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Same-sex marriages approved in Oregon

Multnomah County will begin issuing same-sex marriage licenses at 10 a.m. today

By Jan Tobias Montry
Managing Editor

Portland-area officials announced that they will begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples today, making Multnomah County just the fourth county in the United States to do so, KGW-TV and The Associated Press reported Tuesday night.

Multnomah County commissioners said in a statement released Tuesday that the county's legal counsel approved the decision to issue the licenses, a move

that could set the stage for a potential same-sex marriage battle in Oregon.

"Based on a legal opinion released by the county attorney, a majority of the Board of County Commissioners supports a policy change to allow the county to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples," the statement said.

It was unclear Tuesday exactly what legal justifications were used to make the decision, however, Multnomah County Judge Linda Bergman told KGW-TV that she will begin performing marriage ceremonies today for same-sex couples, provided they present a marriage license.

Oregon law states that marriage is "a civil contract entered into in person by males at least 17 years of age and

females at least 17 years of age, who are otherwise capable, and solemnized in accordance with ORS 106.150."

In anticipation of a barrage of same-sex couples seeking licenses, along with the potential for protests, law-enforcement agencies will also appear at the Multnomah County headquarters, located at 501 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd. in Portland, where the marriage licenses will be issued.

"We'll err on the side of caution enough to make sure our presence is known," Multnomah County Sheriff Bernie Guisto told KGW-TV.

Former University LGBTQA Co-Director Austin Shaw-Phillips, currently the ASUO multicultural advocate, has

mixed feelings about the ruling, saying that allowing same-sex marriage won't change societal discrimination.

"That's good that that happened and all this progress is being made toward gay marriage, but I don't put a lot of stock in the institution of marriage in the first place," he said. "Case in point: the Britney Spears thing."

"I don't think this is going to change the attitude toward queer people at all."

University College Republicans Chairman Jarrett White reiterated his group's official position on same-sex marriage, but he also offered political and economic reasons why it is a bad idea.

"We obviously are against gay marriage in any form, so we oppose (the

decision)," he said.

White said that Multnomah County's move toward same-sex marriage only underscores the need for a Constitutional amendment defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman. With governmental action in some states drawing fire, White questioned whether revenue generated from marriage licenses would be refunded if an amendment is passed.

"I will be moderate for a second to say that it's unfair to give gay people licenses and then take them back," he said.

Chris Looney, a junior economics major and College Republicans member, deviated slightly from

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Election schedule revised by ASUO

The general election was scheduled to take place during the law school's Dead Week

By Jared Paben
Senior News Reporter

The ASUO Constitution Court on Tuesday rejected the ASUO Election Board's election packet, calling it "constitutionally infirm" because the general election was scheduled April 20 through April 22, during the University School of Law's Dead Week.

"Were the Court to approve such a date, then any such student seeking office would be placed in the untenable position of having to choose between preparation for a final examination and their campaign," Chief Justice J. Michael Harris wrote.

ASUO Elections Coordinator Stephanie Day said she submitted a revised packet Tuesday afternoon that now sets the primary election for April 5, 6 and 7 and the

