

Jacquelyn Zapp-Garcia was in attendance at the Portland Bisexual Alliance's Bi Day '97

## First time bisexual event dubbed success

Organizers estimate that 175 people turned out for Bi Day '97, billed as Oregon's first rally promoting bisexual visibility.

"We're really delighted by the turnout," says Sven Bonnichsen, president and political director of the Portland Bisexual Alliance, a community organization for bisexuals. "We're hoping this becomes a tradition—much like the Dyke March has—that only gets bigger and better."

The event, held June 27 at Pioneer Courthouse Square in downtown Portland, featured an array of speakers and music.

State Sen. Kate Brown (D-Portland), who is openly bisexual, was slated to present but failed to attend due to her legislative schedule.

However, Bonnichsen says Brown sent a letter, which was read during the gathering, expressing her solidarity. Members of the transsexual and anti-violence communities were also on hand.

"It was a great beginning," he adds.

PBA meets the first and third Fridays of the month at 7 pm at Laughing Horse Books, 3652 SE Division St., in Portland. For more information, call 232-9275, or write to PBA at PO Box 412, Portland, OR 97207.

## Rights initiative headed for Washington ballot

An estimated 230,000 signatures have been submitted to the Washington secretary of state's office to place a statewide gay and lesbian rights initiative on the November ballot.

The petitions were delivered July 3, and state

officials say Initiative 677, which seeks to prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, should be validated within a month.

Hands Off Washington, a grass-roots coalition that promotes gay and lesbian equality, was instrumental in the signature-gathering campaign.

The ballot title reads: "Shall discrimination based on sexual orientation be prohibited in employment, employment agency and union membership practices, without requiring employee partner benefits or preferential treatment?"

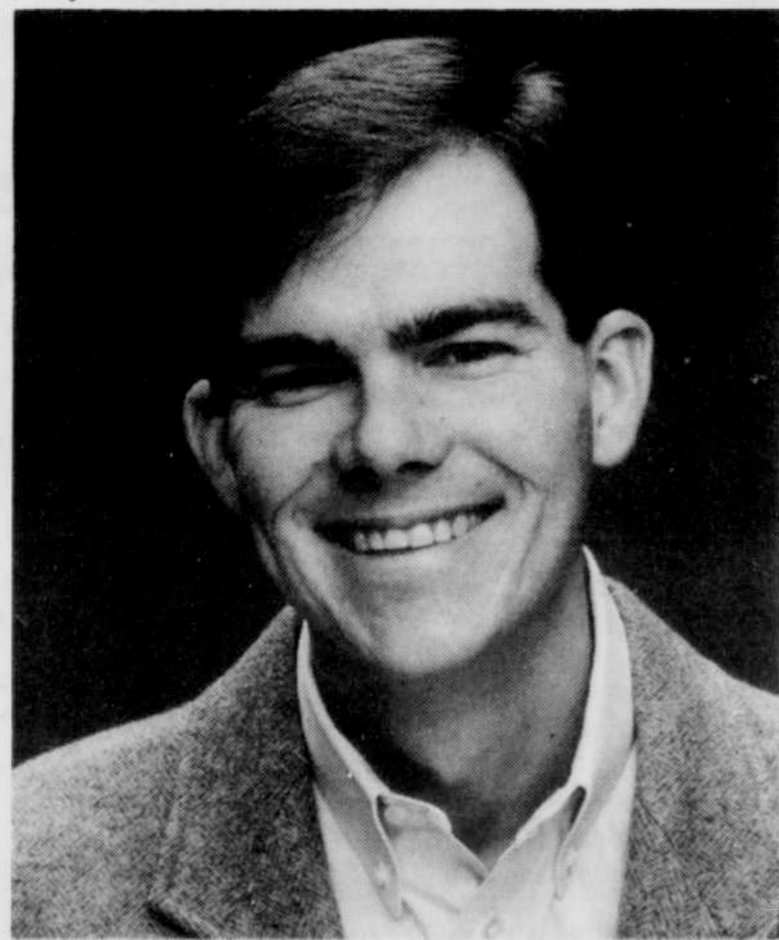
Backers needed to collect 180,000 valid signatures to qualify the proposal for the ballot.

## Church selects gay minister

The Rev. John Paul Davis III, who is openly gay, was installed June 1 as the minister of congregational life for the First Congregational Church/United Church of Christ, located in downtown Portland.

Davis, 33, is a 1990 graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey. He is the First Congregational Church's first openly gay minister and one of an estimated 50 openly gay UCC ministers nationwide.

At the national level, the United Church of Christ has called upon its churches to be "open and affirming" toward gay men and lesbians and has endorsed the ordination of sexual minorities



The Rev. John Paul Davis III

since the 1970s. First Congregational Church became an "open and affirming" church in 1992.

Davis was ordained at the Philadelphia-based Tabernacle United Church in March. According to the Rev. Patricia Ross, FCC's senior minister, the search committee considered 50 applicants for the post, unanimously choosing Davis.

Reported by Inga Sorensen

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