

Lawmakers hear message, pass gay-supportive legislation

To the Editor:

At the Lucille Hart dinner this year I was impressed with the spirit of celebration and appreciation regarding two important legislative victories (hate crimes reporting and intimidation). At the dinner, as well as at many other special events, the legislators and lobbyists who worked hard for the passage of these measures were publicly thanked and supported. It felt great.

The feeling was very different just one year ago this month, when we had "lost" the Ballot Measure 8 campaign, and trashing took the place of appreciation.

Having worked both on the No on 8 campaign, and in the legislature this past session, lobbying for women's and gay rights, I feel strongly that the ballot measure campaign paved the way for the legislative victories. I think that the campaign succeeded in planting the message that "it's not right, it's not fair" to harass gays and lesbians in the public's mind. It demonstrated to others (including many lawmakers) just how powerful and prevalent homophobia is in our culture, and therefore just how badly we need the protection of the law.

I'm not saying that I'm glad Ballot Measure 8 passed — it was a devastating blow to our community. But I think the work of the campaign has had far-reaching results. Along with our legislative friends, the No on 8 campaign workers deserve great thanks for bringing about this year's positive statutory changes.

Holly Pruett
Portland

Rose Court appreciates support

To our gay and lesbian community and friends:

Thank you for your support and the sense of pride and unity you have shown towards us, and to the Imperial Sovereign Rose Court in the past weeks.

As the newly elected representatives of the Rose Court, we hope to work closely with each of you in hopes of creating a working relationship, including an open communication between the entire community and the Rose Court. We cannot be true representatives of Portland's gays and lesbians without this commitment.

We are asking you to keep us informed of your upcoming events, meeting dates, and general updates so we can do our best to support you and your cause.

With the continued challenges facing all of us daily, we hope to unite and become an even stronger community so we can achieve the civic rights and choices that we all deserve.

Velvet Monet
The Heart of Gold Empress
HMIM Rose Empress XXXII

Mr. Bill
The Avant-Garde Emperor
HMIM Rose Emperor XVI

Radio station's ads inflammatory

To the Editor:

KGW radio ran this newspaper advertisement:

Panel A — "Gays make great parents!"
Panel B — "Keep gays away from kids!"
Panel C — "What do you think? 620 KGW — The Talk Station!"

What do I think? I think it's offensive to suggest that gay people's right to be treated with the same respect as any other human being is open to debate. I think it's irresponsible to legitimize an old lie by presenting it as a valid viewpoint. I think it's unfortunate to contribute to division and oppression by publicizing the false idea that gay people are not as loving, capable and fully human as everyone else.

Consider the following:

A — Blacks make great neighbors.
B — Blacks would ruin my neighborhood.

A — Women make great executives.
B — Women can't be trusted to make rational decisions.

A — Jews make great friends.
B — Jews are greedy and dishonest.

Would KGW sponsor these debates?

There undoubtedly are persons who still hold the "B" prejudices, but these opinions are not considered acceptable for public debate. KGW's ad parallels those opinions by treating the worth and abilities of gay people as a debatable subject. KGW suggests that it's fair to judge individuals on the basis of discredited stereotypes, and it gives permission to prejudice by treating gays as separate from people.

Human worth and personal dignity are inherent. It should not be allowable to debate them.

What do you think? Call or write KGW and tell them your opinion of their insulting ad.

Marvin Moore
Portland

Welcome to the Gay '90s

To the Editor:

I feel we are coming upon a great opportunity for some publicity. Mere weeks from now, the '80s are over. One hundred years ago this led to the "Gay '90s."

I propose in an era of liberation that a final push to end discrimination begin so, 100 years from now, people will again remember the Gay '90s.

So starting with New Year's Eve, let the world fly with Gay '90s parties. January 1, a Gay '90s rally. This is only the beginning, so let's get cracking. The magic phrase must be on everyone's lips within months. Tell your friends!

Michael Pearce
Portland

Carbon copy

Hon. Mark O. Hatfield
United States Senate
711 Hart Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Sen. Hatfield:

The Senate recently voted 93-3 to bar federal financing of materials for school children "which promote or encourage homosexuality or use words stating that homosexuality is 'normal,' or 'natural,' or 'healthy.'" Because this language has been removed, I think it natural to assume our government now understands the basic principles of morality and is prepared to define normal, natural, and healthy.

Unfortunately this is not reality. It's merely another attempt of the government to violate and unjustly use a select group of people to impose understanding of acceptable limits of behavior. The removal represents a source of aggression and destructiveness to the individual it deprives. Things that reinforce and fragment people disallow access to one's inner world, contributing to the creation and growth of destructive drives. The truly impaired in our world are not the mentally ill, the psychiatric patients who are shunned by society — they are people who want to impose a belief of a diminished human reality. Those who are ill unconsciously point out to us the path back to ourselves; the others close off this path with their pseudo-convincing and pseudo-exonerative theoretical constructs.

Homosexuals have always been recipients of someone else's calculation of our own welfare and a target for removing rights of expression. Statutory language on the one

hand takes pride in the traditionally cherished ideals of individual freedom and a crucial separation of church and state, however, it also takes an ethical stance sanctifying restrictive sexual standards. The conflict between the puritan heritage of repressed sexuality and an equally strong heritage of civil libertarianism is all the more distressing because it is rarely resolved; instead it submerges, becoming the tension of hypocrisy. Historically, resolution occurs at the expense of individual freedom, and always forebodes severe consequences for the lives of sexual minorities.

If the wording must be stricken, then it should be stricken from all materials. Until our government has reached a point of being able to interpret morality, define "natural" in relation to heterosexual behavior, determine specifically the criteria required to be "healthy," and judge "normal" behavior on its own merits, I suggest such legislation be overturned. Its passage violates the process of community formation and self-definition by alienating individuals for some unknown collective purpose of judgement. It does not include the adoption of an objective search as its principle mission. Emphasizing the connectedness of people, rather than a notion of autonomous liberty, it seeks community membership only in conversion.

In closing, I want to remind you of a young gay man who was beaten to death in Arizona by four teenage boys one Saturday night in 1976. The judge failed to pass sentence for their subsequent murder conviction because the teenagers lacked previous violations and were "good students, worthwhile citizens, no danger to the safety of the community, all living at home and active in organizations." Am I to understand this to be normal, natural, and healthy?

Randall Garner
Portland

HAVE A HAND-MADE CHRISTMAS AT PORTLAND SATURDAY MARKET!

Find that special Christmas treasure at Portland Saturday Market. Choose from a myriad of unique, hand-made gifts in every price range. When was the last time you bought something from the person who made it?

SANTA will visit Saturdays from 11-3, and Sundays from 12-3, December 9-24.

The DICKENS CAROLERS visit Dec. 9 & 10, from 12-1 each day.

See the FALLEN ANGEL CHOIR Dec. 16 & 17, at 12-1 each day.

AMBER TIDE plays Dec. 23

OPEN DAILY DECEMBER 16-24
Mon-Fri 11-5, Sat 10-5, Sun 11-4:30

Parking validation and gift certificates available.
Take MAX to Skidmore Fountain.