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NEWS BRIEFS

Take Back the Night march will feature three sections

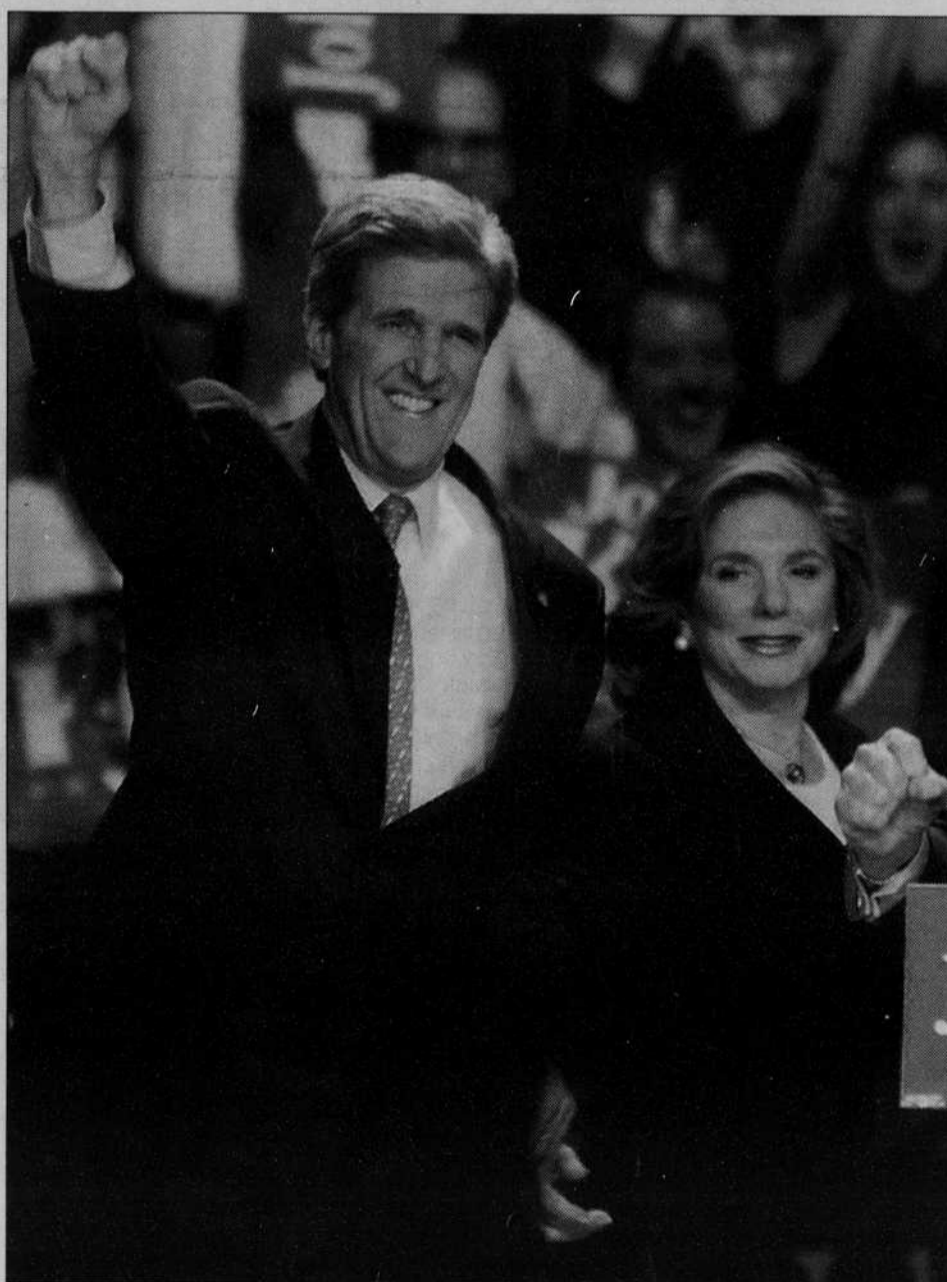
The Take Back the Night march steering committee has decided to separate the march into three sections: women only, gender-queer and gender-neutral.

During a meeting to discuss the issue Thursday, people attending voted to advise the committee to separate the march.

Erin Dury, sexual violence prevention and education coordinator for the ASUO

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Kerry claims Democratic nomination



Chuck Kennedy KRT

Sen. John Kerry (D-Ma.), joined by wife Teresa Heinz Kerry, addresses supporters in Washington, D.C., Tuesday.

Despite conceding two weeks ago, Howard Dean picked up a win in Vermont; John Edwards is expected to announce his decision to leave the race today

By Steven Thomma
Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

WASHINGTON — Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts clinched the Democratic presidential nomination Tuesday, crushing rival John Edwards in a coast-to-coast primary romp and driving him from the race.

Kerry, 60, dealt the final blow to Edwards' fading campaign by beating him decisively in Ohio, one of the states where Edwards had hoped his down-home populist message would impress voters who blame free trade for lost jobs.

Kerry added blowout wins in New York, Connecticut, Maryland, Rhode Island and his home state of Massachusetts in early returns. In all, 10 states voted Tuesday.

In a surprise that had no effect on the nomination contest, failed candidate Howard Dean won a sentimental victory in his home state of Vermont. Though he quit the race Feb. 18, his name remained on the ballot in Vermont and many other states.

Edwards clung Tuesday evening to hope for a victory in Georgia, where the race was too close to call two hours after polls closed.

Still, he abandoned any fading hope of overtaking Kerry and decided to fly to his home in Raleigh, N.C., rather than continue campaigning as scheduled. He was expected to announce his decision to leave the race in a speech there Wednesday afternoon at a high school that his children attended, according to sources close to him who spoke on condition of anonymity.

A total of 1,151 delegates were at stake in the 10 states: California, Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Rhode Island and Vermont.

With Kerry's nomination now all but certain, both parties signaled an immediate start of the general election campaign.

Appearing on CBS Tuesday morning, Kerry brushed aside a suggestion from some Democrats that he doesn't have the passion to take on Bush.

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Ryan Nyburg reviews
"The Passion
of the Christ"