



Look who's having
a Birthday!

Happy Birthday Kim

Speak out

All the world's a stage

TO THE EDITOR:

Your editorial ["Your Grandma Is Watching, Keep Your Pants On," *Just Out*, June 4] makes a crucial point about the media's depictions of us.

The sooner voters identify with us, the sooner we'll have equal rights. Very few voters identify with the stereotypes they see in the media, so why should such obnoxious deviants have rights like mine, they may ask themselves. But if they saw men, women, children and families marching like any other parade of responsible citizens, a greater sense of identity and empathy may result. Maybe a positive image or memory would persist until Election Day, when they may vote on candidates and issues that affect our community.

I feel that we are forever indebted to a bunch of fed-up queers and drag queens who finally stood up at Stonewall and shouted, "Enough! We're not going to take it any more!" I'm thankful for the courage of activists everywhere, who relentlessly keep our issues in the forefront. But times, people and communities change. In these times, we would better represent our cause with more maturity and grace in certain venues.

All the world's indeed a stage, we're all actors, and television cameras and reporters are everywhere. Let's give them images that help—not impede—our struggle for equality.

ED CLEMENT
Portland

There's room for us all

TO THE EDITOR:

Having just read Marty Davis' "modest proposal" for cleaning up Portland's gay pride at Waterfront Park ["Your Grandma Is Watching, Keep Your Pants On," *Just Out*, June 4], I feel compelled to respond and offer some comments of my own.

Davis feels that only the most flamboyant queers get television coverage, leaving some straight people with a stilted, unsavory view of queers. These unsavory views, she contends, could have residual effects that affect queers politically. She advocates using pride as a "showcase of our accomplishments" and suggests, in a somewhat patronizing tone, that "we exhibit our best behavior and set out to show family, friends, landlords, neighbors and employers that we deserve their respect and good will."

Davis apparently believes some of Portland's saucier pride participants are misbehaving and need to be "straightened out," as though they were undisciplined fourth-graders on a field trip—*single file children, no talking, act nice*—I'm left to wonder if she would prefer we raise our hands for permission to use the porta-potties.

The most dangerous part of Davis' proposal, though, is that her notion of respectability (and accordingly, assimilation) is wholly subjective. She prefers not to see too much skin, piercings or tattoos because local television news teams focus on it and give the rest of us a bad name. But what about the gym-toned, 28-year-old gay white male from Northwest Portland? Perhaps his notion of respectability involves telling large, dykey women who sport blazers and short hair to "femme up" for the sake of those television cameras because butch lesbians give the rest of us a bad name.

So who, then, gets the right to draw the line about what is OK versus unacceptable for the sake of the media? The answer is obvious and simple: No one can and no one should. Pride is not an event that needs to be manipulated for the television cameras. If there's an issue with balanced media coverage, someone needs to take that up with our local television stations and leave pride and its participants alone.

From a historical perspective, need I remind Davis that it was indeed rowdy flaming faggots and drag queens who sparked the Stonewall riots in 1969? Those riots are the reason queers celebrate pride in Portland and around the world.

Perhaps then, the way to honor those brave, radical pioneers is to follow in their footsteps and be as out, open and wildly queer as possible as we celebrate our *one day* a year in downtown Portland. Sure it may frighten a closet case or two, but that's why we have support groups.

My point is, there is no reason *not* to be yourself. Those tattooed and pierced queers in G-strings have as much right to be at pride as a 70-year-old PFLAG mom, whether there is television coverage or not. If you don't like what you see, turn your head or turn the channel. Gay pride is a parade and festival to some, a march and rally to others. There's room for us all, and if we sacrifice individuality for the sake of a 10-second spot on the news, there is really nothing left to fight for and we all lose.

HOWIE BAGGADONUTZ
Portland

How about Halloween?

TO THE EDITOR:

I want to support the idea of "keeping our pants on" as expressed so well by Marty Davis ["Your Grandma Is Watching, Keep Your Pants On," *Just Out*, June 4].

I think it is time to proactively use the corporate media for "our own good." The reality is we are fighting for full civil rights in this state and nationally, and our pride parades have become a political venue.

I am, however, equally concerned—and can appreciate—that some people in our community will feel that their "self-expression" is hampered by such an attitude. To help satisfy our right to self-expression and creativity, I suggest the following: Let's keep our pants on at pride, but let's strut our stuff starting this year by creating an annual Halloween parade in Portland, one that will rival the famous New York City Halloween parade, which is an all-out fun celebration of personal, physical expression and creativity.

KIM ROTH
Portland

transition

Fabulous 40

Richard Holman and Robert W. McCrary (a k a Big Vi) have something really special to celebrate during gay pride month: their 40th anniversary. The two partners met 10 years before Stonewall at a Portland waterfront bar. By the end of their first month of dating, even their mothers could see they were right for each other and suggested they move in together.

Both men are native Portlanders and have lived together in two colorful locations—first at China Court, an early mecca for Bohemians such as Allen Ginsberg, and for the past 28 years at a Northeast Portland apartment complex famous for its late-night parties. Their union will be celebrated with family and friends over the July 4 weekend. Congratulations guys!

just asking

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Benefiting Brother to Brother, Lesbian Community Project, Love Makes A Family, Pride Northwest ▼ Benefiting Brother to Brother, Lesbian Community Project, Love Makes A Family, Pride Northwest ▼



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