

If you believe the folklore behind Peacock in the Park, Portland's annual outdoor summer drag show, the last Sunday in June is the driest day of the entire year.

Rose Empress XXIX Lady Elaine Peacock, the founder of the annual drag fest and fund-raiser, reportedly looked into the precipitation history books to chose a day to have her first show. It had to be the sunniest and most beautiful day of the year. It had to be a day when a Peacock could strut her stuff and show off her plumage—without any mascara running.

This year's event, the second largest gay event in Portland, is on June 25. As usual, the picnic and show will feature the Washington Park Amphitheater as its backdrop. The show will begin at 2:30 p.m. with scholarship presentations. Music and picnicking will start at noon. Local drag celebs Maria and Poison Waters will conduct the afternoon festivities.

The event, originally called Peacock and the Roses Show, started in 1987 and drew only a small crowd. In those days, the stage had no sets, there were no food booths, no T-shirts and nary a promotional poster. Despite the production's simplicity, Lady Peacock's mother, Audria M. Edwards, was there to see that first show.

A few months later, Edwards died. Her death would be the catalyst for what has grown into one of the community's most successful annual events.

Along with her siblings, Lady Peacock, one of Portland's most flamboyant and beloved drag performers, established the Audria M. Edwards Scholarship Fund in her mother's honor. The show was renamed Peacock in the Park.

Since 1992, nearly \$60,000 has been distributed to sexual minority students and the student children of sexual minority parents who reside in Oregon and southwest Washington.

This year, additional scholarships totaling \$13,500 will be presented. The event hopes to match the money raised last year, when more than \$30,000 was taken in, netting \$18,000 for

SEQUINS IN THE SUN

Banking on beautiful weather, Peacock in the Park organizers are ready to unleash the outdoor drag extravaganza by Jonathan Kipp

From left: Poison Waters, the Rev. Roy Cole and Maria at last year's Peacock in the Park



PHOTO BY KRITSENA STRAWDER

the tax-exempt nonprofit Peacock Productions Inc.

Nowadays, seven years after the death of Woody Johnson (a.k.a. Lady Elaine Peacock), a capacity crowd of about 3,000 gathers each year to enjoy one of Portland's most unique events.

While the crowd at Peacock in the Park is typically well-mannered, Kimberlee Van Patten, co-director of the event, says there usually are a few who have too much to drink and become disruptive. Organizers want to limit excessive

alcohol consumption this year, so no kegs will be allowed in the park. A permit has been issued to the event's sponsors allowing attendees to bring their own alcoholic beverages.

Still, Van Patten wants people to drink responsibly.

Of particular concern are the kids, she says. Historically, young people, who seem to think liquor laws will not be enforced, act as if the event is a free-for-all.

"We don't want to see anyone get hurt," Van

Patten says. "This year we're going to be watching more closely."

The Portland Parks Bureau has donated the services of at least three park rangers to patrol at the event, and Portland police officers have been hired to patrol the park's perimeter as well.

Violators of the event's rules will be asked to leave the park either by volunteer security guards or law enforcement.

Due to space constraints and shallow irrigation pipes in the amphitheater, no canopy tents will be allowed at this year's event.

A "beer bust," at the Embers Avenue in Old Town, will immediately follow the show. Proceeds from the party will also go to the scholarship fund.

The popular June event is often mistakenly attributed to Pride Northwest, which organizes Portland's annual gay pride parade and celebration. But Peacock Productions has its own tax-exempt status and is fully self-supporting.

While Van Patten has to worry about people obeying the rules and the law and the logistics of the event, she says she wants people to come and enjoy themselves. She says it is always a lot of fun and is a great family event.

And Peacock fans can almost bet on the weather, too. The last time the event saw rain was 1993—the same year Lady Peacock died and left behind this amazing legacy.

