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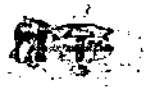
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## Marriage issue has familiar ring to it : Battle for recognition of interracial unions faced similar heated debate in 1960s

**ALBANY - It was 1967 when the U.S. Supreme Court decided all states had to recognize interracial marriages. Today, many are pointing to legal and social similarities in the latest crusade to allow same sex couples the right to marry.**

The 1967 judgment came from the decision by a white man, Richard Loving, to defy a Virginia law - called "An Act to Preserve Racial Integrity" - and a black woman, Mildred Jeter, to marry in 1958. The couple went to Washington, D.C., to tie the knot, where interracial marriage was permitted.

Upon returning to Virginia, they were prosecuted and ordered to spend a year each in jail or to leave the state for at least 25 years.

The nation is grappling with the same type of issues now with gay marriage. As was the case then, there are the sticky issues of states', civil and constitutional rights, a strong religious undertone and an emotionally charged, attentive populace.

"The interracial marriage debate is a good comparison to make," said Sam Trumbore, minister of First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany. "And in 1967, it was more hot (more controversial) than gay marriages are today."

The Massachusetts Superior Court, in an explosive decision that deemed same-sex marriages legal in that state, also compared the interracial marriage disputation to the current one on gay marriages.

"For decades, indeed centuries, in much of this country (including Massachusetts) no lawful marriage was possible between white and black Americans," reads the November decision. "... The right to marry means little if it does not include the right to marry the person of one's choice, subject to appropriate government restrictions in the interests of public health, safety and welfare."

Gay marriage advocates are looking to bring the issue to the courts in the same way Loving and Jeter did.

"I am working with a lawyer to figure out what I can and cannot do as far as marriage is concerned," said Trumbore, who has performed commitment ceremonies for years. "We are looking at what a minister can do that will create the kind of case that might be brought to the Supreme Court of New York state to advance the cause of gay marriage."

Lambda Legal, a Manhattan-based civil rights organization, filed a lawsuit two days after state Attorney General Elliott Spitzer said that state laws referring to "husband" and "wife" should prohibit local officials from issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples - but he added that those laws raise serious constitutional questions because they exclude gay couples.

"New York's courts have a track record of making sure lesbian and gay people are included in the state Constitution's requirement that everyone be treated equally under the law," Susan Sommer, supervising attorney at Lambda Legal and lead attorney on the case, told The Associated Press. "This lawsuit is the next natural development in a line of cases that have upheld gay couples' fundamental right to be treated with respect by their government. When gay couples cannot marry, they are not treated equally, and we believe New York courts will see that."

There are some differences between 1967 and today, however. The 1996 federal Defense

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## CAPITOL CITY MILESTONE

# Albany site of gay weddings

### Unitarian Universalist minister prepared to face jail for rights of homosexual couples

By Shawn Charniga  
The Record

ALBANY — A pair of same-sex couples was married by a Unitarian Universalist minister during back-to-back ceremonies Saturday morning, the first high-profile union the city has seen.

It is unclear if or when charges might follow.

While the minister hopes the ceremony will eventually become a direct challenge against prevailing views of state law barring such unions, the couples making vows to each other say their marriages are a natural extension of longstanding relationships.

While several same-sex marriages reportedly occurred at the state University at Albany recently, these events escaped wider public attention. The same did not occur this weekend, and by design.

Rev. Samuel Trumbore, pastor of the 405 Washington Ave. First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany for the last five years, said after performing the ceremonies that he is charting a deliberate collision course with the law as it stands and will be happy to go to jail in order to celebrate the love of the four people married Saturday.

Setting aside the law, as well as the minister's view of the Unitarian Universalist creed, it is that love that is at the



Mike McMar

Elissa Kane, left, and Lynne Lekakis, with Elissa's biological father, were married at the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany Saturday. The couple was one of two same-sex ceremonies performed





## Minister: Weds gay couples

► Continued from A1

"We've always wanted to do something in this congregation," said Kane. "This is our congregation. If we were to get married, it would be here.

"We know what we are together, and we've known for a long time. What we want is legal recognition of what we are," in essence legal protection for the daughter they are raising together, Social Security benefits such as those enjoyed by widows or widowers, car rental discounts and the ability to visit each other in the emergency room in case of calamity, she explained.

"We contribute (to society)," Kane continued.

The couple said they were denied a marriage license by City Hall last Thursday.

