

STEPPIN' OUT

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photo by Helen Lottridge

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E D I T O R I A L

It was a long time coming, but now that it is finally here the women of Portland are excited about their new bar. The Primary Domain.

Never before has Portland's womens' community had such a haven they could call their own. White walls with grey trim offer bright avant garde decor. Grey and brown tweed chairs seated at light grey tables add to the softness of the bar. It has been a tradition for bars to be dark and dingy, but the Primary Domain breaks that tradition with lighting that is bright and flattering. The entire bar exudes an atmosphere of femininity and womanness.

Opening night brought together an extremely diverse group of women. From frequent bar goers to the infrequent. From the very politically correct to the very politically incorrect. Young women, older women, white women, women of color, and differently-abled women blended in together with the atmosphere, and it has been that way ever since.

The service is good, the drink menu is fabulous, featuring a wide variety of blended alcohol drinks, along with an assortment of blended non-alcoholic drinks, too, making non-drinkers as welcome as drinkers. The prices are fair and reasonable, and the bar has an overall warm and inviting atmosphere.

The Primary Domain makes you feel good about being there. There is nothing deviate about it. It screams, "It's okay to be gay and love women."

The women's community owes Kate Sullivan a great big thank-you for finally bringing class to the bar scene in Portland.

The women's bar community is ever-changing. The past year has seen many. For too long we had only two women's bars. The Otherside of Midnight, which was owned by two women, but is now owned by a supportive gay man; the Club 927 owned by straight men and managed by their gay relatives. The black walls and sleazy atmosphere discouraged many women from patronizing the bar, though the owners are still able to pack them in on Friday and Saturday nights.

A third women's bar came and went, Judy's. Serving beer and wine it appealed to a small segment, and raised hopes of filling a void long felt in the community. Hosting many musical and theatrical events, Judy's gave women musicians and actors in the community a forum for their talents, though the bar still was unable to support itself and was forced to close.

It has always irritated me that women would support the straight-male-owned Club 927 over the women-owned Otherside of Midnight and Judy's. I always felt that money from the women's community should go back into the pockets of women, not into the pockets of their main oppressor — straight men.

It is my hope, and the hope of many others that the Primary Domain will fill the needs of those women who currently support the Club 927 and force the owners of that bar to revert back to a straight clientele and put gay moeny back into the pockets of gay people.

Renee LaChance

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