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Hostility increases in Springfield

□ Anti-gay rights measure sparks harassment, goes unchallenged

By Tim Neff and Hope Neelson
Emerald Writers

Jean Marchant knows all about discrimination in Springfield.

As a Springfield resident who happens to be lesbian and who drives a car speckled with gay pride stickers, she has become the target for numerous derogatory remarks and countless searing stares.

But Marchant said the unkind atmosphere has become more hostile since the May passage of Ballot Measure 20-08, which amended Springfield's charter to prevent the city from "promoting homosexuality."

"I don't feel entirely safe here or entirely welcome," Marchant said. "I just go about my business here, but there are increasingly people who feel comfortable about acting out their homophobia."

One day shortly after the charter amendment won voter approval, Marchant came face to face with Springfield's ugly side. Marchant, who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis 10 years ago, was assembling her wheelchair in a supermarket

parking lot when a man decided to vent his hatred.

"He yelled, 'Fucking queers. We don't want you in Springfield,' and then he spit on me," Marchant said. "There's a climate here where people don't feel real safe."

Other people and organizations who actively opposed Measure 20-08 have felt repercussions. Marchant said the Church of the Brethren, which opposed the measure, has received several bizarre messages on its answering machine. Others have had windows broken for their stance against the measure.

But aside from harassment, there have been few obvious indications of the measure's impact. Legal action or challenges based on the charter amendment have not yet surfaced.

"The issue hasn't been dealt with because it's been passed, and we haven't had anything to challenge it yet," Marchant said.

The measure's impact has also been muted by the small number of gays and lesbians who live in Springfield. Marchant said if the charter prevents gay and lesbian groups from using city facilities, they wouldn't know it because they had never used the facilities in the first place.

Marchant said the Oregon Citizen's Alliance,

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Coloradans to vote on gay rights

□ Colorado head football coach calls homosexuality an abomination

By Pat Malach
Emerald Editor

Oregon residents won't be the only voters deciding the rights of gay citizens come November.

Colorado for Family Values, a right-wing religious organization, has succeeded in putting a measure on the Nov. 3 ballot that would amend the state constitution prohibiting Colorado from

"enact(ing), adopt(ing) or enforce(ing) any statute, regulation, ordinance or policy whereby homosexual, lesbian or bisexual orientation, conduct, practices, or relationships shall constitute ... or entitle any person or class of persons to have or claim any minority status, quota preferences, protected status or claim of discrimination."

Like Oregon, the controversial measure has divided the state into clear camps, with one side calling the measure a form of legalized bigotry, while the other denounces civil-rights laws for gays as special rights.

Colorado for Family Val-

ues began its anti-gay rights movement last year when it tried to rescind a Denver ordinance because it protected people on the basis of sexual orientation. That effort failed by 10 percent, said Bobbi McCallum of the Equal Protection Campaign, a group formed to fight this year's proposed amendment.

However, a similar movement against a proposed anti-discrimination law in Colorado Springs that included protections for homosexuals was a success.

With that victory under its belt, the group decided the

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