"I've become used to thinking of myself as an outsider, a second class citizen, used to our great free land denying me rights," says George Jurgatis, one of two men married Saturday, in a statement. Jurgatis and partner Robert Barnes declined to speak to the press.

"Gay marriage is about recognition and respect, nothing more. And none of us should settle for anything less," Jurgatis wrote. "Marriage, I will remind you, is only witnessed by the church and by the state. It is the couple that joins themselves together in matrimony.

"We want the rights and benefits that others in this country enjoy. Regardless of what comes to pass tomorrow, or in the near future, Bob and I will continue to commit to one another with or without those rights allotted to us. You see



Mike McMahon/The Record

Rev. Samuel Trumbore solemnized the marriage of two same-sex couples Saturday in Albany.

that much is in our power."

According to a separate press release by Trumbore, Unitarian Universalists have supported the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons for more than three decades, during which time the organization's ministers have officiated at religious marriages for same-sex couples.

In 1996, the Unitarian Universalist Association officially resolved to support the right to marry same-sex couples, the release continues. Trumbore called Saturday's events the logical next step. He is not yet planning more.

Trumbore plans to bring the marriage affidavits to City Hall Monday, and called the ceremonies "potentially legal."

"We're hoping, from the advice of the lawyer, that these will be recognized as legal marriages," he said. "We're hoping to start a court case. I don't believe the (state) Legislature will take this (issue) up without a legal push, because it's not popular."

According to Terence Kindlon, an Albany attorney who was contacted by the church prior to the ceremonies and offered his aid, Trumbore stood to be arrested at any moment

for solemnizing a marriage without a license.

The same charge is faced by New Paltz Mayor Jason West, a Latham native who faces 19 counts of the misdemeanor charge for performing 25 marriages in the Ulster County village.

West has compared penalties for the misdemeanor charge to points on a driver's license. Kindlon appears to lend more weight to the possible charge against Trumbore, but also views it as an opportunity.

"Assuming Sam is arrested, we're ready — chomping at the bit — to get into court," he said.

But the Albany Police Department is not prepared for an arrest.

"We're not going to make any type of hasty decision," said Albany Police Department spokesman Det. James Miller.

Miller said the department was unaware the ceremonies were pending and will discuss the events with state Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, but hope to avoid provoking the atmosphere created in other communities such as New Paltz, where same-sex weddings have been occurring for the last several weekends.



# Same sex, same old answer: No

## Gay marriage licenses denied in Albany

The Associated Press

ALBANY — City officials declined marriage licenses to two same-sex couples Monday, setting up another potential challenge to New York's gay marriage laws.

Unitarian Universalist Rev. Samuel Trumbore came to City Hall with two dozen supporters and one of the same-sex couples he wed Saturday in his Albany church. Trumbore produced two marriage "contracts" and asked the city clerk for licenses.

The clerk refused, citing legal opinions from the city and state. New York health officials have told municipal clerks issuing licenses to same-sex couples is illegal.

3/30/04  
3/30/04  
**► MORE ON GAY MARRIAGE:** Massachusetts lawmakers give initial approval toward constitutional amendment that would ban gay marriage but legalize civil unions — Story, Page A2.

At least two civil lawsuits have been filed this month contending gay marriages are legal under New York's constitu-

tion. There was no decision Monday on whether the Albany couples also would sue.

See **LICENSES, A6** ►



Jaclyn Acker/The Record

Rev. Samuel Trumbore presents marriage documents for a same-sex union to Albany City Clerk John Marsolais for official recognition Monday at Albany City Hall. Lynne Lekakis, right, and Elissa Kane, not pictured, were married in a ceremony performed by Trumbore over the weekend.

## Licenses: Couples denied

► Continued from A1

"Now that we know that the licenses will not be issued today, we'll all have to talk about what the next steps are," said lawyer Mark Mishler.

The ceremonies also could expose Trumbore to the same criminal charges filed against two Unitarian ministers and New Paltz Mayor Jason West for performing

same-sex ceremonies in that Hudson Valley college community.

They have pleaded innocent to charges of solemnizing marriages without a license, a misdemeanor that could lead to a fine or up to a year in jail.

Albany County District Attorney Paul Clyne did not respond to a request for comment on possible charges against Trumbore.

Apr. 2, '04

Rev. Sam,

## **Congratulations**

### **Nice Going**

I was surprised and happy to see your picture on the front page of the newspaper recently. Good luck to the newly married couple and best wishes to you as well. If you would like church members with you at any possible court date, count me in.

