



Supporters of marriage equality for gays and lesbians rally in front of Argentina's Capitol last week in Buenos Aires.

vote in favor of the measure in Argentina's House of Deputies in early May. President Cristina Fernandez had said throughout the debates on the bill that she would allow it to become law if it passed.

The move makes Argentina the first country in Latin America to allow gays and lesbians to marry, although Mexico City became the first jurisdiction in Latin America to grant full marriage equality to gay and lesbian couples earlier this year. Uruguay approved civil unions for gays and lesbians in 2007.

The debate on the bill in the Argentine Senate went on for 15 hours, with heavy pressure to defeat it mounted by the Catholic Church in what Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio called a "war of God." The church organized a rally of 60,000 people outside the Palace of Congress, Argentina's capitol, earlier in the week.

But a majority of lawmakers rejected the church's arguments, with one senator noting "not even in the Bible can one find a paragraph where Christ got angry with gays."

Sen. Eugenio Artaza asked, "Why such a big effort to prevent other people from having the same rights we have?"

After the vote, LGBT activists rejoiced.

"The importance of the marriage equality law is also for all of society because it brings meaning to the principle of equality, which is central to diversity," said Pedro Paradiso Sottile, of the Argentine Homosexual Community. "It is also a great starting point for discussions on equality in Latin America and the Caribbean."

The move was widely noted in other countries, particularly Argentina's neighbors. Activists in Paraguay congratulated Argentine gays and lesbians for their victory, and said they're pushing for a vote and debate on marriage equality in that country's congress in October.

"Things are advancing," said Simon Cazal, of Paraguay's SomosGay. "There are various senators who are giving their support."

A bill to recognize civil unions for gay and lesbian couples is also under consideration in Chile.

The first couple slated to wed in Argentina, approved by city officials July 16 in Buenos Aires, is actor Ernesto Rodriguez Larrese, 60, and Alejandro Vanelli, 61, who have lived together for 34 years. If they want, they'll get an all-expenses-paid trip to Mexico - after Argentina approved the bill, Mexico City tourism officials offered airfare, accommodations and meals for a honeymoon in Mexico City and Cancun for the first gay or lesbian couple to wed in Argentina.

OBITUARIES

MIKE BLIZZARD

Mike Blizzard, 54, suffered a heart attack and passed away at his Munster, Ind., home July 16.

Blizzard was known to many in Chicago as Lois Carmen D'Nominator and was the International Association of Gay Square Dance Clubs Honky Tonk Queen of 1995. He was one of the original She Devils who performed at early Northalsted Market Days

events. The She Devils were the 1992 *Gay Chicago Magazine* Entertainers of the Year.

In 1997, Blizzard told *Gay Chicago*, "The concept was born in Vancouver. It was at a square dance convention. ... So we were all sitting around in a hotel room, and I put on a black crinoline, and I said, 'Oh, it makes you feel so Spanish,' as it



was like a mantilla, and I started singing 'Carmen.' Then someone said, 'A fabulous drag name would be Carmen D'Nominator.' And to be a She Devil, it had to begin with L, so I became Lois Carmen D'Nominator. Dana (Blizzard's roommate, aka Lucy Ann Purchase) didn't want me to be a She Devil - at all. He didn't want two of us doing the same thing together in the same house, and he didn't want me to steal any of his glory, because he knew that I would be a better She Devil than him... and I guess history has proven that. ... She'll never forgive me for saying that."

Friends said he had been in poor health for several years due to complications from diabetes, but he had been well enough to appear at an IAGSDC gathering in Chicago several weeks ago.

Funeral information was not available as *Gay Chicago Magazine* went to press, but a member of Chi-Town Squares said discussions about a memorial service were underway.

SPORTS

CMSA WEDNESDAY KICKBALL

(As of Wednesday, July 14)

	W	L
1. Team X-Cel	5	0
2. The Spot Steel Toe Divas	4	0
3. Cocktail	4	1
4. Bucks Corn Fed Kickers	3	1
5. SoFoSexuals.....	3	1
6. 4 Kicks	2	3
7. Halsteds	2	2
8. Rub Her Balls.....	2	3
9. The Call Girls	2	3
10. Rockford Peaches	2	2
11. Scarlet Ball Kickers.....	1	3
12. Spyners Banana Hammocks.....	1	3
13. The A Team.....	0	4
14. Ballz.....	0	5