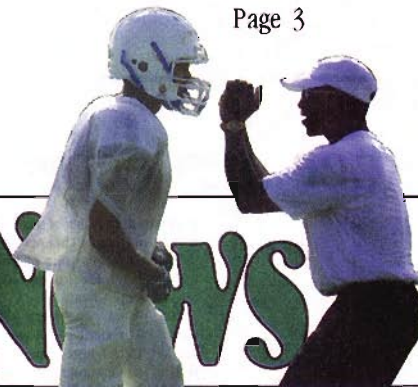
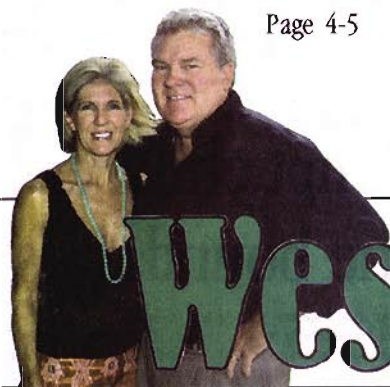


Editorial	2	Sports	3
Lifestyle	4-5	Community	6
Sports	7	Auto Marketplace	8
		Fall Sports Guide	



Volume 19 Issue 43

August 31, 2006

"The best weekly newspaper in Austin, maybe the State."

\$3.00

Editorial

West Austin News

www.westaustinnews.com

August 31, 2006

2

Straight talk about marriage discrimination



Anne S. Wynne

Did you know that there are at least three million same gender families living in our country? Did you know that there are more than one million children being raised by same gender parents?

Let me tell you how I got to know about these families.

I'm a married mother of three. Rights for gay people didn't get on my radar screen until I saw the 2004 November election results where eleven states voted to add a ban on gay marriage to their states' constitutions. When I saw the margins these propositions passed by, I thought where were the people who think like my husband, Fred Ellis, and me? I knew it was time to get involved.

I couldn't find a group that was for straight people standing up for the rights of others, so I thought, "I'll just do that." And, I started "Atticus Circle" named after Atticus Finch from "To Kill a Mockingbird," because he is someone who absolutely stood up for other peoples' rights.

Now, here we are two years later, and Texas has its own Marriage Discrimination Amendment.

I want to tell you about some of the things I've learned over the past two years.

First, I learned that there is nothing anyone can do or should do to keep two people who love each other from making a home and starting a family. I learned this is a civil rights movement. Its struggle is rooted in love.

I found same gender couples want to be responsible for each other. They want to pay the marriage penalty tax my husband and I pay. They want to provide for themselves and their kids with health insurance and retirement plans. And they want to make those hard end-of-life decisions when the time comes.

I met couples who have been together for 10 or 20 or 40 years, who don't need a marriage license to keep their promise to love, honor and cherish each other. They do it every day in relationships that mirror what my husband and I have. These couples just don't have that piece of paper that gives them the more than one thousand benefits that government recognition of their relationship brings.

I found there are no accidental families when the parents are a same gender couple. These families are created with conscious intention. Their precious children are prayed for and planned for, more than you can possibly imagine.

Our kids go to school with precious children who have two mommies or two daddies. How can those kids legally be denied access to child support? How can one parent legally take a

child away from the other parent if the parents split up?

I found that gay and lesbian Texans do not want any special rights. They do want and deserve the same rights for themselves and their children that my husband and I have and that our children have.

I don't want our children to grow up in world where discrimination exists. I was so proud when Travis County said "No," to discrimination, and voted against the Texas Marriage Discrimination Amendment.

We need to end discrimination based on whom someone loves. This is the civil rights struggle of our time – the future of our children – all children – depends on it.

Anne S. Wynne is the Founder of Atticus Circle, named after Atticus Finch in To Kill a Mockingbird. Atticus Circle works to achieve equal rights for all partners, parents and their children. www.atticuscircle.org