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Ben Merrill is pleased and honored to be moving across the street and to share office space with the law firm of Royce, Swanson, and Thomas with Bev Stein at

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*Wishing you and yours warm holidays—
 and a prosperous new year!*

— Ben **Ben Merrill, Attorney at Law**

Just Out • 8 • December, 1987

Just news

Community notes

Portland Women's Crisis Line board, Cygnificant Other, the Women Only Blood Drive and thoughts on the holidays.

BY KAMILA AL-NAJJAR

On Tuesday, December 22, the next Women Only Blood Drive will take place from 3 to 7 p.m. at the downtown YWCA. Donors must be at least 17 years old, weigh 110 or more and be in good health. Every participant will undergo a health screening and mini-physical before donating blood.

This drive will be held in memory and honor of Audria Edwards. Audria was a full-time volunteer at all of the previous drives and was a very caring woman. There will be "in memory" cards available for those donors who would like to send a note to her family letting them know that they donated blood in her memory.

Women are encouraged to sign up before the drive: call Anita at 231-0843 or Lynda Oakley at the Red Cross at 284-1234, ext. 312. Only women are accepted to donate at this particular drive, however, men are welcome as volunteers to help the day of the drive, or to help provide refreshments for the canteen area.

PWCL seeks board candidates

The Portland Women's Crisis Line has announced openings on its Board of Directors. The PWCL is encouraging women of color and survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence to seek membership.

The PWCL is a feminist organization serving communities throughout the tri-county area and is committed to ending violence against women and children through:

- The maintenance of a 24-hour telephone hotline to provide support, services and education to women experiencing domestic and/or sexual violence
- The endorsement and support of related programs intended to prevent the crimes of rape, battering, incest and sexual harassment
- The provision of an education program for the community at large on the problems of domestic and sexual violence

Board members will help set policy for the agency and join one of the acting committees. Individuals interested in the positions should contact the PWCL at 232-9751 during business hours before December 21, 1987.

Cygnificant Other debuts at PD

We want to change the face of women's music," says Kaite Chase, lead vocals and rhythm guitarist for "Cygnificant Other," a new women's band in Portland.

Kaite says that for years the forerunners of women's music have been very country- and folk-oriented and the women of today are looking for something different and are hungry for a change.

"All of our original material is very high energy with messages that deal with people and the problems that we are all living with. It's a mixture and an aspect of people and social entities," says Kaite with an enthusiastic look on her face.

Kaite describes the band with its other three members (Bev Standish, Casey Lee and Monte!) as a very tight group of musicians.

"We are a democratic group and respect each other's feelings and creativity when we are together. We like to have a good time and we are here to entertain and show people what it's like to love music from the heart," she says.

"Cygnificant Other" will debut at the Primary Domain on Wednesday, December 23, at 8 p.m. The band encourages everyone to come out. Cover is only two dollars.

Home for the holidays?



Illustration by E. Ann Hinds

Bah, humbug!

Every year it seems to start earlier and earlier and by August all of the winter coats are on the racks. Mannequins, displayed in department store windows, are wrapped in winter wools with snow drifts at their feet, while I'm still trying to maintain my summer tan.

By the end of November or, rather, the day after Thanksgiving the real madness begins — getting ready for Christmas. Stores have overdone displays and there are dozens of television commercials for best new Chipmunk's Christmas album. We are bombarded with the capitalistic hype to "buy, buy, buy for our loved ones."

Beyond all of the commercialism of the season, there is also the issue of "family." Christmas is traditionally a time meant to be spent with our families. But this in itself can lead people to their most depressing and stressful times of the year. So I asked a few people some questions about their perception of this time of year.

How do the holidays make you feel?

Jill: "I really enjoy the holidays. I look forward to Christmas and decorating my house, the whole process excites me."

Rick: I don't look forward to the holidays as much as I used to. It's kind of boring to me. It seems like it's been the same thing for 25 years; I know when we are going to have dinner and what we are going to eat. Holidays were always a big deal in my home.

Mary: I get excited, just because it's a time for giving and loving. But on the other hand, when it comes to family expectations, it brings me down.

How does being gay affect the holidays for you?

Frank: It's a separation. I don't feel like I have a family to go home to and Rick feels obligated to be with his family. It is a time for family to be together and I still don't feel comfortable around his family. His brother and sister can be affectionate with their lovers, but Rick and I end up sitting on opposite ends of the couch. I want to be able to hold his hand and be close.

Robin: I feel close to my family and we have a nice time together during the holidays, but it is getting to the point where I would rather spend it with my good friends. I'm not out to my parents. I could bring my lover over, but that would be like just bringing a friend over and things would still be unknown.

Rick: If I could have anything change about the holidays it would be me being able to break the close ties I have with my family and not feel a lot of guilt for wanting to spend the holidays with my lover.