Jane Davis  
(237,1553)

Thank you again for taking  
the time to share your thoughts  
on this critical issue.

Alan Aspith  
for the leadership  
Development Committee

Dear Sam

Thank you so much for  
participating in the ministers'  
panel at the "Who's In Charge?"  
conference.

The panel was a highlight  
for many who attended the  
conference, and received  
high marks on evaluations.

Personally, I thought that  
your statement that democracy  
is the best way to establish  
self-interest was especially  
helpful.

March 29, 2004

Dear Sam,

We were thrilled yesterday to see your photo on the front of not just one, but both local newspapers!

Thank you for taking a stand for civil rights for gay people. We were impressed when you said, "I would be happy to go to jail to celebrate the love of these four people."

Thank you for doing the right thing. You make us proud to be members of the First Unitarian Society of Albany.

Sincerely,

Gene Jackson & Daniel W. Van Dyke

should all volunteer to  
go to jail with you, but  
that probably won't happen.

During the Pledge of Resis-  
tance lots of us went out  
waving banners and posters  
and making lots of noise,  
but only a few offered to  
go to jail - the same  
few each time. So hooray  
for the FEW (and the brave).  
What are we doing on the  
outside?

Betty D.

P.S. Here are 3 of the Agnes series I missed.



Dear Rev. Trumbore,

Thank you for the risks you are taking on behalf of same-sex couples who want to marry. Contrary to what the D.A. was quoted as saying, your action was neither ignorant nor arrogant, but instead was civilly disobedient in the tradition of others who have pushed society to become more ~~more~~ inclusive & humane. I hope you will be vindicated by the constitution.

Best wishes,

Susan DuBois

S. Linda Hoddey will be performing a ceremony for me & my partner Peter at the Saratoga UU congregation in June.

Mar. 27, 2004

Dear Sam,

I was very pleased to see the story about you and same-sex marriages in the Albany Times-Union. I wanted to write to thank you for your courageous stand on this issue. I've been very proud of our denomination throughout this controversy.

Thanks,  
Aaron Broadwell



Hudson  
Valley  
Psychological  
Associates

4/6/04

Dear Reverend Trumbor

I wanted to share with you how deeply touched I've been not only by the gay/lesbian marriages you performed - not only by the banner on the church, which makes me cry every time I drive by, but also by your personal courage to stand for love at a time when hatred fills our air waves, our White House and so many of our houses of worship.

As an "out" lesbian who has been with her partner for nearly a quarter century, I often feel that homophobia doesn't affect me anymore. But I can witness the harm that remains when an act like yours & those of your congregants reaches id to heal the still wounded places inside.

At this Passover season, I'm reminded how long and slow is the process of liberation from any form of slavery, how filled with fears and false starts and with the yearning to run back to the narrow and known servitude.

In our time, it seems, we need →

Susan Cox, Ph.D.  
233 New Scotland Ave.  
Albany, New York 12208  
(518) 489-1044

Susan Kaplow, C.S.W.  
135 N. Allen St.  
Albany, New York 12206  
(518) 438-3139

Jonathan Shapiro, Psy.D.  
305 Hamilton St.  
Albany, New York 12210  
(518) 462-6139

Nanette Shapiro, C.S.W.  
321 Hamilton St.  
Albany, New York 12210  
(518) 462-6139



many Moses's to help us go forth, to have  
the faith to struggle in the desert, and to  
hold forth the promise of milk and honey.

As an offer of thanks to you and in  
honor of Elissa & Lynn's marriage, please  
accept the enclosed contribution.

Shalaw Salaam/Peace,

Susan Haplow

SAM

# Gay couples to file lawsuit seeking legalized marriages

By SARA FOSS  
Gazette Reporter

ALBANY — Two same-sex couples who were married during a joint ceremony in Albany in March plan to file a lawsuit today seeking to legalize gay marriage in New York.

The couples, Elissa Kane and Lynne Lekakis and Robert Barnes and George Jurgsatis, asked for marriage licenses at Albany City Hall days after their wedding, but were refused.

At the time, attorney Mark Mishler said the couples got married to be a "test case."

Last month, Kane said she and Lekakis had no plans to travel to Massachusetts to marry because they wanted to wed legally in New York, and would push for the opportunity to do so.

"I don't live in the state of Massachusetts, I live in the state

of New York," she said at the time.

