

Here we go again

The OCA submits nearly 120,000 signatures for another discriminatory measure, though a legal hurdle still stands in its way

by Renée LaChance

The Oregon Citizens Alliance submitted nearly 120,000 signatures to the secretary of state's office July 8. If 89,028 of them prove to be valid, the initiative will become Ballot Measure 13 and will be on the statewide ballot in November. The state Elections Division has until July 23 to verify the signatures.

One legal hurdle still stands in the way. Last February, a Marion County Circuit Court judge ruled that the initiative violated constitutionality requirements that initiatives address only one subject. That ruling is being appealed, and final written arguments are not due until late August. Oral arguments will not be delivered until sometime in September. The state Elections Division has a Sept. 8 deadline to tell county clerks what will be on the ballot, so they can prepare voter's pamphlets and absentee ballots. The local legal opinion is that rulings will not be made in time and that the initiative will end up on the ballot.

Oregon and Idaho are the only states facing statewide discriminatory ballot measures in 1994. Initiatives in Montana, Nevada, Washington, Maine, Missouri and Arizona all failed to reach the ballot, and Florida's proposed initiative was

declared unconstitutional.

More than 400 people gathered in Pioneer Courthouse Square the evening of Friday, July 8, as a call to action against the statewide measure. Gov. Barbara Roberts spoke at the rally. She was joined by former Portland police chief Tom Potter, Ann Sweet, Sharon Gary Smith, Kathleen Saadat and others.

By contrast, 250 supporters attended a kick-off rally that day in Salem carrying dozens of U.S. flags, while Lon Mabon led five boxes of initiative petitions into the secretary of state's office.

Several groups are ready to fight the measure on a statewide level and are actively seeking volunteers, donations and other resources. They are Support Our Communities Political Action Committee, 222-6151; The Rural Organiza-

tion Project, (503) 543-3978; Speak Out!, 223-4992; and People of Faith Against Bigotry, 230-9430.

No one wants to endure another OCA statewide ballot struggle, especially those who have battled the OCA and its campaign of discrimination since Ballot Measure 9 was defeated. But we must be tireless and work until we win.



Gov. Barbara Roberts spoke out against the Oregon Citizens Alliance's newest statewide initiative at a rally in downtown Portland

Discrimination defendant challenges city law

Attorneys for a man accused of discriminating against a Portland lesbian have filed a motion challenging the validity of the Portland City Code which extends civil rights protections to gay men and lesbians. The challenge comes out of a \$2.2 million damage suit filed by Cathlyn Abbruzzese, who accuses Albert Odell Jones, the owner of Dooley's Lounge, of violating state and local laws barring discrimination in places of public accommodation.

Abbruzzese was refused service in Dooley's Lounge, formerly a lesbian and gay bar called The Eastside, in January. Jones and his employees told her that lesbians were not welcome in the bar and that women must have a male escort to get in. She sued, citing a Portland law that bars discrimination based on sexual orientation and gives residents the right to sue in Multnomah County Circuit Court. Jones' lawyers argue that Portland does not have the authority to grant circuit court jurisdiction, and that the case should be tried in the lower district court.

Rainbow Services program aimed at east side youth

Sexual minority youth on Portland's east side will get support groups, counseling, education and other services through a new program of the

Urban League of Portland. The new program, called Rainbow Services, will offer a positive peer support group for gay, lesbian and bisexual youth. It will also offer anti-homophobia education in high schools, HIV and AIDS education, and individual and family counseling. The program's goals are to reduce the number of lesbian and gay teens who run away from home, work as prostitutes, drop out of school, contract HIV, or commit suicide. More information about the new program is available from the Urban League, 280-2644.

Big help for AIDS organizations

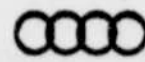
The Fabric of Life benefit was a smashing success this year, raising an incredible \$140,000 for local AIDS charities. Eight hundred guests filled Saks Fifth Avenue in downtown Portland, where they listened to music, drank wine, and viewed the 13 windows decorated by Portland interior designers. Events at the gathering included a silent auction and a fashion show. Checks for amounts from \$5,000 to \$45,000 were given to the Brinker Fund, Our House of Portland, the HIV Day Center, Esther's Pantry, Friends of People with AIDS, and Catholic Charities AIDS Ministry. In addition, an anonymous gift of \$50,000 was given to establish the new Mitch Quigley Endowment Fund, named in honor of the Portland designer.

Compiled by Jann Gilbert and Martha Allen



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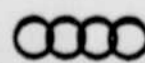


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