

## Local news in brief: Nov. 26

Staff reports | Nov 24, 2010

### Gay couple participates in D.C. Adoption Day

A judge signed the official papers for a gay male couple to adopt a two-year-old girl they have raised since infancy on Nov. 20 during the 24th Annual Adoption Day ceremony at the D.C. Superior Court.

District residents John Coon, 43, and Josh Tuerk, 42, who have been a couple for 18 years, were among the parents of more than 20 kids whose adoptions were finalized at the ceremony. Their adopted daughter, Gabriella “Ella” Logan, who attended the event, was described by an announcer as having a “captivating and vivacious personality.”

Court officials and the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency said in a statement that the Adoption Day event is intended to “celebrate the joy of adoption and encourage area residents to consider adopting or fostering a child” through the city’s child welfare system.

Same-sex couples have been adopting children in the city since 1994, when the D.C. Court of Appeals issued a ruling clearing the way for such adoptions. Local gay rights attorney Michelle Zavos, who specializes in gay family law, said the city’s child welfare and adoption office is fully supportive of gay adoptions. She noted that qualifications and background checks used in the adoption approval process are the same for same-sex and opposite-sex couples.

“We adopted two boys 10 years ago—Noah and Marcus. They’re both 10,” Coon told the Blade. “And Ella — we decided it was time to add a little princess to join our all-male household,” he said.

Coon, an interior decorator, and Tuerk, who owns and operates a D.C.-based pet care business, live with their children in the city’s Wesley Heights section. They recently bought a farmhouse and farm outside Charlestown, W.Va., where they plan to spend the Thanksgiving holiday.

“All the grandparents will be with us,” Coon said.

LOU CHIBBARO JR.