Attorney Terry Kindlon offered few details on the lawsuit, saying it was embargoed until today, when a news conference will be held on the steps of the state Court of Appeals.

The couples were wed by Rev. Sam Trumbore at the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany. Robb Smith, a spokesman for the church, said his congregation supports what the couples are doing.

"The church does support the civil right of marriage for all people," Smith said.

Gay marriage has been a hot topic in recent months.

Last month Massachusetts became the only state to allow same-sex couples to wed. Although opponents of same-sex marriage had pushed the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn a

Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court decision allowing gays and lesbians to wed, the country's highest court declined to intervene.

New Paltz Mayor Jason West found himself in the national spotlight in February, when he began marrying same-sex couples. He and two Unitarian ministers were eventually charged with misdemeanors for performing ceremonies for same-sex couples without marriage licenses.

Attorney General Eliot Spitzer issued an opinion stating that although gay marriage is illegal in New York, it could be open to a constitutional challenge.

He said that although state law does not explicitly ban gay marriage, the constitutional framers intended marriage to be between a man and a woman, using terms such as husband and wife and man and woman.

Mishler has said that since the state doesn't forbid gay marriage, it should be permitted.

Reach Gazette reporter Sara Foss at 432-4391 or [sfoss@daily-gazette.net](mailto:sfoss@daily-gazette.net).

6118104

# Same-sex couples sue state

## Suit, which also names Albany's city clerk, claims denial of marriage licenses is unconstitutional

By James V. Franco  
The Record

ALBANY — Two same-sex couples are claiming the denial of a marriage license is unconstitutional, and now they are suing the city clerk and state.

Elissa Kane and Lynne Lekakis, along with Robert Barnes and George Jurgsatis, were married in March at the Albany Unitarian Universalist Church by Rev. Sam Trumbore but were denied marriage licenses by Albany City Clerk John Marsolais.

When the requests were made, Marsolais gave each couple a letter from the state

Department of Health explaining "New York's law does not authorize the issuance of marriage licenses to persons of the same sex" and that any official issuing a license to same-sex couples "would be violating state law and subject to penalties in law."

Marsolais and the Department of Health are named as defendants in the suit filed in state Supreme Court Thursday.

"It is not only about us, it is about all the people who came before us. We have friends that have been married for years," said Kane.

See **SUIT**, A3 ▶



Tom Killips/The Record

Attorney Terence Kindlon explains a lawsuit filed on behalf of two same-sex couples shown behind him Thursday in Albany. At left are Lynne Lekakis and Elissa Kane and



# FROM PAGE ONE



Tom Killips/The Record

Attorney Terence Kindlon draws a media crowd as he announces a lawsuit he filed on behalf of two same-sex couples Thursday at the state Court of Appeals in Albany.

## Suit: State, city clerk named

► Continued from A1

The lawsuit lays out advantages legally married couples have over those who are only allowed to live together in this state, such as filing joint tax returns, family health plans, Social Security benefits and other legal benefits involving property ownership and wills.

"These folks are entitled to the same legal recognition of their marriage as any heterosexual couple, and that is what we are looking for here," said attorney Terence Kindlon.

Kindlon claims that the state's Domestic Relations Law is gender neutral in that it does not assign a specific gender to a husband or a wife, and therefore cannot prevent same-sex couples from marrying.

According to Kindlon, if the court does determine the Domestic Relations Law does not include same-sex couples, it should be deemed unconstitutional.

"Denying marriage licenses to same-sex couples discriminates on the basis of both sexual orientation and gender and violates the equal protection

provision of the New York state Constitution," the lawsuit says.

The two couples have long standing relationships. Kane and Lekakis have been together for nearly six years, have a home and business together and are raising a 7-year-old child.

To Kane, it is more than a matter of semantics. She does not think a civil union or allowing couples of the same sex to share in the same rights as married heterosexuals is equality.

"I did not invite my family and friends to a civil union. I am not civil-unionized," she said. "That is saying we are separate but equal. Clearly, that did not work."

"To us, it is an equality thing," Lekakis said. "We're just as responsible as any other couple."

Barnes and Jurgatis have been a couple since 1978. One of the reasons they want the same legal rights as a heterosexual couple is so Jurgatis can become Barnes' Social Security beneficiary. Barnes has been a state employee since 1968.

This is the latest in a series of lawsuits addressing different aspects of gay marriage since

New Paltz Mayor Jason West started marrying gay couples in February. State Attorney General Elliott Spitzer opined that gay marriage was illegal, but also said it could be unconstitutional.

