadership of the Party.

"The US must not falter in its support for Israel, especially now that the multi-track negotiations offer such a promising opportunity for real peace," said Robert Barnes, Co-chair of the Lesbian/Gay Caucus. Barnes recently was a member of a delegation of San Francisco Bay Area community leaders who travelled to Israel to meet with government and community leaders, both Israeli and Palestinian, and experience the complexity of the Middle East firsthand.

Barnes added, "While our Congress cannot muster the votes to lift the ban on gays and lesbians in the US military, the Israeli Army, one of the premier fighting forces in the world, removed its ban with no adverse consequences."

So, whether the communities are fighting for anti-discrimination laws or against private school vouchers, working toward national health care reform or against encroachment in our public school by the religious right, Jews and lesbians/gays will continue to work together.

Both communities are travelling the same path to peace and freedom, bound by