

Family Pride *Continued from page 31*

Looking back, Treanor surmises she eventually came to the City of Roses to be "isolated." She needed a place to reflect, to conduct some inner exploration. And what began to emerge was her love of and attraction to women.

"It wasn't easy," she explains. "One week I was [a lesbian] and the next week I wasn't—and during the weeks I wasn't, I was relieved!"

That is changing, however, and Treanor uses each pride celebration as a personal gauge.

"It gives me a chance to see where I am with my own coming out process," she says. "The first pride I attended, I went with just a couple of friends; I was nervous, and didn't really feel part of the community. But these days, I'm enthusiastic when I go, and have a good group of friends."

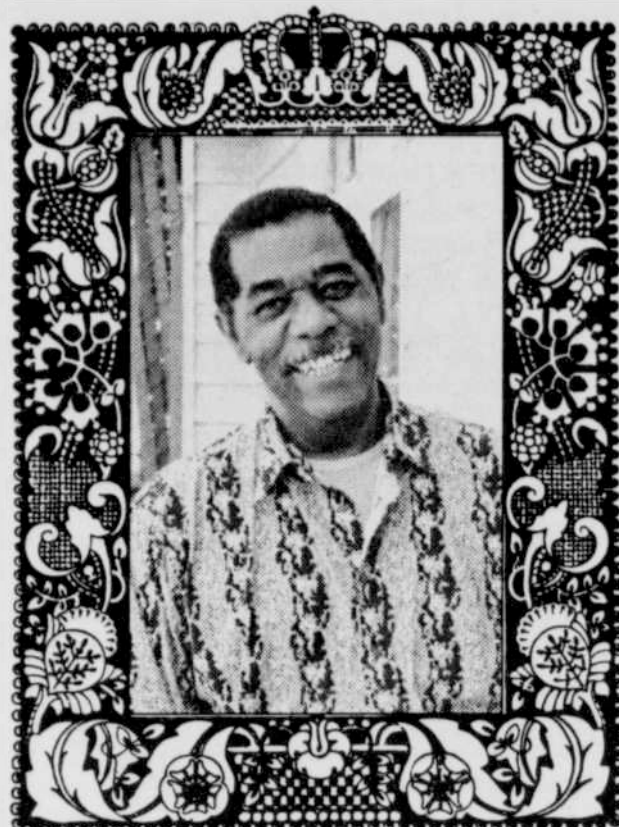
Treanor, a systems analyst, says that when she was coming out a few years back, she couldn't bring herself to partake in pride.

"I knew it was gay pride, but I was too scared to go—but I still drove past to check it out. The following year, I was actually there. So it's good for me to see where I am with my own progress," she says. "I feel I would participate in the parade in future years—same with the Dyke March."

But don't expect to ever spot Treanor going topless at the ever-feisty Dyke March.

"No, I'm not that radical," she laughs, adding in a more serious tone: "Pride gives me a sense of community. It helps to feel proud of who I am and my own community. And I think it's really good for people in outlying communities, many of whom probably appreciate it even more because they have to hide more in their everyday life."

I.S.



Willie TUCKER

Cantankerous. Grouchy. Grumpy. Irascible. These are just a few of the words used to describe Willie Tucker. And mind you now, these are words Tucker uses to describe himself.

In actuality, the 61-year-old hairstylist is a colorful historian of life in Portland gay bars and drag shows—worlds in which he's been ensconced since the late 1960s.

Tucker came out as a gay man at the age of 19. This was before Stonewall; before a gay

rights movement; before it was even reasonable to be an out African American man.

And he has stories to tell.

In 1968, Tucker moved to Portland and became a fixture in the early court system and drag-show circuit. He got involved with Peacock in the Park and currently serves as a board member of the organization that produces the annual event. The day of the performance will find him acting as "trouble shooter" and backstage coordinator.

As for the importance of gay pride, he responds: "The whole idea is to have a day—one day—where we can be ourselves and not worry about what people say and think."

Tucker admits he's never been to the actual gay pride parade, but he's been to the festivities that follow at Gov. Tom McCall Waterfront Park.

He agrees that now may be time to try and make it down and see just what's new with the gay and lesbian community. Let's hope that he makes it this year.

M.D.

Eric TYLER

When meeting Eric Tyler for the first time, one might wish for a time machine. The urge to travel back to his birth and confront the doctor who announced, "It's a girl," is overwhelming. Biology can be deceiving.

To think of Tyler as a man is not disturbing. To think that he once had to live as a woman is.



It's difficult to imagine this 42-year-old, all-American-looking guy trying to live as a female. But it's nothing, obviously, compared to how hard it was for him.

"I had a tremendous amount of anxiety in my life," Tyler recalls. "I had this stuff building up inside of me. I thought I was going to go crazy."

Following his decision to make the transition from female to male, the world is looking like a better place.

"A lot of my depression has gone away," Tyler says. "I look better. I feel better. I have some really great friends and a great girlfriend.... I've achieved an amount of clarity about myself that's opened up a whole new world for me."

As for his place among the queer community's ranks, Tyler says: "I would classify myself as a heterosexual male—a queer, heterosexual male."

As such, not only will he be attending Portland's pride festivities, he'll be performing as well. On Saturday, June 19, he'll take the stage to sing three songs and play guitar. And he can feel proud that he feels more himself than at any other point in his life.

Different Drivers. Different Roads. One Car.

