

Coors, again!

To the Editor:

Gee, so the Coors Brewing Company recognizes the gay and lesbian community for "our valuable work in combatting the AIDS crisis." Wow, thanks. And now that I'm validated, I'm supposed to march out and buy "Coors beverages," forgetting that those profits go to the Coors family members who support John Birch agendas and anti-gay legislation. Bullshit!!

Please stop supporting Coors. Get them out of Just Out, and out of our refrigerators.

Not only do drugs kill, but profits kill.

Steven Keenan
Portland

Editor's reply: Not to minimize your concerns, but when was the last time you felt "validated" by Fred Meyer, B. Dalton, G.I. Joe's, Safeway, Pay 'n Pak, U.S. Bank? A list of businesses which do not validate you and your point of view by refusing to advertise in this or similar publications can go on and on.

I, personally, have never purchased a Coors product nor do I ever intend to, but since taking their unsolicited money allows this publication — which does validate you and your point of view — to continue (in the red, by the way) then we have and we will.

Instead of castigating Just Out for accepting "tainted" money, write a letter to the advertising buyer at any (or all) of the businesses listed above and urge them to validate, or at least acknowledge, your point of view by adding this publication to their advertising budgets.

And, regarding those "who support John Birch agendas and anti-gay legislation," I believe that anyone who pays taxes to the U.S. Government belongs in this category.

Diversity, strength must include all

To the Editor:

I want to express my profound gratitude to the lesbians who planned and executed the recent LCP Media Project, Margins to the Mainstream. In a short time, they arranged for the first ever Lesbian and Gay float in the Starlight Parade; they brought the first openly lesbian or gay speaker to the City Club whose speech was broadcast on public radio and T.V.; they designed, produced and funded ads promoting lesbian visibility in the Oregonian, and mailed a glossy brochure dispelling many myths about lesbians to thousands of Oregon citizens.

The LCP Media Project accomplished a great deal by reaching out to an audience that does not read the lesbian and gay press. Many

lesbians and gays read the Oregonian and watch the Starlight Parade who would never pick up a copy of Just Out. These people are as much a part of the lesbian and gay community as every "out" person. There are many lesbians and gays in the mainstream of our society. To truly celebrate our diversity and the strength that comes from that diversity, we must include all of us, exclude none, and acknowledge that some lesbians and gays are simply "less different" than others. May our diversity be as varied as our acceptance of one another is strong. Thank you, women!

Jocelyn B. Somers
Portland

Appreciation, not criticism, needed

To the Editor:

I moved to Portland many years ago because of its growing and viable lesbian and gay community. I love our community/communities and the tremendous amount of positive and caring energy that we have.

I have become increasingly aware over the years that we (myself included) do very little toward appreciating the efforts toward leadership that are made by people in our community. We seem to have developed a community-wide pattern of criticalness. Examples:

One was the response to the No on 8 Campaign. Many people in our community put in a tremendous amount of time, energy, and money to fight Ballot Measure 8. Yet much of the public response of our community to the No on 8 Campaign was negative. The No on 8 Campaign was not responsible for Ballot Measure 8's passage; homophobia was. The No on 8 people were never thanked in any significant way by our community.

A more recent example of this pattern of criticalness is Lesbian Community Project's Margins to the Mainstream campaign. This group of lesbians initiated and cosponsored a float in the Starlight Parade, ran openly lesbian ads in the Oregonian, and sponsored the first openly gay speaker at the City Club.

What kind of response are they getting? Again, it seems some people are starting to jump in to pick apart what they've done.

My suggestion is that we cherish those who put time and energy into working for lesbian and gay rights. Who will if we don't? Let's appreciate the efforts each of us makes toward improving our community before we begin criticizing. Of course, everything can be improved. Rather than criticizing what someone has done, perhaps we can frame our thoughts along the lines of how we can

improve our efforts in the future.

To follow my suggestion, I would like to publicly thank each and every person who worked on the No on 8 Campaign and the LCP Media Project. I would propose that each person that agrees with me write these people (or Just Out) a letter of thanks. Each of these people deserves hundreds of such letters. We write our pro-gay legislators letters of support. Let's do the same for each other.

Cindy Cumfer
Portland

Float a joyous, positive image

To the Editor:

Seeing the Lesbians and Gays of Oregon float in the Starlight Parade and the ads placed by the Lesbian Community Project's Media Project in The Oregonian and Willamette Week made me feel great.

Through the work of the Media Project, heterosexuals in Portland had to acknowledge that lesbians like myself are a part of this city. Like it or not, by placing the ads, getting a joyous, colorful float in the parade, and having Jean O'Leary speak at the City Club, we are refusing to be invisible members of this community.

