

Lesbian health issues to be explored at conference

A lesbian walks into a doctor's office for a physical exam. This is her first visit with the physician, who automatically assumes the woman is a sexually active heterosexual. Like many lesbians, she does not use any birth control. Almost immediately the doctor asks, "So what kind of birth control do you use?" You may have heard similar tales from friends, or experienced such an incident firsthand. It's an all-too-common occurrence that highlights the problem of lesbian invisibility in the medical world: an invisibility that could seriously compromise the health and well-being of lesbians. This issue will be one of many topics addressed Oct. 22 and 23 during the Lesbian Health Conference, a free event sponsored by the Lesbian Community Project.

"A lot of lesbians haven't received health care in years. That may be due to a lack of health insurance, but many of these women say they have had a bad experience with a doctor and simply never went back," explains Dr. Jocelyn C. White, a Portland general internist and co-founder of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Physicians of Oregon. Lesbian health will be the focus of White's keynote address at the conference Oct. 23.

"One of the things I try to do is sensitize health

care providers to the specific needs of lesbians. It is also important that lesbians be honest with their providers about their orientation," says White. "There is limited research into lesbian health care issues at this point, but things are starting to get better."

According to White, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is currently targeting lesbians in its national screening programs for prevention of breast and cervical cancer. Another national study is monitoring the health of an estimated 600,000 women, including lesbians.

"I'm extremely optimistic about the work that is being done," says White. "We've never seen such interest in lesbian health matters."

The Lesbian Health Conference will focus on issues such as living with chronic illness, alternative health care, and building a healthy lesbian community. Evelyn C. White (no relation), a journalist and editor of *The Black Women's Health Book*, is scheduled to speak Oct. 22.

The conference will be held at Good Samaritan Hospital at Northwest 22nd Avenue and Lovejoy Street in Portland. The event, which runs from 9 am to 5 pm each day, is free. Participants are asked to register as soon as possible by calling LCP at (503) 223-0071 (voice/TTY). Child care is available; call in advance to make arrangements if you are hearing impaired.

Inga Sorensen

Conference for people of color planned

"Taking the Lead: People of Color in Nonprofits" is the name of a planned conference and cultural event for people of color involved in nonprofit organizations.



TAKING THE LEAD PEOPLE OF COLOR IN NONPROFITS

Presented by Technical Assistance for Community Service and The Center for Third World Organizing, the conference will be held Thursday, Oct. 27, from 9 am-6 pm at the Portland Conference Center, 300 NE Multnomah St. Cost is \$35-\$100, on a sliding scale. For further information, contact TACS 239-4001, or CTWO 232-5338. The conference is co-sponsored by the Black United Fund of Oregon and the Metropolitan Arts Commission. Happy birthday to MRG!

Happy birthday to MRG

The McKenzie River Gathering Foundation celebrates its 18th anniversary Oct. 21, with a gala evening of politics and dancing. The event takes place from 7:30 pm until midnight at the Melody Ballroom, 615 SE Alder St.

The keynote speaker will be Delores Huerta, co-founder and first vice-president of the United Farmworkers of America. Community activist Kathleen Saadat will emcee. The Irene Farrera Tropical Band will perform Caribbean, Latin American and African music.

At the event MRG will present its Lilla Jewel Awards for Women Artists to performance artist Zoa Smith and local filmmaker Pat Baum. The evening will include a performance by Smith, and a screening of Baum's short film *The Cleansing Machine*.

MRG's annual Grassroots Victory Awards will go to two organizations which exemplify grassroots organizing for progressive, social change. This year, the awards are being given to the Portland-based Hotel Workers Organizing Committee and the Rural Organizing Project. HWOC is a

multiracial, multicultural, community-based organization that works to improve the quality of life for hotel workers and their families. ROP was formed to fight Ballot Measure 9 and has since developed 52 human dignity groups in small towns and rural areas throughout Oregon. These groups confront all forms of bigotry and further the vision of human dignity for all.

The celebration includes a light buffet and a no-host bar. Tickets are \$10-\$20, sliding scale, and are available from MRG at 233-0271.

Black culture emphasized

A new program, called "Family Night Out," began in September at the Lutheran Community Center. A group of 14 African American performing artists launched the first of a planned series of evenings whose goal is to showcase African American culture.

Storyteller and drummer Nyewusi Askari said, in an interview with *The Oregonian*, "We're encouraging young people to come out and share their poetry and other talents. We'll also offer [African] drum classes to both girls and boys."

Featured in the series will be drummer Art Alexander; actress Ruby Reuben, director of the Sojourner Truth Theater; the African American Drill Team from Beaverton; and the African American Women Drummers. Also scheduled are book-sellers, vendors, food tastings, poetry readings and storytelling.

For more information on these programs contact Nyewusi Askari, 288-3370.

Chávez honored with poster

"You cannot un-educate the person who has learned to read. You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride. You cannot oppress people who are not afraid of anyone." —César Chávez

El Hispanic News and the Metropolitan Human Rights Commission have created a poster honoring César Chávez as part of a Human Rights Advocates series. The release of the poster coincided with the beginning of Hispanic Heritage Month and the independence days of Mexico, Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Chile.

Other Human Rights Advocates posters feature Martin Luther King Jr., Harvey Milk and Abigail Scott Duniway. The poster is sponsored by a grant from *El Hispanic News*.

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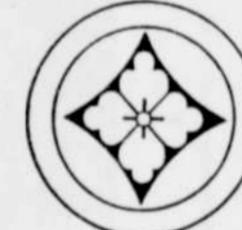
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