

Hobo's response unconvincing

To the Editor:

I remain unconvinced by Hobo's response to Kelly Childress's letter. I think the response displays an insidious and subtle form of homophobia — the "some of my best friends are" type.

Oh, how very supportive Jay Sauft and Harriett Troutman are of our community — just so long as we stay in our place and don't make trouble for the folks in from Gresham with the kids. (Why do the homophobes always have to drag in the children as an excuse for oppressing us?)

Of course they can find gays who will support the oppression — that's a common enough tactic. And you will note that only same sex couples, one for each community (very balanced), needed to be reminded of the common standards of conduct. We just can't keep our hands off each other, can we?

Finally, what is kissing excessively? In the wider world, it is usually not comfortable for gay men and lesbians to show affection. That's why we have been invisible for so long. So when we find a place where we can touch each other, we might, MIGHT, touch and kiss more than a straight couple who have the whole world in which to express their love. If straight people are uncomfortable seeing our affection, then it is an opportunity for them to experience in part what we experience very often.

It is unacceptable for Hobo's to single us out. Hobo's is, after all, a gay bar! Their profits should not be used to continue our oppression, especially since it is largely our dollars which make up that profit.

The next time someone, after a movie, say, suggests Hobo's, I'll suggest somewhere — anywhere — else.

Dave Traeger
Portland

CAP Board and accountability

To the Editor:

So, the CAP Board of Directors tells us that change is natural, and not to worry that both of their top leaders are gone. Well, I say change may be natural, but consuming our leadership is not. This kind of self

consumption goes on at many AIDS organizations around the country — perhaps when a community is under such pressure as ours it manifests itself in this way. We definitely need more healing energy, less conflict.

The Board's column asserts that Tom Koberstein left for unrelated personal reasons. It is commonly understood that the catalyst for Mike McGowan's firing was the perception that he was protecting Tom, particularly with regard to the decision to hire a staff person for the Walkathon, besides the Development Director. It is obvious that this firing triggered Tom's decision to leave. Tom no doubt put forward "personal reasons" out of maturity and a desire to avoid unpleasantness.

Let's look at a little history: Farley Peterson, staff director of CHES, fired. Brown McDonald, staff director of CAP, not hired (read as fired) after merger of CAP and CHES. Mike McGowan, CAP Chair, "fired." Tom Koberstein, resigned for "personal reasons." In other words, every single top manager at CAP has been eaten alive.

What kind of managerial talent does the organization expect to attract now? Do experienced managers knowingly jump into traps? No. The agency is going to be faced with hiring someone willing to take a huge risk, and that is likely to be someone balancing that risk against the opportunity to develop new skills — i.e., a beginner.

I should disclose my own involvement: I resigned my seat on the CAP Board of Directors back when Brown McDonald was fired, since I had lost confidence in the Board's managerial skills. I continued to contribute money and some time, since CAP is the main AIDS agency, and we have to do this for ourselves. Now I don't know what to do.

I know we need more accountability from the CAP Board to the community. Perhaps CAP should become a membership organization so that contributors (of money or a set amount of time) will be able to vote on the Directors. Perhaps we need a wholly new agency, but that seems very risky. At the very least, we need a higher level of critical public attention to the workings of the CAP Board: Are they handling their stewardship of our funds and our lives in the manner we would like?

Suggestions, anyone?

Terry Miller
Portland

Interim director clarifies CAP agenda

To the Editor:

This is my first letter to Portland's gay/lesbian community in my capacity as Interim Director of Cascade AIDS Project. I guess I better make it good. It seems whatever gets into print about us generates some form of controversy. Like last month's letter from our Board Chair, Jim Simons. Some folks think Jim was saying CAP is going to turn its back on the gay/lesbian community. I know Jim pretty well, and I know that wasn't his intention. But Jim can speak for himself. I want to tell you where I'm coming from. You have a right to know who's working for you.

I came flaming into the gay/lesbian community 20 years ago in Boston. Except there wasn't any community to speak of. Just a few rundown bars. So I got together with some newfound friends and we started Boston's first gay/lesbian newspaper, Lavender Vision. And we went through a lot of pain together, trying to love each other and to direct our anger against our enemies instead of ourselves.

Well, I've never really stopped having that Lavender Vision. Sometimes it got hard and I backed away. But I've always come back to our common struggle for freedom, justice and the American lavender way.

All this is to say that I am not about to turn my back on the gay/lesbian community. And every one of the people who are coordinating our services at CAP — Pattie Ladd, Cliff Jones, and Mimi Luther — could have written this letter. They all have worked for years in our community, long before AIDS darkened our collective door.

Yes, CAP does and will continue to serve anyone who is affected by this terrible disease. And yes we desperately need to expand our base of support so that the gay and lesbian community does not have to continue to carry this disease on our backs. But I understand that our work at CAP is not "just" to fight AIDS. It is also to take part in that 20-plus year struggle to learn how gay and lesbian people can take care of each other and to affirm our intention and our right to survive.

Paul Starr
Interim Executive Director
Cascade AIDS Project

Starlight float committee thanks community for support

To the community:

On June 3, 1989, we made some history here in Portland. Our Gay and Lesbian Float in the Starlight Parade was (as far as we can determine) the FIRST TIME there has ever been a Gay AND Lesbian Float in any mainstream parade, anywhere! Your cheers, blue waving lightsticks and overall presence made the people on the float feel surrounded and supported, and we want to thank you for being there.

We want to thank those 31 people who rode on and walked beside the float. With courage, you set aside your apprehensions and (in many cases) fear of being so very "out." We want to thank those people behind the scenes who came forward to help. We especially want to thank the dedicated people who headed our main committees.

There were a number of businesses in our community we want to thank:

Dakota Cafe
Marlene Findling, Attorney at Law
The Embers
Gifford-Doving Florists
Happy Days Florists
Helen's Pacific Costumes
Old Wives' Tales
Spinster Textiles
The Other Side (Bend, Oregon)
and a wonderful local wholesale florist!

Also, we want to thank all of you who have given money either to the Media Project or to the float directly. We want to encourage those of you who haven't contributed to send us a check — because there's still a deficit to meet (send to LCP/Float, PO Box 5931, Portland, OR, 97228).

And finally, we want to thank the Rose Festival Association for their cooperation and encouragement, and for being willing to be pioneers. Unfortunately, our loyal opposition has had no qualms about writing the Rose Festival telling them they made a terrible mistake. Letters to the Rose Festival from you and your friends will make a difference. Tell them that you support their decision and that diversity makes a community great. They should be sent to: Rolf Glerum, 1989 President, Portland Rose Festival Association, 220 NW 2nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97209.

Again, many many thanks to all!

The Steering Committee
Margins to the Mainstream
Lesbian Community Project

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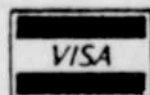


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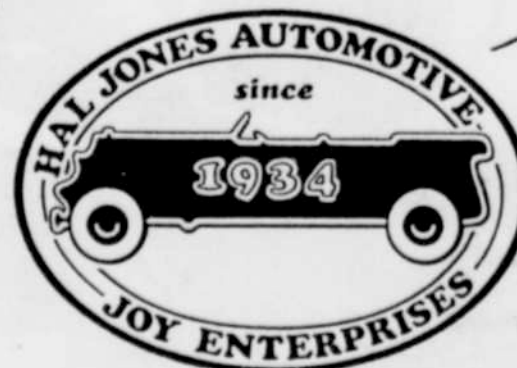


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