

## Roseburg's GALA receives MRG grant

by Billy Russo

Last winter I leafed through a copy of the *Oregon Guide to Foundations* looking for Oregon-based trusts that might be willing to help finance our work here. Among the hundred-odd grantmakers, I gleaned a handful that looked hopeful. Focusing on their funding history, I chose groups that funded the less traditional organizations. I wrote brief letters on GALA stationery to fourteen or so groups, asking for applications.

Only two groups responded with applications: the Fred Meyer Charitable Trust and the McKenzie River Gathering (MRG). MRG was in the midst of their funding cycle, and said that I could apply in the fall.

Dealing with the Meyer trust was a long,



## The Roseburg Report

drawn-out process which proved not to be fruitful. It took all summer for them to decide not to fund us. And I believe that the long delay indicates that they must have at least entertained the notion of funding GALA.

This fall I filled out the four page application that MRG sent us. The instructions clearly stated that they will accept no attachments; however, newsletters and leaflets were optional. Responses had to be limited to the space provided and had to be submitted in fifteen copies. MRG's funding criteria specifies that they are particularly interested in projects that create social change, that have limited access to traditional funding sources, and that are actively involved in outreach to those not well represented.

The following month I received notice that GALA was among 34 organizations considered finalists. We were among 20 groups invited to come to Eugene in December to make a presentation to their grantmaking committee. The presentations were billed as "an opportunity to find out about social

change work going on throughout Oregon."

The presentation took place at the Emerald Baptist Church. In the letter that informed us that we were among the preliminary finalists, it was explained that we would make a ten minute presentation to the fourteen member grantmaking committee. In turn the committee would ask questions for ten minutes. Prospective grantees were also allowed to ask questions.

The first presentation was by the host of the *Blue Plate Special*, a half hour talk show aired Monday through Friday on KLCC in Eugene. He talked about the important role his program plays in discussing social changes in such areas as awareness about Central American issues. He also talked in length about a recent interview he did with Aaron Fricke, author of *Reflections of a Rock Lobster*.

The presentations went on all day. Groups representing native Americans, blacks, Central America, prison projects, anti-nuke, women's rights, anti-pollution, lesbian/gay concerns and anti-choice were all there making a pitch for money.

By the time *New Clear News* made their presentation early in the afternoon, everyone seemed sedated by the slow pace and the predictability of the afternoon. After the ten minute explanation, one of the grantors inquired into *New Clear News'* affiliation with the anti-choice movement. The man making the presentation tried to play that down. I could see outrage on the faces of some of those present and everyone around the room focused on the discussion.

The only other homophile group there was Lesbian Community Organizing Project. They asked for money to explore ways to provide better networking within the lesbian community.

I made a brief presentation asking for money to purchase a letter quality printer for production of our monthly newsletter, *The Gay Ol' Times*. Besides myself, a GALA co-president, Jesse Cordor, our Recorder, Wes Luttrell, and Doug Beal, an at-large Board member were also present. Jesse also said a few words about our community, and the fourteen grantmakers and prospective grantees asked questions about our commitment to social change.

A week later we received notice that GALA was being funded for the full amount requested. The official notification listed their decision pertaining to all the groups. And every organization received funding except the anti-choice affiliate, *New Clear News*.

The McKenzie River Gathering Foundation has been funding non-traditional social change projects in Oregon for ten years. They have made over 900 grants and loans totalling \$1.3 million. Their administrative costs average 20 percent of their income which is the lowest ratio in the U.S.A. today.

## Age no barrier to alienation

Dear Dr. Ray,

I am 50 years old, but unless I'm looking in the mirror I'm convinced that I'm much younger. I enjoy the company of men in their 30s and I find them much more interesting physically than people my own age. The only thing I miss in a serious relationship with a younger person is a mental and emotional maturity that seems only to come with age.

I am a relationship-oriented person. I will soon begin the search for a relationship that I hope will be my last. Should I look for someone my own age who will share my problems of getting older, or just follow my heart?

