

# Just news

## "No on 8" OFF and running

Through November 8, OFF will tell voters why "No on 8" is a vote for fairness.

BY ANNDEE HOCHMAN

The first semi-official campaign sign hangs in the window of the Bijou Cafe: bright crayoned colors, large block letters. Bumperstickers and buttons deliver the same simple message: "No on 8."

Telling people *how* to vote on the measure, which would roll back Gov. Neil Goldschmidt's executive order protecting lesbians and gays in state jobs and services, is the easy part. Between now and November 8, leaders of Oregonians for Fairness will struggle to tell voters *why*.

With two months until the election, OFF campaign staff and volunteers are raising funds from all corners of the state and figuring out how to persuade uncertain voters that a "no" on Measure 8 is a vote for fairness.

"It's not just a gay rights issue, but an issue of non-discrimination," said Cathy Siemens, deputy campaign manager of OFF. "Part of our job will be some education about what the repeal measure actually does. It sends a message to state supervisors that they *can* discriminate [on the basis of sexual orientation], that they will not be reprimanded for it. So it's a lot more serious than people think."

By the end of August, OFF had begun the hurried paces of a campaign to defeat what is sure to be the ballot's most controversial measure. OFF staff, camped on the carpet of a large southeast office, consulted datebooks already scribbled full of fund-raising events,

polling deadlines and meetings with organizers around the state.

Liz Kaufman, OFF's campaign manager, has worked on political campaigns in Connecticut and Oregon since 1982, including Beverly Stein's successful primary run for the state House of Representatives. Kaufman's political experience spans issues from landlord-tenant law to toxic-waste clean-up. She said the "No on 8" campaign appealed to her because its impact goes beyond gay rights.

"Over the past couple of months, I've realized the urgency of pushing back the onslaught by the right wing in this state. It's clear that this group of people is not going to stop until they suffer a substantial defeat."

While OFF leaders won't develop the specifics of their strategy until they examine results of a statewide poll, Kaufman said the messages will probably focus on several general issues. One key theme is fairness, she said, and the idea that a measure permitting discrimination against one group opens the door for discrimination against others. Kaufman said the campaign also may stress that passage of Measure 8 would be a departure from Oregon's reputation for sane, forward-thinking politics.

"This is kind of a wacky thing to do, and we don't want to be seen as a state where people pass wacky laws," she said.

Both Kaufman and Siemens stress the importance of a unified campaign that can deliver powerful messages from Portland to Bend, from Coos Bay to the Rogue Valley.



In southern Oregon, where the gay and lesbian community is smaller and its funds limited, OFF is working to enlist financial and moral support from non-gay elected officials, clergy and the academic community.

Tim Hughes, OFF's southern Oregon fund-raising coordinator, said that by the end of August more than 20 persons had agreed to host fund-raising house parties, and that many of those hosts are University of Oregon professors and students, county commissioners, clergy members and the parents of lesbians and gay men.

OFF also sponsored a booth at the Lane County Fair to spread the word about Measure 8. "We basically introduced ourselves to a lot of middle America," said Laurie McClain of Eugene.

In general, the response indicated that "middle America" is confused. Some people approached the booth shouting, "How can you be against discrimination?" while others collected pamphlets, then told OFF organizers that they had "helped put Measure 8 on the ballot," Hughes said. "There are a lot of people out there who don't have a clue [about the measure]. I was glad we were the first ones doing their education." Although there were no overt confrontations between fair-goers and OFF organizers, "the after-church crowd on Sunday was fairly hostile," he said.

Bryce Johnson, an organizer of the Human Rights Coalition, which will fight Measure 8 in

the Rogue Valley area, said a grass-roots campaign there has taken its first steps. A local tavern is sponsoring "Defeat Measure 8" nights in which customers make contributions and employees donate their wages to the campaign. Johnson said the repeal measure is new information to many voters he has approached.

"A lot of people don't know about it. And I still run into people who signed the petition and are amazed to hear that it was misrepresented. My experience is that when I talk to people about it, they're quite ready to sign up in opposition to Measure 8."

Organizers all over the state agree that, especially in sparsely populated areas, mass-media efforts such as TV spots and mailings will speak the loudest to the most people.

"I feel like, down here, we'll have limited success talking to friends and people we know," Johnson said. "But we really need to get to people who watch four or five hours of television per day."

Oregonians for Fairness plans the following fund-raising events:

September 10-11 — Statewide house-party weekend. Planning packets available from OFF. "It's something people can easily plug into," said Cathy Siemens, OFF deputy campaign manager. "We plan to raise at least \$30,000 around the state."