■ PEACOCK IN THE PARK takes over the Washington Park Amphitheater at noon June 25. Because of limited parking, free shuttles to and from the park will be available from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Pickup and drop-off locations are Embers Avenue, 110 N.W. Broadway, and the corner of Southwest 12th Avenue and Stark Street.

For more information about the AUDRIA M. EDWARDS SCHOLARSHIP, write to P.O. Box 11883, Portland, OR 97211; or apply online at www.gaydirect.com/peacock/sform.asp, or in person at Embers Avenue, the Edge or the NorthBank Tavern.

PARTNERSHIP REGISTRY DRAFT RELEASED

Multnomah County and city of Portland release draft of domestic partnership registry ordinance—with differences from original plan

by Jonathan Kipp

As promised, the city of Portland and Multnomah County presented a draft ordinance June 9 outlining a domestic partnership registry.

The draft was delayed while city and county attorneys grappled with the issue of confidentiality, so there will be no unveiling of a functioning registry at Portland's annual pride event June 17 and 18.

Mayor Vera Katz had hoped to model the local registry after the city of Ashland's, allowing couples to register anonymously if they feared public disclosure. But, according to a joint press release from the city and county, it was ultimately decided an option of anonymity "would undermine the core purpose" of the registry.

The ordinance, if approved by Portland's City Council and the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, does call for couples to retain the original domestic partnership certificate. But a database containing the names, dates of registration and certificate numbers would be considered public record.

Domestic partners uncomfortable with their names becoming part of the public record will be advised by the county on how to document their partnership without government involvement—presumably utilizing private attorneys who can prepare domestic partnership agreements.

Katz announced her intention to pursue a domestic partnership registry ordinance in January. The mayor says the city supports "all families—no matter what their makeup." She feels the existence of such a registry would cement that support.

But at least one city official has warned proponents of the registry that, while the draft ordinance is ready to be implemented, "we are not done yet."

East Multnomah county residents, notoriously more conservative than their western counterparts, will have an opportunity to comment on the proposed registry in early July at a community meeting in Gresham.

Following the meeting, the county commis-

sioners will hold two hearings on the proposed registry.

Implementation of the registry is expected in September, barring any unexpected complications.

Multnomah County will issue the domestic partnership documents in a process similar to that of dispensing a marriage license.

To take part in the registry, both parties will be required to appear in person with identification and declare that they are:

- Residing together and sharing the common necessities of life;
- Not married or registered as a domestic partner in any jurisdiction;
- At least 18 years of age;
- Not related by blood kinship closer than would ban marriage in the state of Oregon, and

"It's high time the government allows all couples the right to formalize their relationships and families."

—Multnomah County Commissioner Lisa Naito

are mutually competent to consent to the contract;

- Each other's sole domestic partner with the intent to remain so indefinitely and are responsible for each other's common welfare.

The registry would provide a means to establish a domestic partnership for all citizens regardless of sexual orientation or gender.

For domestic partners wanting to end their relationship, the draft ordinance calls for a "Statement of Termination of Domestic Partnership." The document is required if the partnership is terminated by either party (unless by death).

The draft also requires a six-month "cooling-off period" before a previously registered individual can register with a new partner.

"It's high time the government allows all couples the right to formalize their relationships and families," Multnomah County Commissioner Lisa Naito said in the press release announcing the draft.

The impact of such a registry on sexual minority couples is unclear. Some consider the registry a benign gesture of goodwill by local government, while others think registries are a crucial first step toward gaining equal rights currently denied to same-sex couples.

Whatever the political repercussions of such a registry are, same-sex couples in the Portland area stand to gain at least a nod of approval from local government.

"Our proposal is a step toward making all families feel welcomed in our community," Serena Cruz, a county commissioner, said.

■ The final community meeting to receive public comment about the draft ordinance will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. July 6 at the Gresham Library, 385 N.W. Miller Ave. County hearings are scheduled for July 20 and 27.

Written comments can be submitted to mayorkatz@ci.portland.or.us. The draft ordinance can be viewed at www.ci.portland.or.us/mayor.