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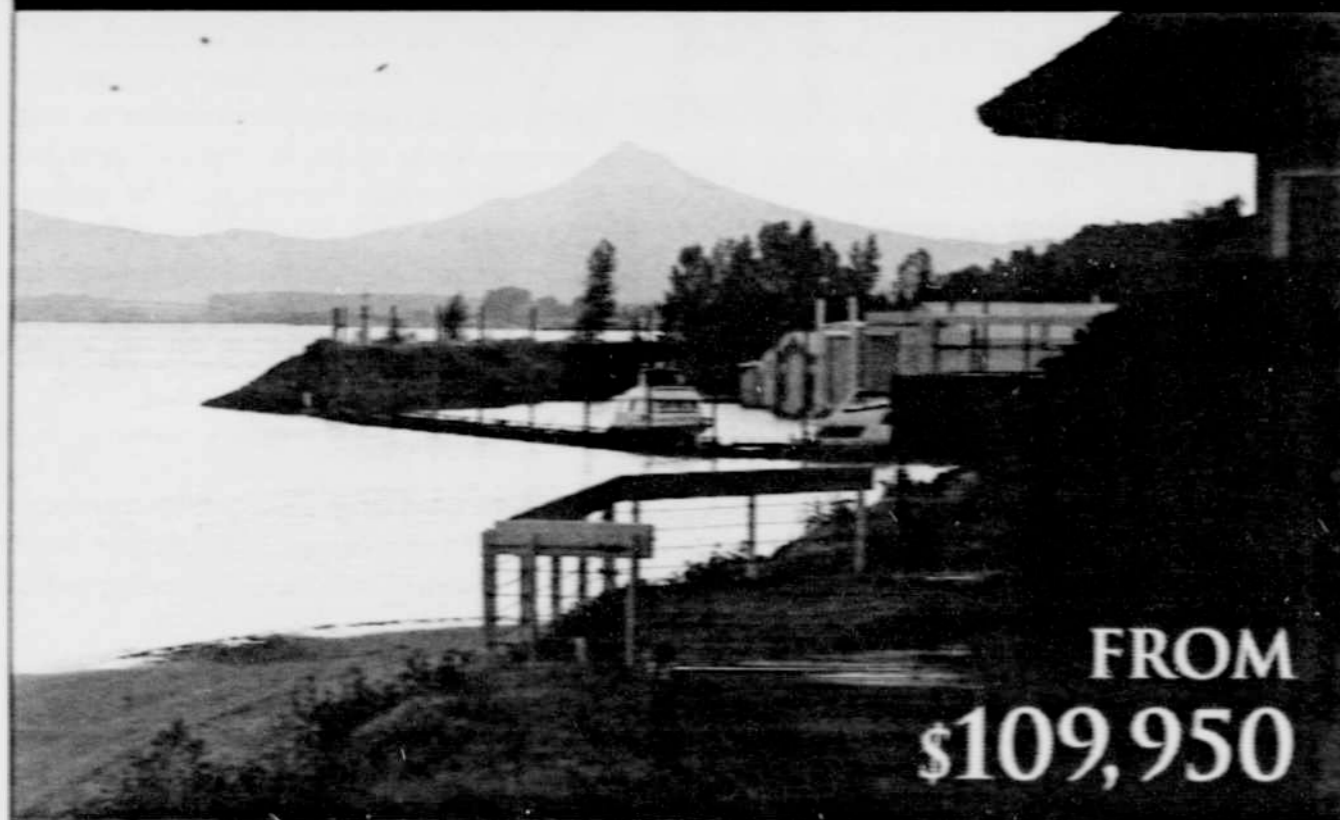
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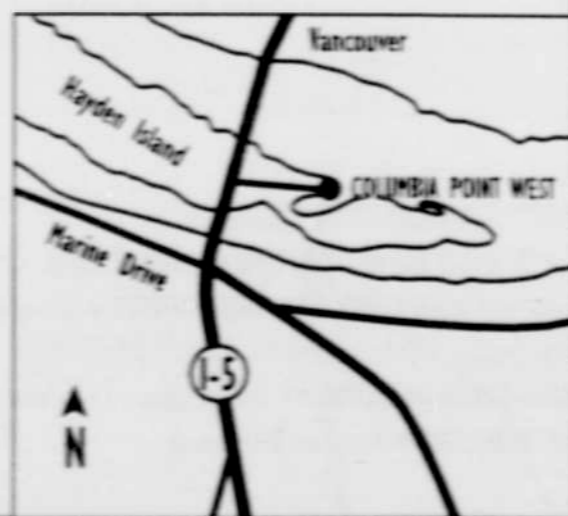


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## Speak out

### Personal safety an issue

TO THE EDITOR:

On June 12, 2000, sometime between 6 and 6:30 p.m., something very wrong happened to me. What, you ask? A black gentleman about age 50 said he was going to take my life. OK, so what, you say. This happens all over the city. I point out that I am a pre-op transgendered woman! This person had a problem with me being where I was at the time.

