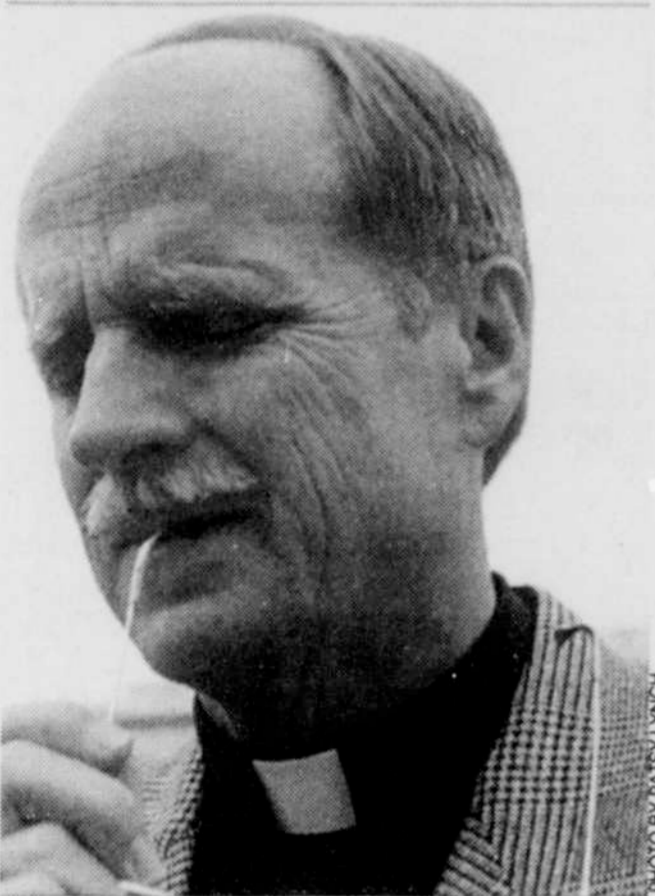


local news

Video promotes equal marriage rights

The Seattle-based Partners Task Force for Gay & Lesbian Couples has produced *The Right to Marry*, a new video that examines the many issues related to same-sex marriage.



The Rev. Mel White

The 72-minute production includes interviews with: the Rev. Mel White, known for his book *Stranger at the Gate* as well as his hunger strikes to confront Pat Robertson's anti-gay rhetoric; Phyllis Burke, author of *Family Values: A Lesbian Mother's Fight for Her Son*; Richard Mohr, author of *A More Perfect Union*; and Kevin Cathcart, executive director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund.

It also spotlights some same-sex couples who have sued for legal marriage rights.

Partners Task Force has advocated for same-sex couples since it was established in 1986, and was an early proponent of equal marriage rights for same-sex couples.

The VHS stereo videotape costs \$19 (plus \$3 postage) and is available only from Partners Task Force, PO Box 9685, Seattle, WA 98109, or by calling (206) 935-1206. Checks, VISA or MasterCard are accepted.

A special 28-minute version of the video is available free of charge to air on public access cable television stations. Partners Task Force is seeking volunteers to arrange for airings on local public access channels. Write the task force, or e-mail at demian@buddybuddy.com for contractual details. Partners Task Force also has a Web site at: <http://www.buddybuddy.com>.

States would benefit from queer marriage, reveals report

The Institute for Gay and Lesbian Studies recently released a state-by-state supplement to its 1996 report "For Richer, For Poorer: The Freedom to Marry Debate," which in part examined the potential economic benefits to the federal government if same-sex marriages were legally recognized.

The supplement provides information about the economic benefits for states currently facing same-sex marriage legislation, including Oregon and Washington.

Citing data indicating that marriage is "the most common route off welfare," the new report suggests state governments could experience significant savings in payments for means-tested financial assistance programs such as Medicaid

and Aid to Families with Dependent Children. It also finds that there are likely to be significant social benefits to legalizing more marriages, with negligible costs to governments and businesses.

"Unfortunately, much of the current debate [about same-sex marriage] seems to be based on opinion, irrational conjecture and subjective moral judgments," says Dr. M.V. Lee Badgett, an economist who co-authored the report. "In this paper we have attempted to take an unbiased look at the costs and benefits of recognizing these marriages based upon sound analysis and economic reasoning. We have found that recognizing more marriages would be good for the economy, for government budgets and society in general."

The complete report with the supplement can be obtained by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the Institute for Gay and Lesbian Studies, PO Box 53036, Washington, D.C., 20009-3036, or e-mail Stephanie Grim at sgrim@wam.umd.edu.

Lesbian Health Matters to meet April 16

The next meeting of Lesbian Health Matters, a group that advocates for lesbian health issues, is slated for April 16 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at Unity Church, 4525 SE Stark St., in Portland. Anyone concerned with lesbian health matters is encouraged to attend.

A Lesbian Health Matters workshop is also scheduled for April 30 from 7 to 8:30 pm at It's My Pleasure, 4258 SE Hawthorne Blvd., in Portland. The event is free and open to the public. For more information about Lesbian Health Matters, call Betty at 248-3674, ext. 28266.

Portland NAMES Project seeks help with Quilt effort

Volunteers are being sought to assist with plans to bring The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt to Portland. The only large display of the Quilt in Oregon this year is currently at Willamette University's Sparks Center, 900 State St., in Salem. The display is open to the public free of charge from 10 am to 9 pm on Friday, April 4, and 10 am to 3 pm Saturday, April 5; closing ceremonies will take place at 3 pm on Saturday.



Several planning committees of the NAMES Project Portland chapter need members, including those working on education, panel making, fund raising and media. For more information, call 650-7032.

Compiled by Inga Sorensen

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