

letters

Nader is no friend

To the Editor:

In his letter to the editor [*Just Out*, Sept. 20, 1996], John Balkar attacked most Oregon Democratic members of Congress and President Clinton for their pro-DOMA positions, and he advised gay/lesbian/bisexual voters to support Ralph Nader.

I hope your readers will also see the article "It isn't easy being Green" in the Oct. 1 issue of *The Advocate*. It seems that Ralph Nader is not supportive of homosexual rights. He refuses to accept and to endorse the strong pro-gay plank in his own party's platform, and he refuses to answer questions about gay marriage. This is our "friend"?

A "protest" vote for Nader (or other minor party candidates) could have the same result in the national elections that it had in the 1994 California race for secretary of state, in which Green Party votes prevented the election of an openly gay Democratic candidate.

Clinton is certainly preferable to Dole! Let's not help elect conservative Republicans in some kind of protest against Clinton's or any Democrat's DOMA action or any other position regarding the so-called "gay agenda." We are much better off with office holders who have actively supported us—even if not all of the time.

Lyle M. Tucker
Lake Oswego

There are no coincidences

To the Editor:

In her criticism of Oregon's recent state-sanctioned murder of Douglas Franklin Wright, Deni Starr asked: "Is it a coincidence that a man thought to be a homosexual was the first to die?"

The answer is, no.

On Jan. 4, 1994, Washington State's first execution in nearly three decades was that of Westley Allan Dodd. Dodd, *Just Out* readers may recall, was the Vancouver man convicted of the 1989 rape and murder of 4-year-old Lee Iseli.

Margaret Deirdre O'Hartigan
Portland

There's Quakers, and then there's Quakers

To the Editor:

Recent issues of *Just Out* contained articles giving positive press to the open-mindedness and acceptance of the queer community by the Quaker church. Before your readers rush out and join the nearest Quaker church, this lesbian born unto a fourth-generation Quaker family from Newberg feels compelled to clarify a couple of items.

First, there are two very different versions of Quaker. One is the more open and accepting (what was called the "East Coast," or Friends Service Committee, faction). The only Meeting in Oregon that I'm aware of as representing this

"earlier" form of the church is located on Southeast Stark Street in Portland.

The other form of Quaker is composed of the Friends churches in the Northwest Yearly Meeting. These include entities such as George Fox College, Reedwood Friends Church, West Hills Friends, Tigard Friends, Newberg Friends, Sherwood Friends, etc. In the mid-'70s, the Northwest Yearly Meeting declared homosexuality to be against the teachings of the church. The Yearly Meeting has not changed its stance. This is a very conservative group ideologically similar to the Foursquare Church or the most conservative Baptist church. Growing up queer in this church and community, I observed not only disdain for homosexuals, but also incredible sexism and all the usual forms of fear and intolerance.

Surely there are individuals within the Friends church who are truly open and accepting. How I wish I had met one in the 20 years I lived within the confines of that church. Quaker teachings may offer some important messages, but the Friends church fails to impart them. And it fails to support its queer children.

Joyce Mills
Portland

Thanks for the memories

To the Editor:

I want to take this opportunity as I finish the last few weeks of my reign to thank the gay community for the best year of my life.

A lot of you have asked me if I would do it all over, or if it was worth it. Yes, but I find myself feeling a little melancholy. This year has gone by too fast, and I have so many things I want to do. But it has been worth the time, tears and money. We've done a lot this year to bring the Rose Court back into all of our gay bars and organizations. My hope is that this is a new beginning. We have raised more money for charity than ever before. We have tried a lot of new things; some worked, some did not, but we made the effort. It is nice to see all of us working together again as a community. Some said I ventured where angels feared to go. What can I say? I love a challenge.

After this year I am convinced that Portland's gay, lesbian, bi and transgendered community is more than alive and well; they also care. Thank you to all the bars for your hard work and support. I have heard through the grapevine that you would like me to stay on another term. That is very sweet, and believe me, I would if I could! I still believe that anyone could buy a crown or medalion, but it takes work to represent a city. When one person struggles to dig out of gay oppression, separatism and apathy, they lift the whole community with them.

Thank you, Portland, for kind words, gifts, laughs and hugs. I am proud to have served as your 38th empress. The colors may fade, but the memories never will.

Misha Rockefeller
Legacy Rose Empress XXXVIII Misha

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