

Speak Out

What's it gonna be, Portland?

TO THE EDITOR:

I'm not at all surprised to learn that embezzlement and financial mismanagement threaten Phoenix Rising's continued existence.

Nearly two years ago I obtained and reviewed a number of the agency's grant applications filed with Multnomah County. The alarm was first publicly sounded in the June 12, 1997, edition of *The Oregonian*, when columnist Steve Duin reported my concerns that the agency had mismanaged county grant money.

The clients of Phoenix Rising who face the loss of much-needed help are merely the latest victims of the venal "business as usual" mentality which afflicts this community despite its constant invocations of "pride."

What sort of pride tolerates the endless misappropriation and misuse of community funds?

Remember the scandalous embezzlement at CAP some years back? And just how did the Lesbian Community Project amass such a huge

amount of debt given bylaws prohibiting debt whatsoever?

The seemingly endless spectacle of fund-raising and financial mismanagement which has distinguished too many of Portland's gay and lesbian organizations demonstrates that pride isn't obtained by mindlessly mouthing an empty word.

Pride is earned not only by demanding accountability but by assuming the personal responsibility to oversee how all that money raised in our names is actually expended, regardless of whether we sit on the boards of directors or are employed by this or that agency.

Portland's sexual minorities can continue to stand by as the incompetent and unscrupulous deplete our resources or we can show enough pride in ourselves and our community to get involved and ask the hard questions.

So which will it be, Portland? Continued victimization or pride?

MARGARET DEIRDRE O'HARTIGAN
Portland

just asking

Just Out recently braved rain and wind to find the answer to this most daunting question: "So, what's the best or worst Valentine's Day you've ever had?"



ANNETTE HADAWAY
Portland
Print salesperson

"The worst was when I got someone else's flowers by mistake."



RICK SPENCER
Portland
Owner, Gai-Pied

"Why be romantic for just one day? I'm a big advocate of intimacy and I'm always amazed at how many guys have intimacy issues."



NATHAN MOORE
Portland
Louisiana transplant

"The worst for me was the second year of my three-year relationship. I'd gone to great lengths to prepare a very romantic time and my boyfriend had forgotten it was Valentine's Day."



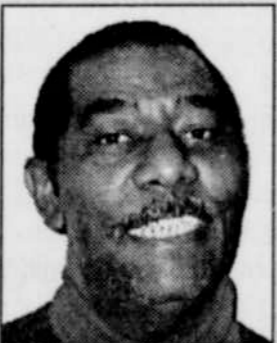
JAN SWANSON
Portland
Owner, Java Jan's

"When I was in grade school I had a huge crush on this little boy and I gave him about 20 valentines and he didn't give me a single one.... And then I noticed this little girl sitting next to me...."



TERI INMAN
Portland
Owner, Stereotypes

"My thought is that it's nice to have a special day, but you should also tell the person you love that you love them every day."



WILLIE TUCKER
Portland
Hairstylist,
Gary Luckey Salon

"The best was when I had a night of all-night sex. That was when I was young and could slow down and start over again."

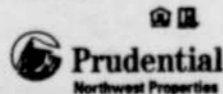
Got a question that keeps you up at night? We'll get the answers you need!
Contact Just Out via fax at (503) 236-1257; via e-mail at justout@justout.com;
or via the USPS at P.O. Box 14400, Portland, OR 97293-0400.



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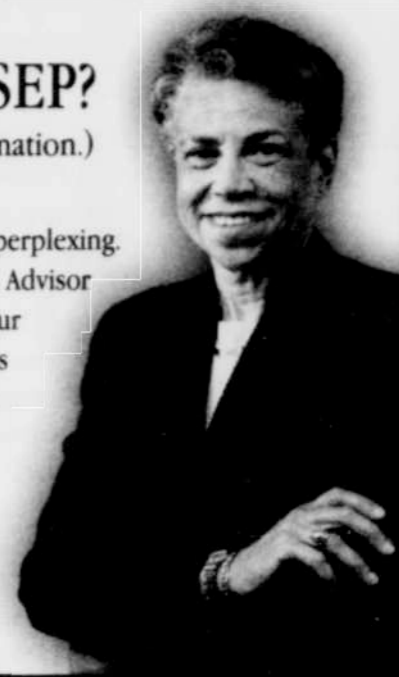
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