

letters

Get those projects done

To the Editor:

Look out! Here comes Son on Nine, hulking his way over the horizon, casting a long shadow over 1994. Oh sigh, not again!

The media polishes up its Oregon Citizens Alliance headline typeface in hopes of increased sales with news of the second State War of 1994.

Human Dignity groups reach for the megastress vitamin bottles while dusting off "No on Nine" buttons and bumper stickers.

Queers recheck the locks on their doors and gate posts.

But wait! Perhaps there is another way to send the spawn of Lon packing. What if we take the money and commitment of time planned to fight Son of Nine and do the project we really would rather be doing in our community. Like for example, rejuvenating a sagging library system, diversity work in school, health care issues, you know, all the things we say we want to do.

I suggest our local fight-the-right groups take the time to make a budget based on considered money for a 1994 campaign. The budget would include both dollar amounts and estimated volunteer time. Then apply the budget to a desired project instead of mopping up drool from the OCA.

Sky

Applegate Valley, Southern Oregon

Three strikes, yer out

To the Editor:

I would like to challenge your decision to publish the article "Further adventures in Chorus Land" (Jan. 7, 1994) on three grounds:

First the writer, Dr. Tantalus, leaves no clue anywhere in the article that he either has the background or expertise to be writing about music in the first place. Unsavory delivery aside, there is a fundamental lack of basic musical vocabulary and insight in his writing that one would reasonably expect from a music reporter.

Secondly, I challenge your policy of allowing a review to be printed under an assumed name. It is fundamental to the role of a music critic to foster the arts in the community about which he writes. Allowing a reviewer to publish under an alias relieves him of this responsibility. His anonymous diatribe of narcissistic editorializing is nothing more than guerrilla journalism and ultimately reflects poorly on both *Just Out* and your judgement as an editor/journalist.

Lastly, what's your point anyway? Aren't the external pressures on the lesbian and gay community enough already? Why must any of us be subjected to such ridicule and harassment? I contend that in 1994 we have neither the time nor the resources to stop and seriously question whether the more virulent enemy is attacking from within.

Bob Mensel
Portland

Editor's Note: *Dr. Tantalus, aka Jim Van Dyke, has been writing music reviews for Just Out for eight years. Reviewers have an obligation to accurately represent a performance, how ever painful that may be.*

Masons revisited

To the Editor:

Janna MacAuslan's letter in a recent issue of *Just Out* concerning the evils of Masonry demands a response.

Her thesis that Masons indulge in ritual abuse of animals and children is the same kind of thesis that Lon Mabon utilizes in damning gays and lesbians—and is worthy of the same consideration.

It is obvious that MacAuslan has not done her homework on the organization of Masonry and its

appendent bodies, and is unaware of the history of Masonry or its part in the founding and growth of the United States. Neither has she availed herself of the mass of information on Masonry which is available in public libraries or in a number of books relating to the history, philosophies and goals of Masonry. She seems to prefer instead sensational publications of dubious truth and opinions of biased individuals.

A principle requirement for admission into Masonic membership is that the applicant believe in the existence of a Supreme Being (i.e.—God, Allah, etc.) and in the immortality of the soul. Thus, men of many religious creeds may qualify for Masonic membership, be they Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jew, Buddhist, or one of the Native American religions.

It is true that Masonry can be characterized as sexist since it admits only men to membership. It may also have members who are homophobic or who are pedophiles—just as in any large group taken at random. It is not the function of Masonry to support or defend any individual or group whose behavior is anti-social. However many of its members work for tolerance of others and diversity.

Perhaps the most definitive study of the Masonic Fraternity by a non-Masonic organization has been the recent work of the Southern Baptist Convention. In 1992, amidst cries of satanism, anti-Christian and perversion condemning Masonry, the Southern Baptist convention determined to make an in-depth study whether the Fraternity of Freemasonry was compatible with Baptist faith and practice. The report cited several elements of concern but in summation reported that Masonry was a matter of individual conscience and was in fact compatible with Baptist faith and practice. The convention adopted an abridged report and the Southern Baptist church is making this report available to the public for a nominal fee.

C. Robert Keeney
Past Master, Unity Masonic Lodge No. 189
Portland

TRANSITIONS

A sister follows a brother

Longtime Portland performer Misty Waters Shanklin, known by many simply as Misty Waters died on Dec. 15 of complications due to AIDS. She was 36 years old.

Born as Sullivan Johnson, he served honorably in the United States Marines for three years. Later in life he underwent the physical transformation to become a woman.

As Misty Waters, Johnson was crowned Miss Oregon and Princess XI during her career as a stage entertainer. Her brother, Woody Johnson, also known as Lady Elaine Peacock, died in October of complications from AIDS.