Some Just Out writers have criticized the campaign because of the focus on the mainstream. As a socialist-lesbian-feminist my politics will never be mainstream. What I want is the ability to be open about who I am and what I stand for when I venture out of the lesbian community to do political work.

The Media Project's campaign is a step towards making the general public acknowledge — and hopefully accept — the existence of lesbians in Portland. The float was a way of giving their children a positive, joyous image of lesbians and gays, which runs counter to the images they normally see of us.

Thank you to the women who did the work on this Project. The only question I have is: What's in store for next year's Media Project?

Leila Wrathall
Portland

Why is America so homophobic?

To the Editor:

America has been guilty of many prejudices, but the most rapid-growing is homophobia. It is impossible to figure out their reasons. Homophobia is useless, but it exists.

Strange as it is, our "land of the free" is the worst offending country in the world. What is America's installed fear of homosexuals? Ever since the surface of the AIDS crisis 10 years ago, homophobia scattered. I don't see why people need to discriminate against homosexuals. If you don't care about a person's race or religion, why should you care about sexual orientation? And why is the situation worse in America?

When a lesbian traveled to Canada, she wore a badge for gay rights as she crossed the Canadian border. When she asked the Canadian official if her being a lesbian was a problem, he simply smiled and said, "No, this isn't America!" Why is America so homophobic? When I was getting pledges for the AIDS walk, many people turned me down. Especially one woman, who bluntly replied, "Why should I give my money to save a bunch of gays who brought on the disease, and deserve to die?" That really phased me! The problem is hardly any heterosexuals will stand up for gay rights. People are afraid of being called "gay" so they sit back and allow the abuse to continue instead of doing something about it. People ask why a heterosexual would care about the rights of a homosexual. Why should a white person care about a black person, or a man care about a woman, or a Jew care about a Christian? This country was founded on the grounds of equality, and every group seems to be getting it, but gays.

The gay community could use more supportive heterosexuals to speak out on gay rights. It would make more heterosexuals aware, and perhaps bring out more supporters.

Rachelle Prisco
West Linn



LIPS says thanks to Portland

To the Editor:

The National Lesbian Conference held during the weekend of July 21-23 was a huge success. Lesbians from across the country met at Portland State University and prepared for the national conference in Atlanta in 1991. The Portland Host Committee would like to acknowledge and thank all of the people and organizations that made this conference a reality. In cooperation with the PSU Women's Studies Program, lesbians are now networking throughout the US.

The Portland Host Committee
L.I.P.S.

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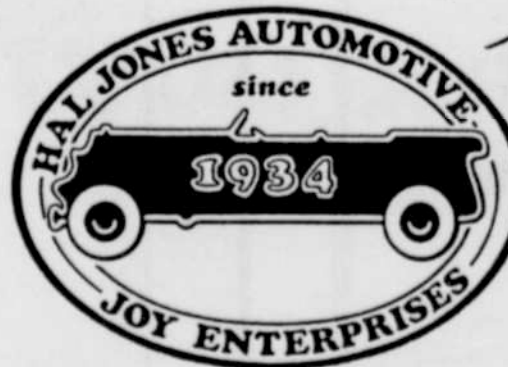
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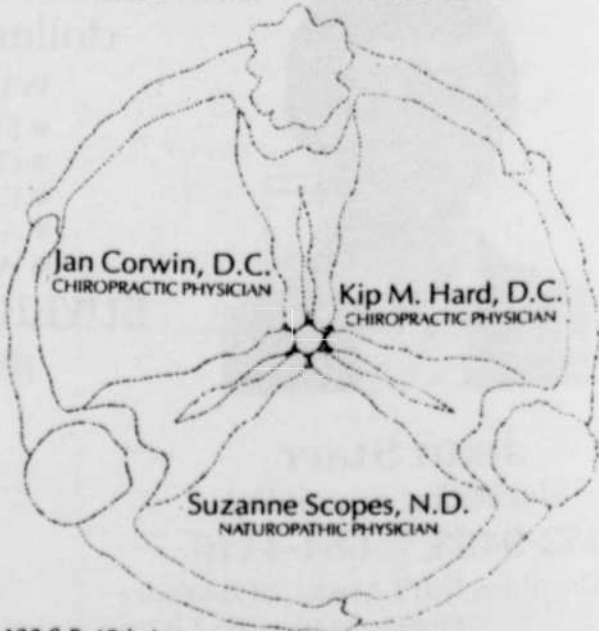


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