

Real Community Policing demands hiring gay cops

Mayor Bud Clark's Community Policing plan acknowledges the need to hire more women and minority police officers. But the Mayor's office is a little wishy-washy when it comes to explaining what process will bring that about in a fair and equitable manner.

Now that the city is hiring new cops it's about time the gay community demanded that the city openly recruit gay and lesbian police officers.

It is no secret that Portland has one of the largest gay populations on the west coast. Some of our neighborhoods and business districts have large gay orientations and it would make sense to hire minority police officers in tune with the individual problems unique to those areas.

If the idea of Community Policing is to decentralize the police force and get officers out of their cars and out from behind their desks and back into the streets where they can get to better know individual areas of the city, then hiring some openly gay cops makes good sense.

Mayor, do you hear us?

Studio apartments: home for only one?

C and R Realty, Inc., which controls numerous apartment rentals in the Portland area, has notified some of its tenants that its policy forbids studio apartments to be occupied by more than one person.

It's a damned good thing they don't manage apartments in New York City.

Such policies have the negative effect of discriminating against low income gay couples and working mothers with children.

... Between the Lines ...

B Y J A C K R I L E Y

Certainly an apartment owner needs to protect against renting out crash pads, but that should be a situation best handled by resident managers, not a blanket company policy.

In many major cities, it's very common for two people to share a studio apartment, especially when a 500 square foot studio can fetch over \$1,000 a month in rental alone. Some small studios in New York cooperatives are selling for over \$100,000. It makes good economic sense to share a studio, even in Portland.

C and R Realty may not be uniformly enforcing its written policy, but it should be noted that since a policy exists, there is room for its discriminatory use.

Watch your step during the holidays

So far this fall, there have been one reported abduction and disappearance and one reported murder involving patrons of the Stark Street gay bar strip in Portland. Both are unsolved. God knows how many unreported acts of violence have taken place, including beatings by gay bashers and hate groups.

Since it's getting darker earlier these days, any after-work visit to the bar strip involves a

trip back home in the dark. Here's some seasonal advice:

— Don't walk home alone, even if you don't think you've had too much to drink. Call a taxi, and ask the driver to wait until you get inside your door before he leaves.

— If you have had too much to drink, don't even think about getting home on a bus. The Transit Mall is not safe late at night, despite what Tri-Met tells you. Many bus lines to the North, Northeast and Southeast sectors of the city are not secure either. If you are intoxicated, you are asking for trouble.

— If you must walk home, pick a well-lit, well-traveled route long before the bars close. Do not let anyone follow you home.

— Do not pick up strangers in the bar. Stupid as it sounds, I see guys doing this every day of the week. If you have doubts about someone, ask your bartender.

— Don't expect 911 to save you. If you are attacked, in all likelihood the cops won't show up unless a gun or knife was used in the assault. If an attack takes place outside a bar, get back in the bar and warn management so they can contact the police. Do not let any incident go unreported. Try to remember anything distinctive about your assailant(s) and then cooperate with the authorities when and if they arrive.

Reported hate crimes triple in Northwest

Crimes motivated by prejudice increased 338 percent in a five-state area during the past year, according to a recent study released by the Northwest Coalition Against Malicious Harassment in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

The figures show 263 hate crimes (Oregon topped the list with 135 incidents) in the year ending September 30, 203 more crimes than reported just a year ago.

For the first time this year, the Coalition kept track of attacks reported against homosexuals, with 25 crimes reported. Many crimes go unreported for obvious reasons.

The escalation of reported hate crimes probably reflects better reporting techniques rather than a serious increase in such crimes.

A spokesperson for the Coalition, Tony Stewart, said the largest number of crimes took place in Portland, Seattle, Tacoma and Spokane where organized elements, such as Skinheads, are known to operate.

They want to "blow" this bill to smithereens

Opponents of Massachusetts's landmark gay rights law are wasting no time pushing for a repeal. One day after Gov. Michael Dukakis signed the measure (which bans discrimination against homosexuals in housing, employment and credit) into law, opponents filed petitions with the secretary of state's office seeking a referendum.

"We intend to blow this bill to smithereens," said the Rev. Earl Jackson, a coalition leader who fought the bill and now is fighting the new law. "We intend to defeat this...and bury it so deep no one will ever find it again."

The coalition against the new law argues that "when this question (gay rights) has been taken to the people for a vote anywhere in the nation, people clearly reject it."

Only when there's a will, there's a way

The guy looked "thirtysomething" and definitely not a bar regular. He danced with everyone who would take him up on his offer, but he had a little too much to drink and his dancing was getting a little irregular.

After an hour or so he slumped on a stool at our table and asked for a cigarette. After three years of Alcoholics Anonymous and sobriety, he had fallen off the wagon for the first time. And then he asked for a hug.

Finally, the guy admitted that he had just lost his lover of eight years to AIDS, and what really bothered him was that his lover's family had taken all of the possessions they had shared, not even leaving him a memento of their eight years together. Worse yet, the family asked him not to attend the funeral.

The lesson here is obvious. The family of the deceased man acted on its own wishes, rather than the supposed wishes of their dead son. And it happens all too often in families that do not accept their offspring's homosexuality or relationships.

The answer is a will prepared with the help of an attorney. Some of that grief could have been avoided with a simple court document set up in advance. Don't wait until it's too late.

Let's enjoy the holidays and remember our loved ones!

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