September 18 — A benefit performance of *Babes on Burnside: Modern Times* at Storefront Theatre, \$25 per seat.

September 24-25 — The "world's largest rummage sale," held in the Pearl District, where 5,000 square feet of antiques, collectibles, clothing, furniture and household goods will be for sale.

October 16 — A benefit performance of *Hair* at Portland Civic Theatre, \$25 per seat.

To volunteer or to donate money or materials, write to OFF, 898 SE Stark St., Portland, OR 97214, or call 231-3913.



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## Priscilla appeals slander award

A Multnomah County Circuit Court jury made up its mind about Tim Shuck and Priscilla Martin more than a month ago. The jury decided that Martin, a well-known anti-abortion activist, had slandered Shuck by shouting on several occasions that he had AIDS outside the Lovejoy Surgicenter where he works. The jury awarded Shuck \$175,000.

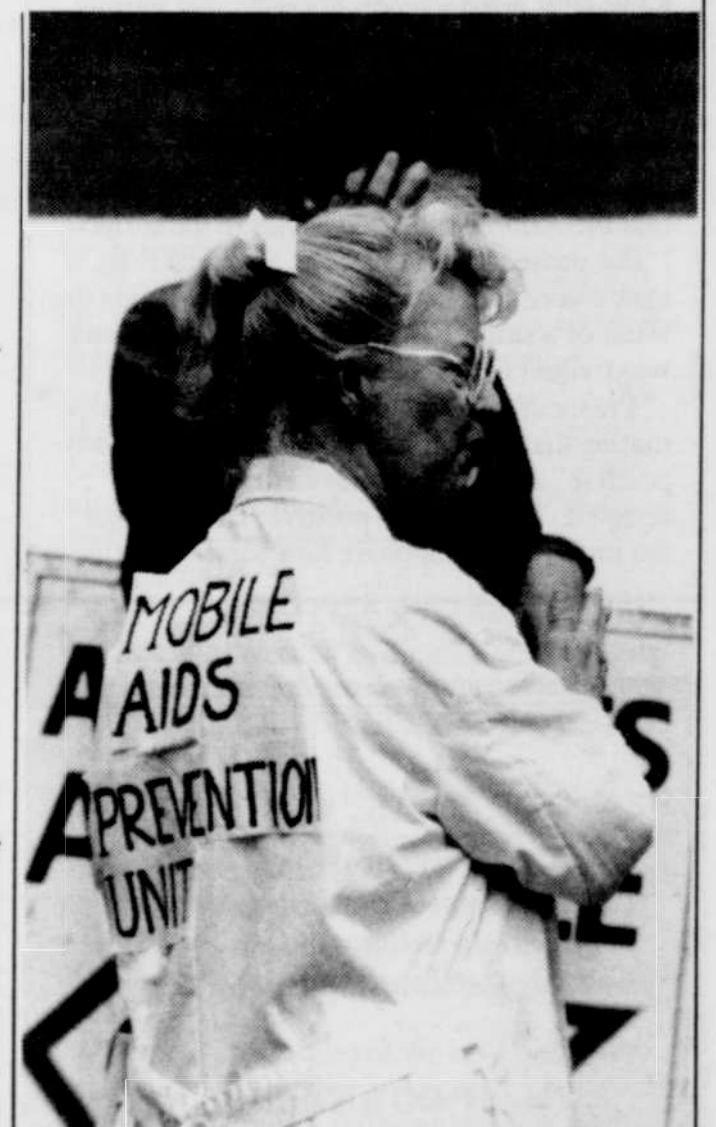
But the case won't be over until after the last appeal. Martin's attorney, Henry S. Kane, has filed a motion to declare a mistrial and call for a new trial, primarily on grounds that the behavior and expressions of the courtroom deputy may have influenced the outcome of the case.

In one of ten affidavits filed with the motion, Martin's husband, Arthur H. Martin, said that the deputy, Joan Peterson, gestured and reacted in a way that may have biased jurors in favor of Shuck.

Her "demonstrative behavior, through her facial expressions, was a running commentary of her agreement or disagreement with the testimony," Arthur Martin said.

Kane raised the same issue in court near the trial's conclusion. After hearing testimony from two journalists who had attended the trial and who said they observed no misconduct from Peterson, Judge Robert W. Redding dismissed the motion for a mistrial, calling it "frivolous."

Ronald H. Hoevet, Shuck's attorney, said he will write a response to Kane's motion, which



Priscilla Martin

was filed August 22. "I can't take the motion very seriously," he said. "It's just a rehash of arguments made during trial that Henry lost on."

— Anndee Hochman