

It was supposed to be lesbian entertainers day on *The Roseanne Show*—and it was in most other parts of the country—but not in Portland.

The program, which was taped at the end of March and aired nationwide May 27, featured, among others, lesbian comedians Suzanne Westenhoefer and Kate Clinton, the singing group the Murmurs, and Chastity Bono.

The Roseanne Show airs on Portland's KGW-TV weekdays at 3 p.m.

Portland-based talent agent Tam Martin, who represents Westenhoefer, says when she sat down to watch the episode via KGW, she was chagrined to see it was a no go.

"It was a [*Roseanne*] show about women athletes," she says, adding that the television listings indicated Westenhoefer and company were to be the guests that day.

Martin says she knows the episode aired elsewhere because she's spoken with people who watched it.

So what's the deal in the City of Roses?

Seems Brenda Buratti, KGW's programming director, took issue with some of the episode's content and decided to pre-empt it.

"Kids are home at that hour," she says, adding that *Roseanne* is a program which, in her view, is more designed for the late-night hours.

"This isn't the first time we've pre-empted the show," Buratti stresses. "We've done it three or four times."

Other *Roseanne* episodes to get the KGW bump include one that offered pole-dancing tips and another touted as a "Fashion Show for Prostitutes."

WAR OF THE ROSES

Rose City's KGW-TV cans lesbian episode of *The Roseanne Show*; KOIN-TV draws fire from concerned queers by Inga Sorensen

None of the prior quashed episodes dealt with gay or lesbian issues, says Buratti.

Given that, what was the problem with this particular installment?

Buratti says she thought the Portland audience would react "very negatively" to parts of the program that she construed as "promoting lesbianism."

It wasn't the topic or the guests who gave her pause, she says. Instead, it was *Roseanne* and the show's producers who did some things that Buratti felt were "inappropriate for the Portland audience."

For example, says Buratti, the show featured a list of the "Top 10 Reasons for Becoming a Lesbian," and a sapphic version of the *I Love Lucy* opening—you know, the heart thing—which instead said "I Love Lesbians."

Says Martin: "It makes me wonder what else I don't get to see!"

Over at Portland's KOIN-TV, meanwhile, it seems Lars Larson, who hosts "The Buzz"—billed as "a double shot of opinion espresso"—during the local newscast, is upsetting some viewers.

"Lars Larson is entitled to his opinion," says

Martin Mullins, an up-until-now KOIN viewer who recently called the station and *Just Out* to voice his concerns.

In a recent installment, Mullins says, Larson was discussing legislation currently in the Oregon House that could severely restrict civil rights for gay and lesbian citizens. He says Larson took the position that if same-sex couples were allowed to marry, who would be next? Polygamists? Fathers and daughters?

"Really ridiculous analogies," says Mullins.

Still, that wasn't what got him so peeved. He says Larson's only guest was one of the sponsors of the anti-gay bill.

"So it was the two of them. There was nobody with an opposing view," Mullins says, adding, "What about fairness?"

Furthermore, KOIN has regularly aired clips of Focus on the Family's James Dobson giving advice on family life during its morning news program.

As one letter writer to *Just Out* protested: "For months, anchors Elaine Murphy and Craig Cheatham have [introduced] his packaged video clips as actual news, with no warning that what follows is commentary from a far-right political organization with repulsive misogynist and homophobic views."

Just Out's phone call to KOIN went unanswered, but the station's Internet site invites viewers to e-mail comments about "The Buzz" directly to Larson at lars@koin.com.

On a more positive note, *The Oregonian* came out strongly against House Joint Resolution 29, which would write into the Oregon constitution a definition of marriage as the union between a man and a woman—even though state statute already stipulates as much.

The measure would also prohibit state and local governments from providing gay and lesbian employees the same benefits provided to married couples.

The May 27 editorial, titled "Bride of Measure 9," starts off: "The need to

confine those home-wrecking gays and lesbians

must have overwhelmed the Legislature's defenders of

decency. Since there's no compelling state interest

here, that's the most rational explanation for the

leaders of the Oregon House pushing a

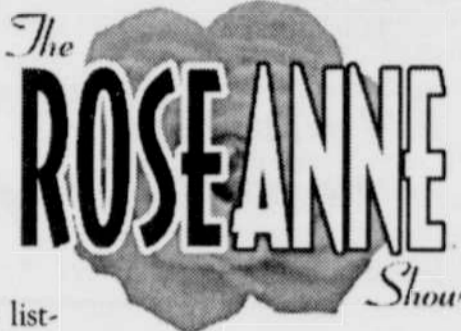
wholly unnecessary defense-of-marriage law."

The piece concludes:

"Lawmakers who support HJR29 won't do anything to protect the institution of

marriage, but they will show themselves to be enemies of equal protection for all citizens. Now

that would be indecent."



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