I did not take the person seriously, and this mistake could have cost me my life. He pulled from his bag a pair of scissors. This got my attention very quickly and put me in a state of panic at the same time.

I've had 24 hours to think this over, and the statement I want to make is: 1. No one has the right to take mine or any other's life; 2. If I or another of my brothers or sisters are not bothering you, just walk away and don't put your hate upon me or another—you're not God!

In closing, just like every other woman in this city, I now have to really take a close look at personal safety. I guess this guy was someone nuts enough to mess with a 6-foot-2-inch, 250-pound black woman and for the second time in her 38-year journey put the fear of God in her. I will not be violated like that again.

DEANNA LYNNMARIE BRYANT  
Portland

### Pride potpourri

TO THE EDITOR:

I had a wonderful experience at the Portland pride parade, and I thought that it would be a heartwarming story to share.

Standing one block before the Pioneer Courthouse Square, four young women pushed their way to the front to watch the parade next to me and my friend. At first I was annoyed, but I loosened up within the spirit of the event. They were very young and very enthusiastic.

Each entry was enthusiastically greeted by us and the young women. By the time the PFLAG contingent began to pass, the mood was quite convivial. One of the women ran out to hug an older woman who was marching with PFLAG. I assumed it was her mother. I felt touched that the mother would walk in support for her young daughter's lifestyle.

What happened next brought all of us around her to tears. Out of the last line of the PFLAG contingent walks an older gentleman with gray hair and the typical carriage of "dad." When he reaches the young girl, who at this time is crying as she spots him, he hugs her and tells her, "This is for you honey, I love you," and goes back into the PFLAG group to continue the march. It was the most touching thing I have experienced in a long time. All the girls gathered around her and hugged and cried, and the rest of us surrounding her were laughing, crying, hugging each other.

For me, and probably for the rest of the people who witnessed that wonderful event of acceptance, our pride weekend was made.

STEPHANIE SWAJA  
Banks, Ore.

TO THE EDITOR:

Never, in all of the years that I have been involved with pride celebrations across the country, have I been more impressed with the people of our community.

Because of an editorial several months ago denoting the lack of volunteers ["A Vexing Lack of Volunteers," March 3], I feel you need to know that for this year's pride event, the turnout of volunteers has been incredible. In just the security team, we had over 70—yes, that's right,

70—volunteers just on Sunday! This, I am told, is a record for Portland's pride.

I think that a major kudos to these volunteers is more than needed. Each and every one of these hardworking team members volunteered to miss out on some of the entertainment and the fun in order to handle the "hate monger troupes," lost children, drunks, injured public, and immense crowds. These incredibly patient, coolheaded, fast-working volunteers deserve our thanks and should be recognized publicly. Without their help, you can imagine what could have happened when our "friends" from the "hate mongers league" showed up, or what kind of real damage might have been done by them and others.

From our security chief and board member Dana Rosenlund to a very patient David Church (who spent most of his time watching and protecting the vehicles under the Morrison Bridge), many people volunteered, bringing their personal know-how and their experiences to help any and all in need.

These volunteers put themselves last so that everyone else could be put first during pride weekend. So, if you know one of these people who gave so much, stop and thank them for giving up their personal comfort and pleasure to ensure yours.

Though I will probably "catch it" for this, a very big "thank you" to the officers of Portland's police department for the help and assistance during pride weekend. The officers made a point of being visible and available to help us for the whole weekend. Also, to Lt. Mike Crebs, our new liaison to Pride Northwest Inc., who arranged for the officers to be present and available all weekend. Putting politics aside, for it has no place in this issue, the help was and is very appreciated. So, to all the people involved with the success of this year's pride event, thank you!

NANCY COOK  
Portland Pride 2000 Security and First Aid

TO THE EDITOR:

On behalf of the squad, "thank you" to Misha, the GLBT community of Portland and the Rose City Softball Association for having us back with open arms.

This past trip was really special because we actually got to know our family members in this beautiful city. Look forward to our return visit in 2001!

Hugs and kisses especially goes out Ron and Gary of Balloons on Broadway. Without them, we would have never succeeded in our showing this year. We love you.

MIDORI SOUR  
West Hollywood Cheerleaders

TO THE EDITOR:

Dancing Trees Marimba Band would like to express our thanks to the Portland Pride 2000 organizers for the opportunity to share our Zimbabwean-inspired music in celebration of Pride 2000.

All of the Trees, gay and straight, were proud to be part of this local celebration and very appreciative of the opportunity to dedicate our performance to being in solidarity with gays in Zimbabwe, most notably Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe, an organization that is leading the cause for gay rights in that country. Thanks, Portland Pride!

JO MAHLER  
Portland

TO THE EDITOR:

This letter is simply to thank Pride Northwest and the volunteers at Pride 2000.

I was a part of a vendor booth and even