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# Just Out



inside  
Is *OUT* editor James Collard  
on his way out?  
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## Trickledown Economics

National groups are often accused of siphoning funds out of local communities, but the Human Rights Campaign is giving back to Oregonians

BY INGA SORENSEN

It was a moment of self-effacing clarity. Poised before a crowd of nearly 400, Ron Wyden pondered the notion that he—a man “with a face for radio and limited oratorical skills”—could wind up in the U.S. Senate.

That, of course, is where the Oregon Democrat has landed, despite his self-professed shortcomings.

Wyden’s humbling humor drew appreciative laughter, a nod in a sense from those who found his assessment—and delivery—refreshing, especially given the highly hypocritical nature of D.C. politics of late.

Wyden then waxed on this country’s illustrious qualities, but not without noting that “discrimination is a stain on our national greatness.” A stain that must be removed.

Detractors of that belief were nonexistent in this safe haven, situated on this night in the Portland Hilton, at the annual Human Rights Campaign dinner.

Several hundred people plunked down \$150 to get into the Feb. 13 event, which featured Wyden, House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt, D-Mo., former Oregon Gov. Barbara Roberts, author and political consultant David Mixner, and gay comedian Bob Smith, among others.

HRC, touted as the largest national lesbian and gay political organization, lobbies the federal government on gay and HIV/AIDS issues. Established in 1980, it maintains a full-time lobbying crew in the nation’s capital.

HRC’s goals during the 106th Congress include promotion of a measure barring employment discrimination based on sexual orientation, and passage of anti-hate crimes legislation.

According to Ron Glanville, chair of the Portland shindig, about 100 more people turned out for the 1999 bash than did last year.

He says of the estimated \$60,000 raised via ticket sales and an auction, about \$35,000 will land in HRC’s coffers in D.C. The other \$25,000, he says, will be used to cover dinner-related expenses.

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PHOTO BY LINDA KLEWER



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Just out

MOLLY MCDONNELL (LEFT) AND KATHY CLIFFORD ON THEIR SPECIAL DAY

Same-sex partnerships may enjoy more recognition than ever before,  
but the brass ring of marriage—and its host of associated entitlements—remains out of reach

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