

Speak Out

major and smaller papers across the country. I hope to reach you there!

LEE LYNCH
Waldport, Ore.

Spousal support

TO THE EDITOR:

I was in Salt Lake City when your March 17 feature article, "Getting Down and Dirty," appeared, but I heard about it from my grumbling little spouse before I ever made it back to Portland!

I was of course more than happy to offer up our yard for a photograph for the story, but "his partner" (as indicated in the caption on Page 24) has a name: It's Dale Boss. I thought it only fair to mention him, especially since he is on the mortgage!

BOB MENSEL
Portland

Heartfelt pledge

TO THE EDITOR:

I'm writing in response to the letter written by Mitch Gould in the March 17 issue of *Just Out*.

I am saddened that someone from our own community is fighting to make our very own pride parades conservative, censored and void of diversity.

Would this guy, if he was in charge, start making up rules for what was to be deemed immoral behavior, or start a committee to screen participants to make sure that he approved of their attire or the content of their entertainment? I think that we would be the first city in the United States to have a politically correct pride parade! Queer people everywhere would feel sorry for us. And what would happen to the people who violated his rules?

Thank God that there are tons of flamboyant drag queens and people who flaunt their sexuality out loud! I'm the type who always admires these folks and hopes that one day I'll have the courage and character to do the same.

This man reminds me of all the closeted queer people I've met who seem to think that if they protect the bigots and homophobes from the truth, they will receive more privileges than all the "other" gay people who live their lives more bravely and honestly.

I know in my soul that once we start making decisions to censor or discriminate against certain kinds of people based on what we believe is acceptable for them, we will lose all chance at gaining the freedom or rights we deserve. Isn't this what we are all fighting for anyway?

Come on, guy, this is one day a year! One day!

I know that this world that he envisions will never come about, at least not in our community, and I pledge my most sincere commitment to making sure that it never will!

JESS BRUNELLE
Portland

Proud of diversity

TO THE EDITOR:

I wanted to write a letter in response to the comments that Mitch Gould wrote in the March 17 issue of *Just Out's* letters to the editor.

I don't understand how someone could feel this way about other gays and have any sense of pride in themselves.

Diversity is something I find very valuable, not just race or sexual orientation, but within race and sexual orientation. All people are very different, which is great! How fun would our pride celebration be if we only had 40-year-old, middle-class, family-type people attending and parading? Or how about *only* the gay youth? We need the diversity among ourselves, because we are not all the same.

The gay pride celebration is a place where I personally feel safe and free to be exactly who I am out in the open. More often than not, people I meet or work with assume I am straight, but not at pride. I feel very comfortable to snuggle my girlfriend in public at pride, where I know I'm not in any danger of harassment or worse.

I've seen the dramatic outfits and the dramatic drag queens. I've seen the shirtless dykes, I've seen the asses of the queers into leather and S&M. They must feel safe at pride too, to be out in the daylight celebrating with pride, instead of the bars and homes where they might normally find acceptance.

Pride events allow all kinds of queers to come together. I embrace this, and encourage the diversity at pride.

DORI HINAMON
Portland

Notables

Michael Byerley, 1955-2000

On Wednesday, March 29, 2000, Michael Byerley died of complications from severe colitis.

Byerley, who was born in Oregon, served in the U.S. Navy as an electrician.

A longtime community activist, Byerley worked for more livable and safer neighborhoods. He was instrumental in closing several drug houses, helped to start Block Watch in his neighborhood and played a crucial role in re-establishing a neighborhood foot patrol in the Sabin community, among many other civic contributions.

In 1996, Byerley won a Charles Bengel Award from the Crime Prevention Association of Oregon. The award was presented to Byerley for outstanding leadership in the area of com-



munity policing in Northeast Portland.

Three years ago, Byerley became a foster parent for the state of Oregon with his partner of over 10 years, Daniel Dale. He also worked as a foster parent advocate.

"Michael's hobby was helping people and being anywhere people needed him," Dale says.

Byerley was surrounded by numerous friends during his last hours. Also standing vigil were his three foster sons. Byerley and Dale were in the midst of adopting two of their children at the time of Byerley's death. Dale plans to proceed with the adoptions.

■ Contributed by JOHATHAN KIPP

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