

letters

Don't be complacent

To the Editor:

Now that the election is over I have heard some comments that there's no need to hurry, no necessity to rush—after all, Measure 13 was defeated. Wasn't it?

Sure. The local metropolitan newspaper put the percentages at 51 to 49, and that is just a tad too close. Already Lon Mabon has prepared and submitted his next measure—you might well feel sorry for this poor individual, as he so desperately needs this type of conflict on a continuing basis. After all, his organization thus siphons money and expenses to him and selected family members. However, by his constant refrain and constant return, Lon Mabon is siphoning off time, energy and even resources that might well be better spent [on] matters of far more import: keeping kids in school, reducing illiteracy and violence, working on health care problems, etc.

This man and his organization certainly are not sitting back and sipping some iced tea. Why should anyone grant this person an 18-month head start? Why should anyone grant this person such a lead by being complacent?

Although Portland seems not to respond favorably to the messages sent by Mabon and the OCA, the statewide returns indicate that there is more to Oregon than just Portland.

What can be done?

I don't have all the answers, however, I would suspect that there is less of a need to preach to the converted. There is more of a need to stretch beyond just Portland, Salem and Eugene: There might well be a manner in which groups can initiate communication with establishments in all of the towns, in all of the locales in Oregon. Is there a method of letting people consider that the OCA wishes to impose upon what happens behind one's closed doors? Is there a method of letting them know that the OCA is asking for more government intrusion into our lives? Is there a method of letting people know that it is all right to express the idea that one is willing to say no to the OCA?

Surely there must be people and organizations within the reach of this newspaper that are not willing to sit back, now that the election is over, and grant Lon Mabon an 18-month head start, and then try and play catch-up in the last few months. This last election, and the close percentages, indicate that such might well be folly and grant the OCA a statewide victory.

Dennis M. McDonnell
Beaverton

Editor's note: There are many groups committed to continuing the education necessary to defeat the Oregon Citizens Alliance. The Rural Organizing Project continues its efforts; the No on 13 coalition will be staying intact under a new name; People of Faith Against Bigotry continues its outreach to religious communities; The Oregon Speak Out Project will talk to any group who will listen; plus, there are over 25 other groups dedicated to the struggle.

Many victories to celebrate

To the Editor:

In the aftermath of the election, I would like to thank everyone who supported Right To Privacy's efforts in helping elect gay- and lesbian-friendly politicians to the Oregon Legislature. With a conservative mood sweeping the country, Oregon rode the swell as well; the current makeup of the statehouse means we will be fortunate to see any progress on civil rights issues in the next session. Even so, at such a crucial time in our movement, it is vital that we continue the work.

I would also like to respond to a letter in the

Nov. 4 edition of *Just Out* which contained inaccurate information about Right To Privacy. RTP's endorsement of Measure 16, the Death with Dignity initiative, did not, as the writer stated, destroy all chances for an anti-Measure 13 statement from the Catholic bishops. As we all know, the bishops said Oct. 26 that they did not support Measure 13. The writer also stated that RTP's support of Measure 16 was a "non-gay issue." As a result of AIDS, dealing with death is an issue of vital importance to the gay community. At a time when the most recent state figures show that HIV/AIDS cases in Oregon remain nearly 75 percent limited to homosexuals, any discussion of AIDS in Oregon is significant to our community. In addition, HIV/AIDS issues constitutes one of the four criteria Right To Privacy considers when making endorsements. With so many people in our community grappling with the terrible and final stages of this disease, the tantamount principle of choice is something we believe the dying individual should retain. On this topic, a majority of voters in Oregon concurred.

Our first and foremost mission is to advocate full civil rights, human rights, and social equity for lesbians, gay men and bisexuals by endorsing candidates and campaigns that further the goals of the organization: equal protection under the law based on sexual orientation, gender equity issues, reproductive rights, and HIV/AIDS issues. Candidates who stand behind these issues receive our support, be they Republican or Democrat. RTP did dually endorse both of the Republican gay male candidates—unlike *The Oregonian*, *Just Out* and *Willamette Week* which endorsed only the Democratic candidates in those races. When it came to our vital criteria issues, RTP's board of directors believed both candidates, Republican and Democrat, when each said they would respond to our concerns.

Both Democrats and Republicans contribute their dollars to Right To Privacy's mission. As a result, this political year alone, RTP has been able to contribute \$34,500 directly to anti-OCA efforts. RTP has also contributed \$78,250 directly to help elect gay- and lesbian-friendly legislators. Oregon retains the distinction of having the greatest number of openly lesbian, gay and bisexual state representatives. The work of Right To Privacy and its supporters makes a difference.

As we move into the halfway mark of the decade, there are many victories to celebrate in the gay and lesbian community. For all that you have done, individually and collectively, know that your efforts are making a noticeable and lasting imprint in the human rights movement.

Greg Jackson
Executive director, Right To Privacy

Excellent account of female impersonators

To the Editor:

In spite of what your film critic said about *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, I saw the film and thoroughly enjoyed it. It was not only highly entertaining, but it was, in my opinion, quite educational in its treatment of the relationships among the characters, the sensitivity in the interaction between one of the men and his son, and the depiction of harassment vs. acceptance as they traveled through the Australian outback.

From my experience in performing with and befriending some female impersonators, I found this motion picture to be an excellent account of how these guys are: fun, flamboyant, artistic, creative, sensitive and outrageous, all at the same time.

Before this film leaves the theaters I suggest everyone see it, or, as I am going to do, wait until it comes out on video and have a "Priscilla Party."

Kathy Bambeck
Portland

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