Earlier this month, 25 gay couples in Ithaca sued over not being able to obtain marriage licenses.

Marsolais, a city employee for more than 28 years, said he expected the issue to go to court but did not expect to be named in the suit. He said he was just following the advice of the Department of Health and the city's attorneys. He expects the city to defend him in court.

"I understand that people are doing what they feel they have to do, and they understand I am doing what I have to do," he said. "We all knew the courts would get involved, and are involved, so we will see how it all turns out and, hopefully, everyone will be happy."

The Department of Health did not return a phone call for comment.





c o m m

UNITY

The monthly news journal of the Capital District  
Gay and Lesbian Community Council, Inc.

P R I D E



G R O W T H



S T R E N G T H

## 2004 CDGLCC Annual Awards Honor Seven for Service to the LGBT Community



**Libby Post**



**Shannon Cherry**



**Reverend Sam Trumbore**



**Hawk Stone**



**Leslie Phelan**

The Capital District Gay & Lesbian Community Council will celebrate those who have served the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community of the Capital District with distinction at the Annual Awards Dinner on October 27, 2004. The annual event will be held at the Desmond Hotel and Conference Center on Albany-Shaker Road. The reception will begin at 6:00 pm and the dinner will begin at 7. The annual dinner serves to both honor members of the community and to raise money to support programs and services for the lgbt community that represent the

Those that will be presented with community awards this year will be:

**Libby Post**, Council Leadership/Lifetime Achievement, for her years of stewardship as Council President and her commitment to building a committed and successful board of directors.

**Shannon Cherry**, Volunteer of the Year, for her outstanding commitment to the Community Center and her work with COMMUNITY.

**Reverend Sam Trumbore**, LINKAGES Award, for his leadership in the Capital Region in the struggle to recognize and provide same-sex marriages for LGBT people.

**Times Union**, Business of the Year, for its fair and accurate coverage of the news affecting the Capital Region and for its commitment to equality and diversity among their employees.

**Hawk Stone**, Harvey Milk Award, for his years of commitment to the LGBT movement and to



## SAVE THE BALLET

Save the Ballet, a group of concerned arts boosters and local business owners, was organized in response to the Saratoga Performing Arts Center's attempted termination of the annual residency of the New York City Ballet. They are an excellent example of something fine and rare: grassroots organizing in the arts.

It's safe to say that neither the Saratoga Performing Arts Center board, nor the organization's long-serving president Herbert Chesbrough, had any idea of the controversy that would follow when SPAC announced on Feb. 13 that the New York City Ballet's annual summer residency would be canceled after the 2004 season. The news hit the local arts community like an earthquake, however. The SPAC amphitheater, after all, had been designed and built (nearly 40 years ago) with the ballet



in mind. The ballet had become as much a part of summer in Saratoga as horses and fancy hats, and its economic impact on downtown was significant.

Within days, ballet supporters began circulating petitions to keep the NYCB at SPAC. John and Janice DeMarco, owners of the Lyrical Ballad bookstore, started one; so did Saratoga Springs resident Lisa Mehigan, who set hers up online. Within weeks, "Save the Ballet" signs began appearing in the windows of businesses in downtown Saratoga Springs, as an ad hoc Save the Ballet Committee was formed (and quickly endorsed by Saratoga mayor Michael Lenz). By March 15, committee member (and Saratoga County Arts Council executive director) Dee Sarno reported that \$90,000 in pledges had been collected from people who intended to buy tickets to the ballet.

Save the Ballet, which now included the DeMarcos, Sarno, Mehigan, Claire and Kathy Stan-campiano, and Jennifer Leidig, incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and began a long summer of fund-raising and activism. They worked on attracting corporate support, and reached out to local politicians; their seriousness and dedication helped enlist the support of Sen. Joseph Bruno (R-Brunswick) and Assemblyman James Tedisco (R-Schenectady), as well as the participation of an initially disinterested Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce.

Through the efforts of Bruno, the state offered a two-for-one matching grant to help fund the NYCB residency; it required SPAC to raise \$600,000 by July 31, 2005. By early August, Save the Ballet had helped collect more than \$400,000. Their activism kept up the pressure on SPAC, too, which responded to the mess they'd created by, among other things, hiring an Albany-based PR firm.

