

# Just out

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Written and graphic materials are welcomed for submission. All written material should be typed and double-spaced. All graphic material should be black ink on white paper. Material will be edited for spelling and grammar, with the exception of letters to the editor.

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month.

Out About Town is a courtesy to our readers. Performers, clubs, individuals, or groups wanting to list events in the calendar should mail notices to *Just Out* by the 15th of the month preceding publication. Listings will not be taken by telephone.

Display Advertising will be accepted up to the 20th of each month.

Classified ads must be received at the office of *Just Out* by the 20th of each month, along with payment. Ads will not be taken over the telephone.

Editorial policies allow the rejection or the editing of an article or advertisement that is offensive, demeaning or may result in legal action. *Just Out* consults the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual on editorial decisions.

Views expressed in letters to the editor, columns, and features may not be those of the editorial staff of *Just Out*.

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The mailing address and telephone number for *Just Out* are:

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# CATHARTIC COMICS

BY RUPERT KINNARD

On Vacation this issue

Call 236-1252  
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## Steppin' Out



## C O M M E N T A R Y

### United Way excludes Phoenix Rising again

*Ten to fifteen percent of the population is gay, yet no gay agency appears on United Way's membership list. In all probability, ten to fifteen percent of United Way dollars come from gays and lesbians.*

BY HELEN LOTTRIDGE

United Way has denied admission and funding to Phoenix Rising, Oregon's only gay/lesbian service center, for the second year. Application for admission as a United Way agency was first made by Phoenix Rising in 1985; at that time, we were not permitted to go beyond the point of a letter of inquiry. In 1986, we completed the entire application process, which extended from October through May, and we were among eight finalists of forty original applicants. During this process, we received positive feedback about our application and about Phoenix Rising as an agency — but no money.

We were pleased to have the opportunity to go through the steps of the application process: letter of inquiry, formal application, staff interview and report, appearance of agency representatives before the admissions committee. We were also very disappointed at the outcome. 10-15% of the general population is gay, yet no gay agency appears on United Way's membership list. In all probability, 10-15% of United Way dollars come from gay men or lesbians.

Inevitably, the question arises, "Were you excluded because of homophobia?" It's a hard one to answer. We found United Way staff to be professional, informative and helpful. While the admissions committee was at times somewhat challenging in their approach, they seemed genuinely interested and willing to listen to our responses. Still, one has to wonder why we were not admitted. We meet all the criteria. The services we offer are on the "high

funding priorities" list as recommended by the United Way Emphasis Committee Report. We serve a very large oppressed minority population which is not supported by United Way. We've demonstrated success in our eight years of operation. It seems likely that anything having to do with the gay community in our society is affected at least somewhat by homophobia.

Our request, \$22,605, was modest when contrasted with other United Way agencies. What would we have done with the money? We would have provided more low-cost counseling to clients who are unable to afford it, particularly in the following groups: adults molested as children, gay youth, gay families, persons experiencing domestic violence, persons with AIDS, ARC and test positive, and mentally retarded adult gay men. We would have begun to move out of the emergency staffing plan we've been on for the past three years. Currently, we have no staff who are paid full-time, so many hours are donated. We're fortunate to have such a well-qualified and dedicated staff. Eight years ago we started with volunteer professional counselors. Now, we hire only one of every ten applicants, and all of them have a Master's or Doctorate degree.

Our biggest disappointment is for the people we could have helped. We're currently beyond the limits of our ability to subsidize. Our sliding scale starts at \$15.00, and our average client fee doesn't cover the cost of providing services. We feel fortunate to have found a bright, new office at the same cost as our old space, and to have a highly professional staff, but there's more work to be done.

For eight years, we've depended on the generosity and support of the gay community to enable us to help our own, and that's what we must continue to do. We're asking everyone in the community to review their charitable contribution plan for 1987-88, and encourage you to donate within the community, being as generous as you can.

United Way has developed an "Inclusiveness Project", which reads in part, "The mission of United Way is to increase the organized capacity of people to care for one another. . . . The goal of the project is to promote and expand leadership, volunteerism and philanthropy in segments of the community which have previously not been actively involved within the United Way system. . . . In an effort to achieve this goal, several emerging communities have been identified. These communities require special assistance in accessing the UWCW system. They include ethnic minorities, geographic service areas, sexual minorities and the disabled as well as other underrepresented communities." This project reflects United Way's desire to encompass a wider spectrum of the overall community.

We urge you to communicate directly with United Way, encouraging them to be a leader in serving the whole Portland community, to implement their Inclusiveness Project. The sheer size of the gay population in this area makes social services a priority. Other groups in the Portland area having special need have found United Way to be responsive to positive appeals from community members, so if you support this effort, please contact them directly to express your position.

Phoenix Rising is the only lesbian/gay service center in Oregon. Our clients are assured of having a gay/gay-knowledgeable therapist. Although homosexuality was removed from the list of "disorders" by the American Psychological Association in 1973, it is still difficult to obtain competent counseling that is both informed and nonjudgmental about sexual orientation. Many of us have entered into counseling for other issues, only to be confronted by a therapist who was intent on "curing" our "illness" of homosexuality, and unwilling to work on other presented issues. At the other extreme, many contemporary therapists may view themselves as open, but then insist on ignoring the issues of homosexuality altogether, having no understanding about how sexual orientation may affect other issues.

Persons wishing to pledge or make tax-deductible donations to Phoenix Rising Foundation may do so by mailing them to 333 S. W. 5th, Suite 404, Portland, Oregon 97204. The telephone number is 223-8299.

Persons wishing to communicate with United Way may do so by writing to David A. Paradine, President, 718 W. Burnside, Portland, Oregon 97209. The telephone number is 228-9131.

Helen Lottridge is Executive Director of Phoenix Rising Foundation. ●