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Writer and world traveler
Barbara Wilson tackles
the world with talent and ink
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Leading Edge

The gay rights movement has come a long way since Stonewall. Organizations and activists have both flourished and failed. There's still important work to be done. It's 1999, do you know who your leaders are?

by Holly Pruett • photos by Linda Kliever

Sexual Minority Leaders Quiz

Name _____
Date _____

1. Match the names and photos of these past, present and future leaders:



- ___ Renée Sánchez
- ___ Cliff Jones
- ___ Jerry Weller
- ___ Kathleen Saadat



2. Essay Question: Briefly describe an effective leader. Use one of the examples.

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Doing It for Themselves

Activists prepare for Oregon's first statewide conference orchestrated by and for queer youth

BY INGA SORENSEN

Mr. T and Evil-T hover at table's edge, downing Nilla Wafers and guacamole cradled in Doritos, all trailed by Sprite chasers.

Joining the two Ts—who despite their monikers are related in purpose only—are Zarah Walker, a 17-year-old Madison High School senior, and Nerissa Ediza, who at 25 could easily pass as a teen-ager herself.

It's a drizzly Monday night in late February, and the foursome are installed in an overheated office at Basic Rights Oregon in Portland.

Their synergistic bantering brings them to a truly scary topic: "I found out what head cheese is today," offers Evil-T, a 22-year-old whose tame name is Teresa Lee.

Evil-T, who proudly boasts a tattoo of the Lesbian Avengers' bomb emblem on her upper arm, explains that head cheese is a seriously creepy meat product that is so vile it wouldn't even land in Spam.

Mr. T, a 17-year-old trans youth with a swath of fiery pink through his hair, logically inquires, "Why do they call it cheese if it's meat?" prompting Evil-T to ponder, "Why do they call it 'head'?"

The crew, though small in number on this particular occasion, playfully trade quips throughout the evening. It's fun and a far cry from your traditional adult queer activist meeting, which can often be staid and dogmatic; here, a breezy sarcasm and edgy humor abound.

"Bite me!" someone pops off. The word *cool* peppers the dialogue, which is good because it marks approval—and hence, progress—in the group's planning process.

And plan they do, for what is likely Oregon's first statewide conference orchestrated by and for queer youth. The event, slated for March 20 and 21 at Willamette University in Salem, is part of Equality Begins at Home, a major campaign for gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans equality.

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