



want the right to marry the person they love. They have worked so hard and waited so long for their marriages to be recognized and are optimistic for future generations to experience no discrimination.

"My wife is a wonderful, caring, compassionate person who realizes that to bring change we actually have to demand it and work for it. Just as a marriage continually needs work and patience, so does society. And just like marriage, it can become better if we stay conscious and connected to the goal of improving society for all of its members," LaRue said.

LBC photography student Rick Motzkus and his boyfriend of 31 years, Joe Firo, are in the process of planning their wedding. The couple also was previously united in a commitment ceremony, but refer to their union as "illegally legal."

"We didn't feel a big need to go and get married," Motzkus said. "But we felt that people have spent so much time and energy fighting for this right that we had to support it. Our commitment ceremony did it for me spiritually. This wedding will be like crossing the t's

and dotting the i's for us." Motzkus and Firo both are devout Roman Catholics who are active in the church community. Their strong faith has remained despite the adverse societal reactions to religion and homosexuality.

"God made me the way I am. I am the best person I can be and as long as I keep doing what I feel is the right thing, I am on God's path," Motzkus said.

For these couples, as well as thousands of others throughout the U.S., having the right to marry is a giant step toward equality in our society. "To watch people change this much has been gratifying. It's different than when I was growing up," Motzkus laughs. "The younger community has grown up around this and to them it's just another lifestyle. I just want people to remember, we are not all individual. We are all connected. It's only a human judgment that makes some people less equal than others." Being able to marry Joe is a huge deal for Rick. It is the final tie to each other.

"When I think of finally being married to him it sends shivers up my back. It will be a reaffirmation of the happiest day of my life."



California & Proposition 8

The California Secretary of State will publish the official final election results on December 9, 2008. As of November 10, 2008, 4:32 pm PST, approximately 1,205,521 vote-by-mail and provisional ballots (26% of the total cast) remain uncounsed by county election officials. On the day after the election, the vote was 52.5% in favor of Proposition 8 and 47.5% against, with a difference of about 500,000 votes. The organizers of the "No on Prop 8" campaign conceded defeat on November 6, issuing a statement saying, "Tuesday's vote was deeply disappointing to all who believe in equal treatment under the law". Following the passing of Proposition 8, mass protests took place across the state. Santa Monica Boulevard was closed as 1,000 protesters gathered outside the Los Angeles Temple of the Mormon church in Westwood; the LDS (Mormon) Church was a proponent of the proposition. Additionally, demonstrators marched through Hollywood, blocking traffic and forcing police intervention. In Sacramento, the state's capital, nearly one thousand protest-

ers peacefully gathered for a candlelight vigil in front of the Sacramento Gay and Lesbian Center. 300 more marched through the streets with protest signs. In Long Beach, over 1,000 protesters rallied and marched from Redondo and Broadway to downtown and back. In San Francisco, thousands gathered in front of the City Hall to protest the proposition and to perform a candlelit vigil. Speakers who voiced their opinion in opposition of Proposition 8 included state Senator Mark Leno and mayor Gavin Newsom. Another pending legal issue is whether approximately 18,000 same-sex marriages already in effect would be retroactively annulled by the constitutional change, or whether they would be preserved. California Attorney General Jerry Brown said that existing same-sex marriages would be unaffected, but other legal experts have said challenges are likely. The 14-word constitutional amendment does not state explicitly that it would nullify same-sex marriages performed before the Nov. 4 election, although proponents say it will.