In a Dilemma

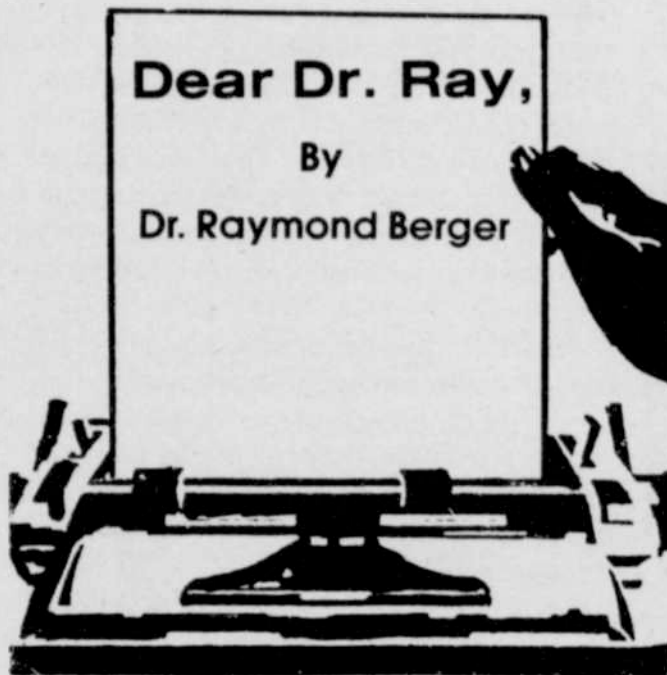
Dear Dilemma,

Many people in their forties and on into their eighties share your feeling: despite the

Dear Dr. Ray,

By

Dr. Raymond Berger



reality of their age they feel like a much younger person inside. Don't be disconcerted by this feeling. Instead, focus on the pleasure of feeling and acting young and energetic.

In matters of love your only choice is to "follow your heart." You can't force your feelings of attraction and shouldn't try to. And there are gay men in their thirties who are well seasoned by life and interested in considering an older partner.

On the other hand, if a relationship is of central importance to you, as you say, then you know that sexual attraction is only one part of a long-term relationship. In fact, for most couples, after the first few months or years of intense physical attraction, it is other factors that keep the pair together.

What are your standards for the type of man that you will consider as a potential partner? Can you relax your standards? Can you open yourself up to exploring a relationship with someone older than 40? Consider that every relationship is a series of compromises. Compromising your desire for a particular

physical type or age may be well worth the effort in its long term rewards.

Your letter implies an urgency and finality in our "search" for a relationship. Can you learn anything from your previous relationships? Have your relationships tended to be with men who were "less mature"? This may have nothing to do with age. But if you find that you always seem to attract the same type of man, you may need to re-examine just what it is you are looking for in a relationship.

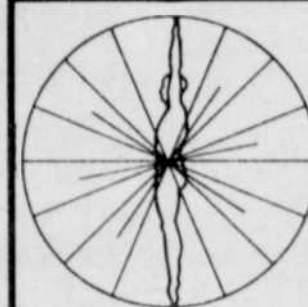
At any rate, you are more likely to be successful you take your time. Don't put your life on hold until Mr. Right comes along. Enjoy your friends and the activities that give pleasure and meaning to your life.

Best of luck to you!

Dr. Ray

Have a problem? Need advice? Write to "Dr. Ray" in care of *Just Out*, PO Box 15117, Portland, OR 97215. Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you wish to receive a personal reply.

Dr. Raymond Berger, an individual, couple and family counselor, is author of the book *Gay and Gray: The Older Homosexual Man*. To schedule an appointment with Dr. Berger call (503) 292-2735.



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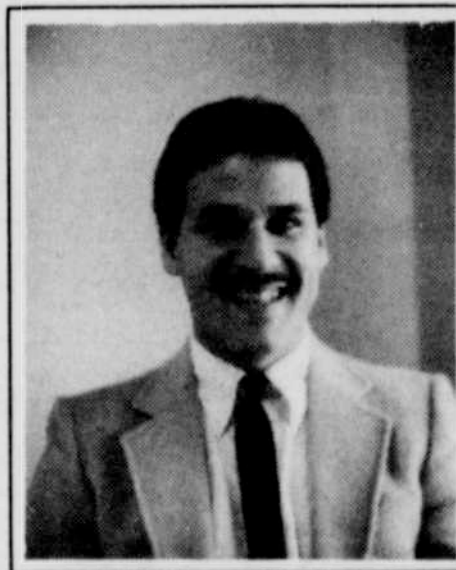
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