

## Helen Lottridge leaves Phoenix Rising

*A particular coup was the acceptance of Phoenix Rising as a United Way member agency*

BY ANNDEE HOCHMAN

When Helen Lottridge became executive director of Phoenix Rising in July 1984, the agency's eight counselors saw about 30 clients a month; the budget was about \$35,000. When she left the job a little more than a month ago, there were 20 counselors on staff seeing 200 clients a month; the budget had grown to \$175,000.

The agency's path through those four years, from a small, low-visibility organization to a large one with a high public profile, was not always smooth. The most powerful lesson she learned as executive director, Lottridge says now, was how to take the risks that kept Phoenix Rising moving forward.

"I just had to take risks in order to keep it going," she said. "It was having the cheek to stay in business when it didn't look like we'd be able to. It was maintaining confidence in myself and the staff when I wasn't sure if we were going to make the next month's rent."

Phoenix Rising Board of Directors president Steve Dotterer, a board member for three years, said Lottridge's devotion to the agency was a particular strength.

"I think she's a very good administrator. I think she's very able, very competent at what she does," he said. "She put in a lot of extra time and did a lot of extra things for the agency."

Behind the changes in budget and staffing that occurred under Lottridge's leadership were more basic shifts in direction, she said.

"We started running the agency more like a business. We instituted more formal office policies and practices. We became much more visible. And that was all by design." Phoenix Rising's advertising increased; the agency began to sponsor more workshops and events. A particular coup was the acceptance of Phoenix Rising as a United Way member agency. This year marks the first time United Way has funded a gay and lesbian organization in Portland.

That heightened profile had its price. "The more visible we became, the more hate calls we began to get," Lottridge said.

After 20 years in management, Lottridge said, it was time for a career shift. She now attends Portland Community College full-time, studying computer systems analysis. She said she will miss the staff at Phoenix Rising more than anything else and remains most proud of leaving the agency on solid financial ground.

"I'm proud of insuring the continued existence of the agency. It required some careful management to keep it from going under. We now have a secure financial base," she said.

Dotterer said the board is currently searching for a new executive director and hopes to interview candidates this month.

## Siemens appointed to MHRC

The formation of a true coalition of minorities will be one of the goals Cathy Siemens will work toward as a member of the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission. Siemens says she is "really excited by the opportunity to connect issues of discrimination" among all minorities as she takes a seat on the 15 member board. "All groups are vulnerable," Siemens said.

Another important goal of her term on the commission will be working to establish con-

crete policies of a mandate for hate crimes statistics. "Victims of discrimination are frightened. I will act as a liaison" in the documentation of crimes motivated by bigotry. "The right wing is not interested in scientific, rational information, but with hate-crimes statistics we can wave the proof in their faces that discrimination *does* exist," Siemens said.

A longtime resident of Portland, Siemens is a veteran in the struggle for equal rights for lesbians and gays. She was the first executive director of the Lesbian Community Project and was the assistant campaign director of Oregonians for Fairness.

— Jay Brown

## MCC fire accidental

The Christmas Eve fire at the Metropolitan Community Church, Portland was caused by a "real freak accident," according to the Rev. Gary Wilson, church pastor. The accidental fire caused major damage to a large stained glass window on the west side of the building.

Wilson said that he was "happy to report no

evidence of arson from within or without." The fire was caused by a candle which reignited itself, he said.

The church has received offers of money and offers of help with a replacement for the uninsured window. "We think the community will be pleased," Wilson said two days after the accident.

