

Salvation Army faces discrimination suit

An openly gay Portland man has filed a \$2 million lawsuit against the Salvation Army and one of its employees claiming they violated the Portland city ordinance prohibiting discrimination in public accommodations based on sexual orientation.

The suit, filed Jan. 17 in Multnomah County Circuit Court on behalf of plaintiff Johnathan Boettcher, charges the Salvation Army and employee James Bradley with violating the city human rights code and the intentional infliction of emotional distress.

"I believe we have a strong case," says Boettcher's attorney, Christopher Wright. "My client was enrolled in [the Salvation Army's] drug rehabilitation program, and when they found out he was gay they made his life hell."



In our Sept. 20, 1996, issue, Boettcher and another gay man, Charles Moore, told *Just Out* the Salvation Army

discriminated against them due to their sexual orientation.

In late June, Moore said, he and Boettcher attended Portland's annual Gay and Lesbian Pride Parade with some men, gay and straight, who were enrolled as residents at the Salvation Army's Adult Rehabilitation Center, which runs an intensive, in-patient substance abuse recovery program that can last from six months to a year.

"The Monday after the parade, we learned that a Salvation Army employee had been dispatched to collect names of residents he saw participating in Gay Pride," Moore told us. "The names were turned over to [ARC men's program director] Jim Bradley. He confronted three of the men."

According to Moore, the gay men, including Boettcher, were told by Salvation Army officials that attending the parade was a form of "acting out," and therefore a violation of recovery program rules. They were allegedly instructed not to attend any substance abuse recovery groups for gay people "because gays go there only to find sex, where straights go to their meetings for recovery."

Boettcher said Bradley later denied making such statements.

Citing stress prompted by the situation, Boettcher dropped out of the program on July 24.

"My client was having migraines every day when this was going on. It was a terrible and painful experience for him," says Wright.

When we contacted the Salvation Army in September, Bradley refused comment. He did not respond to our inquiry for this story.

However, the Salvation Army did issue a media statement denying that it discriminates "in the provision of social services based upon an individual's lifestyle preferences."

The Salvation Army's Statement on Homosexuality, meanwhile, states in part: "Scripture condemns homosexual practices by direct comment...and also by clearly implied disapproval. The bible teaches such practices as self-evidently abnormal."

Portland HEAL forms

A chapter of HEAL (Health Education AIDS Liaison) has formed in the Portland metropolitan area.

HEAL is a national grass-roots coalition founded in 1982 which in part "welcomes dialogue and debate on the unsubstantiated 'HIV equals AIDS' hypothesis and ineffective drug protocols."

The local chapter holds informal Sunday discussion groups where participants "share [their] natural health successes, factual analyses and juicy conspiracy theories."

Topics include "Is the 'AIDS test' accurate or even meaningful?" "Why are environmental toxins being ignored?" and "What's wrong with the viral load and protease inhibitor theories?"

HEAL will host a public discussion Feb. 8 featuring Ron Piazza, founder of Seattle's HEAL chapter. It will be held at Theater Theatre/My-Don, 3430 SE Belmont St., in Portland. A showing of a video documentary entitled *HIV=AIDS: Fact or Fraud?* will also be held in early February.

For more information, call 227-2889, 282-3438, or 233-9444.

Joycelyn Elders to speak at menopause conference

Dr. Joycelyn Elders, former U.S. Surgeon General, is the scheduled keynote speaker for an upcoming gathering entitled "Embracing Midlife, a Menopause Conference."

The conference, whose cosponsors include the Oregon Health Division, Multnomah County Health Department and Oregon Health Sciences University, will be held March 7-8 at Portland State University.

For more information, call 203-9710.

Cable TV show focuses on same-sex marriage

Arts & Entertainment Cable Television Network will air a one-hour *Investigative Reports* focusing on same-sex marriage. Voices from throughout the Pacific Northwest will be featured during the program, which will be broadcast locally via Paragon Cable Channel 40 on Feb. 15 at 6 and 10 pm.

Last fall a program producer was in Portland to film members of Love Makes a Family Inc., a local organization that promotes visibility of lesbian and gay families.



"I think they're doing it because there was so much emphasis on children in the Hawaii trial," Bonnie Tinker, the group's executive director, told *Just Out* in October.

"Glen Dacy, the producer who came here, wanted to interview older children of gay and lesbian parents. I think that was because he wanted to explore what that experience was like for them and how the kids were affected," said Tinker, who along with her partner of 19 years, Sara Graham, and their three children, allowed the film crew into their home "for pizza and homemade lentil soup."

In addition to filming at Tinker's home and the Portland office of Love Makes a Family, Dacy and company caught Tinker on camera as she hosted her weekly AM talk show on KKEY Radio.

The program, also called *Love Makes a Family*, airs Wednesdays during the morning drive time between 7 and 9 am. The show includes listener call-ins and focuses specifically on lesbian and gay family issues. The topic that week was, aptly, same-sex marriage.

A&E also spent ample time in Seattle filming gay and lesbian couples and interviewing representatives from groups such as the Legal Marriage Alliance of Washington.

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