

just out
since 1983

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steppin' out



No on 9 visibility, Artquake, Labor Day weekend in Portland.

PHOTO BY LINDA KLEWER

editorial

The front lines just got a lot closer

Homophobic violence is on the rise, and people who have never felt vulnerable before are feeling the heat

Patrick Robertson's Christian Coalition has arrived in town to escalate the religious war against non-Christians and Christians alike. Robertson's cable television show continues to target "homosexuals." This past month he informed his viewers that "homosexuals" want "so-called civil rights" laws so they can "legitimately sexually molest young boys." Once again lesbians are invisible.

Closer to home, the secretary of the Oregon Association of Naturopathic Physicians, Thomas Lee Abshier and his wife Margo, wrote an inflammatory letter and sent it to all of the naturopaths in the state encouraging them to reconsider the association's vote denouncing Ballot Measure 9. As a result of his letter, OANP has voted twice as an organization to denounce Ballot Measure 9. In his letter, Abshier confuses misogyny with homophobia and totally foams at the mouth for eight pages with horrid assumptions and stereotypes about gay people. Similarly worded inflammatory letters have been employed by individuals in other business and professional organizations that publicly denounce Ballot Measure 9.

Ralf Walters, a Springfield city councilman, and arch-homophobe Paul Cameron were on "Donahue" in September with lesbian and gay activists Scott Seibert, Sandy Shirley, and author Eric Marcus. *The Oregonian* gave the appropriate headline: "Oregon gets a shiner from Donahue," to their story about the program.

Less than a week after his appearance on "Donahue", the offices of Scott Seibert and Oregonians United Together, PAC were broken into. A week later, the offices were burglarized again. The thieves stole addresses, phone lists, money, checks and more. Piles of research papers were toppled, every file was opened. The OUTPAC has been amassing information about the Oregon Citizens Alliance and its members.

Holly Mulcahey, owner of It's My Pleasure, was being verbally harassed by young boys on bikes in front of her shop.

petuating homophobic violence.

A gay man in Northwest Portland was pulled off of his front porch by Skinheads and was severely beaten. His blood stains are still on the sidewalk.

People saying they represent the Oregon Citizens Alliance have been systematically calling people at their work place and outing them.

Just Out has several sources reporting that the Foursquare Church behind Old Wives Tales Restaurant has a list of "homosexuals" for people to reference if they question an associates sexuality.

We are not reporting this information to scare you, or to further victimize anyone, but to show what the perpetrators of homophobic violence are doing. And to show the courage of lesbian and gay Oregonians in the face of this violence. (If you have any similar information, please call us so that we may report it.)

We cannot afford to give in to our terror and fear. That's what they want us to do. We must come out in great numbers and then block our closet doors so that we cannot retreat. It is not just people like Donna Red Wing, Scott Seibert, Kathleen Saadat, Sandy Shirley, Peggy Norman, or Scot Nakagawa who are on the front lines in this war, we all are. Whether you are standing in front of a microphone or your closet door, we are all targets in this war.

"They'll win if we stop, so we'll just keep going. We have to do everything we can to keep this poison from spreading," said Scott Seibert, just days after the break-in of the OUTPAC office addressing the escalating hate and violence against gays and lesbians.

The determination and courage that each of us wears as we face these personal and public assaults deepens the pride in all of us.

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