— Jay Brown

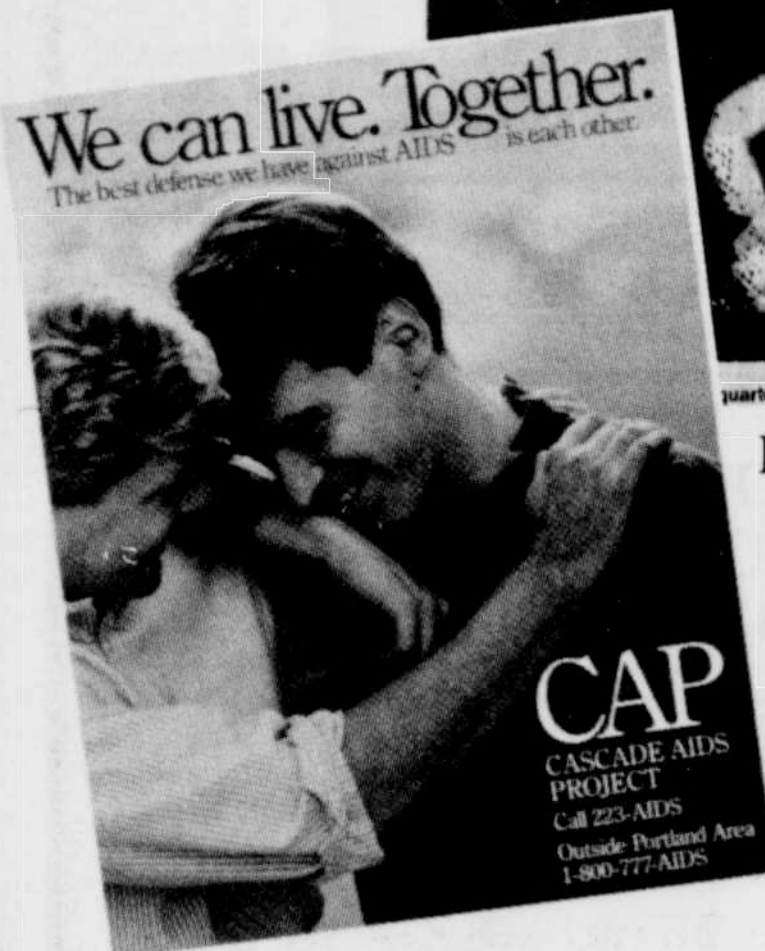
## Operation Andrew

Andrew Wiley is six and lives in Dallas, Texas. In November, Andrew's father died from complications due to AIDS. Before Bill Wiley succumbed, he asked Judith Hyde of Portland to take care of his son.

Judith Hyde must travel to Dallas for a custody hearing in early February. Court costs, attorney fees and transportation add up to

approximately \$3000, which single-mother Hyde doesn't have right on hand. Hyde is asking for help from Oregon's gay and lesbian community so that she can fulfill her promise to her friend.

All contributions in excess of costs will be donated to organizations combatting AIDS in Portland and Dallas. Contributions may be mailed to Operation Andrew, PO Box 82153, Portland, OR 97282.



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Quarterback Chris Crawford share a special moment after PSU's 35-27 win.

## Hypocrisy in action

The photograph (by Ross Hamilton) appeared in the sports section of The Oregonian on December 5, 1988, with this caption: "Tight end Barry Naone (left) and quarterback Chris Crawford share a special moment after PSU's 35-27 win."

Maybe the models for the Cascade AIDS Project should have worn football jerseys?

## Lesbian Community Project conference slated for mid-February

Lesbian Families: Affirming Our Choices," a conference for and by lesbians and their families will occur February 17-19, 1989. The conference will examine the many different kinds of families of which lesbians choose to be a part, as well as factors that relate to lesbian families, legal issues, parenting, alcoholism, careers, and others.

Among the workshops included at the conference will be Lesbian Families and the Law; Thinking of Having Children?; Issues of Coming Out to Biological Families; and a film and discussion group for teens of lesbians.

The conference, sponsored by the Lesbian Community Project, will also feature a concert by Bay Area jazz pianist, Mary Watkins, and a slide presentation of the 1987 March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights. For conference registration and information contact, LCP, 233-9079, or write PO Box 5931, Portland, OR 97228.

— K.C. de Gutes

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