While still not thrilled with SPAC's current management—"To say that SPAC is run like a circus is insulting to circuses everywhere"—Save the Ballet's Jennifer Leidig is pleased with the direction events are moving. A recent audit by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation revealed that, among other things, the numbers SPAC offered as justifying the termination of the ballet were dramatically incorrect, and that the SPAC board was guilty of, at best, terrible mismanagement. Leidig says this has given the folks at Save the Ballet a true sense of vindication: "I was so happy for the community. This [the report] is what we've been screaming about from the beginning."

## THE WEDDING PARTY

Bob Barnes and George Jurgatsis have been together for well over two decades, but they never believed they would be able to get married. "I personally never visualized having a wedding," says Jurgatsis. "I never thought the day would come." Last January they began to discuss going to Canada in the summer to get married, but figured it would be "a very civil thing, quick... not personal."

Every time Lynne Lekakis and Elissa Kane went to a wedding for the past several years, they would discuss the parts they might incorporate if they ever had their own, and the parts they wouldn't. They talked about getting married when it became legal.

For many years, the Rev. Sam Trumbore of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany has believed that it should be up to him to decide who he would marry, not the government.

When the San Francisco and New Paltz weddings started last spring, these five people came together to add Albany to the history-making gay-marriage map. Trumbore knew the moment had come when he heard that two of his UU colleagues, Kay Greenleaf and Dawn Sangrey, had been arrested for performing marriages in New Paltz. He considered joining the rotation of ministers in New Paltz, but decided he wanted to do it in Albany, and with people he had some connection to.

So Trumbore asked Lekakis and Kane, who were members of his congregation, and another congregation member who was friends with Barnes and Jurgatsis mentioned it to them. "We were very happy to do it here in the United States instead of having to run off to Canada," said Jurgatsis.

Leaving aside the bit about having only two weeks to plan, most non-celebrities don't dream of their weddings being an above-the-fold news story. "We're behind the scenes sort of people," says Lekakis as she recalls the decision to go forward.

At first "we thought it was going to be just a quiet church wedding," says Jurgatsis. Then when they realized the media would be invited, adds Barnes, "we thought there would maybe be a radio station, a newspaper, maybe one TV station." He chuckles. "We were surprised."



As it turned out, the ceremony was "a perfect combination of political act and truly moving personal experience," says Kane.

"I think we were a little self-conscious going into it, but when the actual ceremony was going it was very personal.... We totally lost track of the media being there," says Jurgatsis.

The couples are in it for the long haul, having sued the state and county for a marriage license, a case they expect to head all the way to the Court of Appeals. But so far the experience has been more positive than they could have dreamed. Despite the publicity, practically none of the feared backlash or hate mail has manifested. Instead they've gotten presents, parties and congratulations from relatives, coworkers, and strangers in the grocery store, plus a lot of chances to talk with the less certain about why they feel equal marriage rights are important.

Trumbore is actually disappointed that he wasn't arrested, "because that gets it more in the public eye, more attention on the couples." But the experience has forged relationships between him and many gay rights organizations in the area, putting him more strongly in the middle of the fight. And the gratitude taught him just how significant a small act on the part of a straight person, who doesn't "have to" stick his neck out, can be.

Kane agrees. The most wonderful surprise was the vociferous support of the FUUSA congregation, she says. "To have a group of older straight people leading the charge.... Never 20 years ago would I have believed it."

# LIFE • TODAY



Dear Abby  
 Crossword  
 Horoscope  
 Bridge

ALBANY, NEW YORK

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2004



WILL WALDRON/TIMES UNION

# The Year through the lens

**B**efore I became a photo editor I was a photojournalist, telling news stories with pictures.

And every photo has its own story.

◀ **LYNNE LEKAKIS** and **Elissa Kane**, right, celebrate following their marriage in March by The Rev. Samuel Trumbore, the first minister in Albany to marry same-sex couples.

shirt of his uniform seemingly smudged with every flavor of ice cream the shop served. His yellow smiley face button read, "Hi! My name is Vern."

Vern stared at me. I was wearing my photographer's vest, a police scanner in one pocket, a cellphone in another, dangling around my neck were my press credentials.

"Is that a press pass around your neck?" Vern finally asked. I hesitated a moment and then responded, "Yes, it is."

"What do you do?" he asked. "I'm a news photographer."

Times Union  
 photographs  
 look back  
 with pictures

two small children were found dead in their home. Until then, this was a peaceful neighborhood. Police investigators swarmed the area and news media gathered outside the house. Investigators provided little information as the