In 1988, the two siblings formed the Audria M. Edwards Scholarship Fund in honor of their mother, who was a founding member and former president of the Portland chapter of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

"Audria was so proud of all her children," remembered Ann Shepherd, another founding member of the Portland P-FLAG. "Misty was so darling...she was so gentle. Both Peacock and Misty were brought up with love and gentleness and they showed it. They both called me 'mom' after their mother died."

Misty Waters was a beloved performer in the gay and lesbian community. When she performed at the 1993 Gay and Lesbian Pride, for example, she captured the heart of one boy who rushed to the stage to dance with her.

Waters is survived by five sisters and her father, Sullivan Johnson. Donations in Waters name can be made to: the Audria M. Edwards Scholarship Fund, in care of The Equity Foundation, PO Box 5696, Portland, OR 97228.



Kathy Tysinger

Member, Portland
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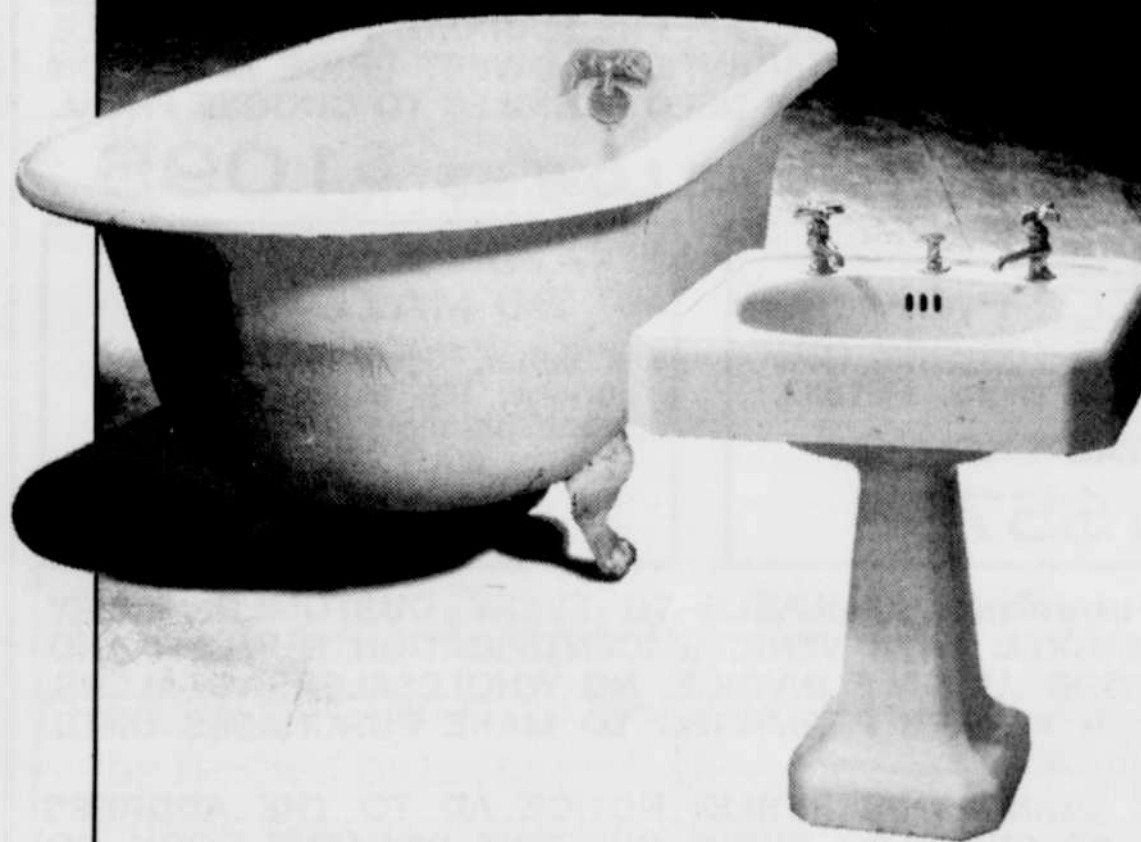
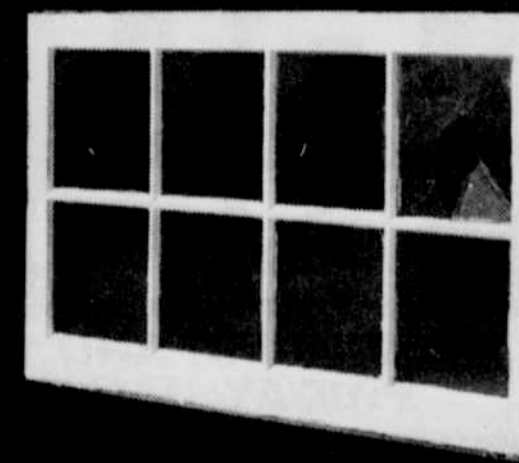
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