

TWENTY-THIRD AVENUE B·O·O·K·S

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The 1994 Lesbian Community Project Dragon Boat Team

races again on:

June 11 at 11:36 am

June 11 at 4:12 pm

June 12 at 8:36 am

(race times are approximate,
so be there early to cheer us on!)

West side of the Willamette River
South of the Hawthorne Bridge

A Rose Festival and Sister Cities Event



letters

Not an acceptable trade-off

To the Editor:

I have corresponded with the powers that be at In Other Words Bookstore and they know that I am angry and insulted at their choice to make a formerly accessible space inaccessible by building a platform (an elevated area with bookshelves that is four steps up from the floor) into their store. Surely, they must also know that their letter [*Just Out*, May 6] was a dare to me. So, as utterly exhausted and frustrated as I am by the continual need to address accessibility issues in order to be part of the community, I'm responding, because people (particularly women) who use wheelchairs are not an acceptable "trade-off," particularly by a feminist organization.

The article "Access and Community" [*Just Out*, April 1] was about queer people with disabilities and how we deal with accessibility issues and obstacles, not about reasons and excuses for those obstacles. It would have seemed inappropriate to me if Mare Davis (the writer who penned the article) had done a formal interview of In Other Words [as they requested]. However, Davis told me she had spoken informally twice with one of the store owners and had read the letter they had written to me in March. That letter was in response to my displeasure at being excluded from shopping like most people do at bookstores. In that letter, they told me that they didn't want the floor to be "crammed with bookshelves," as they wanted space for meetings and events, and that sections had been put up there because of "their size and the need for room for anticipated growth."

In that letter, they also said "the primary solution is to have a print-out available." Not! I don't know anyone who goes book shopping that way. If they truly think that is a good way to do it, then why not run the whole store like that? They could cram the shelves close (since only staff would be going to get books), giving them even more room for events and anticipated growth. We all know that people like to peruse the shelves themselves and base their selections on more than a list.

In Other Words did consult Access Oregon (an independent living center for people with disabilities) for advice while renovating their bathroom. I think it's swell, indeed, that they have made accommodations there. Even though I can't get to all their books, I can get to the bathroom in their bookstore.

I was extremely disturbed at In Other Words' assertion, in their letter to [*Just Out*], that the choice was between this particular space, and these particular renovations, and "not having a viable feminist bookstore at all." I think they should consider other options. There are alternatives to using people who cannot climb stairs as a "trade-off" and having no feminist bookstore.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that there are stores in our community, such as It's My Pleasure

and Widdershins Books that have been accessible from their beginnings. It is a delightful relief to shop at these welcoming and inclusive stores—they will always have my respect, appreciation and business.

Marguerite Brodie
Portland

A good idea from a Canadian neighbor

To the Editor:

I appreciate having *Just Out* available at the Gay and Lesbian Community Centre in Vancouver, B.C. There is a sense of the Pacific Northwest as south are doing has added importance, as the United States has always been at the forefront in social issues. For good or ill, activity in your country is a foreboding for Canada. We're just slower to engage.

In particular, and of mutual interest, are the gay issues which concern our community. The activities of the religious right wing in Oregon and Washington state are of import to gays here in Vancouver, B.C. Although it is far more difficult to force a "special interest" agenda into the political arena here, we have the same "theocratic wannabees" agitating and seeking political opportunity.

Very clearly, political impact can be equated to the ability to raise money. The tradition of tithing in large congregations can be enormously profitable, giving a substantial financial base from which to work. Salaried leaderships, employees, a political agenda of oppression, and money to grease the wheel of change, is a bad combination. Worst of all, the financing of this social subversion is tax-deductible. That means that "full-fare" taxpayers not only pick up the slack, but indirectly finance their own oppression.

It has been said that the power to tax is the power to destroy. Rationalizations can be listed by the page. The point is, however, that the power of religious activists must be tackled primarily in the bank account. Churches make no contribution in civic taxes, and the state does not tax them like the corporate entities they often resemble.

It is certainly in the interests of the gay community in the U.S. to introduce an agenda of church taxation on the ballot. Poor churches, like low-income earners, would be barely affected.

Providing a diversion for the religious right wing, draining their financial reserves in defending a tax-free status would occupy time and money. Who knows? They could even lose!

Stephen McManus
Vancouver, B.C.

TRANSITIONS

Never lost his love of life

Joseph Brown died April 14, 1994, from complications of AIDS at his home in Portland. Born March 17, 1966, in Vancouver, Wash., Joe graduated from Battle Ground High School in 1984.

He began his dance career with the Keith Martin Dance Company of Portland before moving to New York, where he danced with the Joffrey Ballet and the Feld Ballet companies. He traveled all over the United States and much of Europe while on tour with the companies before returning to Portland about three years ago. He danced here with the Oregon Ballet Theatre.

Joe's health forced him to retire about one year ago, but he never lost his love of life and all those he knew. We will all miss him deeply. He was much loved.

Survivors include his partner, Lyle Sweeny; parents, Gary and Kathy Brown; sisters, Shelley

Holcomb, Sandy Brown and Samantha Julian; and brother, James Brown.

Local waiter and model will be missed

William Roger Clark was born to Marion and Roger Clark on October 18, 1957, in Dearborn, Mich. He attended Waldport High School, where he was elected student body president, and the University of Oregon in Eugene, where he was a member of Phi Kappa Psi fraternity. Bill completed his B.S. in economics at Portland State University. He lived outside of Oregon, in Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, and Lahaina, Hawaii. Bill worked as a waiter and model in the Portland area until his death due to complications of AIDS on May 1, 1994. He is survived by his partner, Lance Vannier; mother, Marion Clark; sisters, Constance Clark and Nancy Lundell; and brothers, Phillip Clark and Robert Lundell.

Memorial Services were held Saturday, May 7, at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Portland.