

# Be prepared

An inexpensive one-day seminar on estate planning can help you be true to the Boy Scout motto

by Inga Sorensen

**M**ark M. Williams has heard the horror tales before.

"You do hear the stories of a [gay] partner dying and the same day of the funeral the deceased's family shows up with a moving van to take away the belongings," says Williams, a Portland attorney and member of the Oregon Gay and Lesbian Law Association's board of directors.

Without the proper legal documents in place, that family may have every legal right to do just that—despite the verbal wishes of the couple or the surviving partner, says Williams, who has been practicing law for 16 years.

The couple could have been together 50 years, building a life and a home. Yet it could all be taken away in a snap without the necessary legal protections.

Unlike heterosexual couples, who automatically receive many of those protections upon marrying, same-sex couples are left fending for themselves.

And it's not only couples—gay and lesbian singles, as well as people living with HIV/AIDS, also need to be particularly prudent about protect-

Williams says.

Too often people find themselves tackling the former. For gay men and lesbians, that could be costly.

Luckily, there are those who are working to ensure that the community has the tools to protect itself.

"Taking Care of Business," a daylong seminar to be held April 19, will deal with many life- and estate-planning issues facing gay men and lesbians, and especially those living with HIV/AIDS.

The event is sponsored by the Care Team, the HIV/AIDS support services arm of the Metropolitan Community Church of Portland.

The seminar will cover issues such as preparation of wills, advance directive and power of attorney documents, Medicaid, and financial and estate planning.

Professionals representing both private firms and government agencies are scheduled to speak and act as seminar leaders. Participants will be provided with a packet of fact sheets and documents that can be completed at the seminar. Notary publics will be on hand to notarize any document prepared that day.



ing themselves legally, whether it be planning their estates or drafting wills, medical proxies or living-together agreements.

"You can get nearly all the protections available to [married] heterosexuals now," says Williams. "The difference is that they get them automatically, while we have to actively seek out those protections."

It may not be fair, but at this point that's the way it is.

Fortunately, however, increasing numbers of attorneys are becoming aware of the legal needs of gay men and lesbians, and are willing to work with them as they plan for both life and death.

In fact, Williams says last September OGALLA sponsored an Oregon State Bar seminar specifically addressing these issues. He says the event, which was offered as a continuing legal education seminar for lawyers, attracted an estimated 300 attorneys.

"There are two ways of viewing estate planning—as crisis management or estate planning,"

"The mission of the Care Team is quite simple," says Tim Kehoe, a Care Team executive committee member. "Our sole purpose is to assist those living with AIDS to maintain the same level of personal dignity and independence they enjoyed when they were healthier. We all need to take care of business, most especially those living with AIDS. This seminar is an important part of fulfilling our group's mission."

Williams, meanwhile, acknowledges it is easy to procrastinate when it comes to estate planning. He admits he was years into his practice before he secured his own legal documents.

"But when you see what can happen when someone hasn't planned, trust me, it motivates you," he says.

*Reservations are required to attend the seminar, which will be held from 10 am to 3 pm April 19 at MCC Portland, 2400 NE Broadway. Lunch will be provided with the admission price of \$5. Call 281-8868 to make reservations.*

## SPEAK TO YOUR BROTHERS

Support, Prevention, and Outreach for Gay and Bisexual Men.

Join Us.

### Ride for a Reason cycling group for gay/bi men

Join other gay/bi men for bi-weekly bike rides in Portland area.

Co-sponsored with

Ride for a Reason, August 14-17.

First and third Saturdays, 10 AM.

For rendezvous location & info: ext. 182.

### Neighborhood MenTalk

Find support & friendship with other gay and bisexual men. Groups meet monthly throughout Portland. All start at 7 PM.

*New - East Multnomah County group in Gresham starts April 24.*

For info: Alan at Ext.107.

### Drop-In HIV Testing & Counseling: Gay & Bi Men

Confidential or anonymous. Results in one week. \$20 Donation.

Tuesdays, 6pm - 8 pm, at CAP office.

For info: HIV Testing Infoline at Ext. 172.

503 **223-5907**

620 SW 5th Ave., Ste. 300

Portland, OR 97204

Fax 223-7087

V/TDD 223-0238 CAP is accessible

Speak to Your Brothers is a program of Cascade AIDS Project



**JUST MARRIED**

**Photography with a Bias**  
Linda Kliever 503-287-3256  
**Out and Out Productions**

**TRINITY EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL**  
Presents

VESPERS & HEALING SERVICE  
with SPECIAL INTENTIONS FOR THOSE  
LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS...

SPECIAL GUEST  
HOMILIST:  
**WILLIAM C. CRANE**  
SUNDAY, APRIL 13th, 1997

5 PM HEALING and VESPERS SERVICE  
6 PM RECEPTION to follow...  
(hors-d'oeuvres & beverages served)  
CORNER OF NW 19TH AVENUE & EVERETT

**APRIL-MAY**  
DENISE KESTER • MONOPRINTS  
MICHAEL AND MICHELE GWINUP • RAKU

Artists' Reception 1st Thursday, April 3, 5:30-8:30 pm

**THE REAL MOTHER GOOSE GALLERY**  
American Fine Craft and Art  
901 S.W. Yamhill • (503) 223-9510