

far out

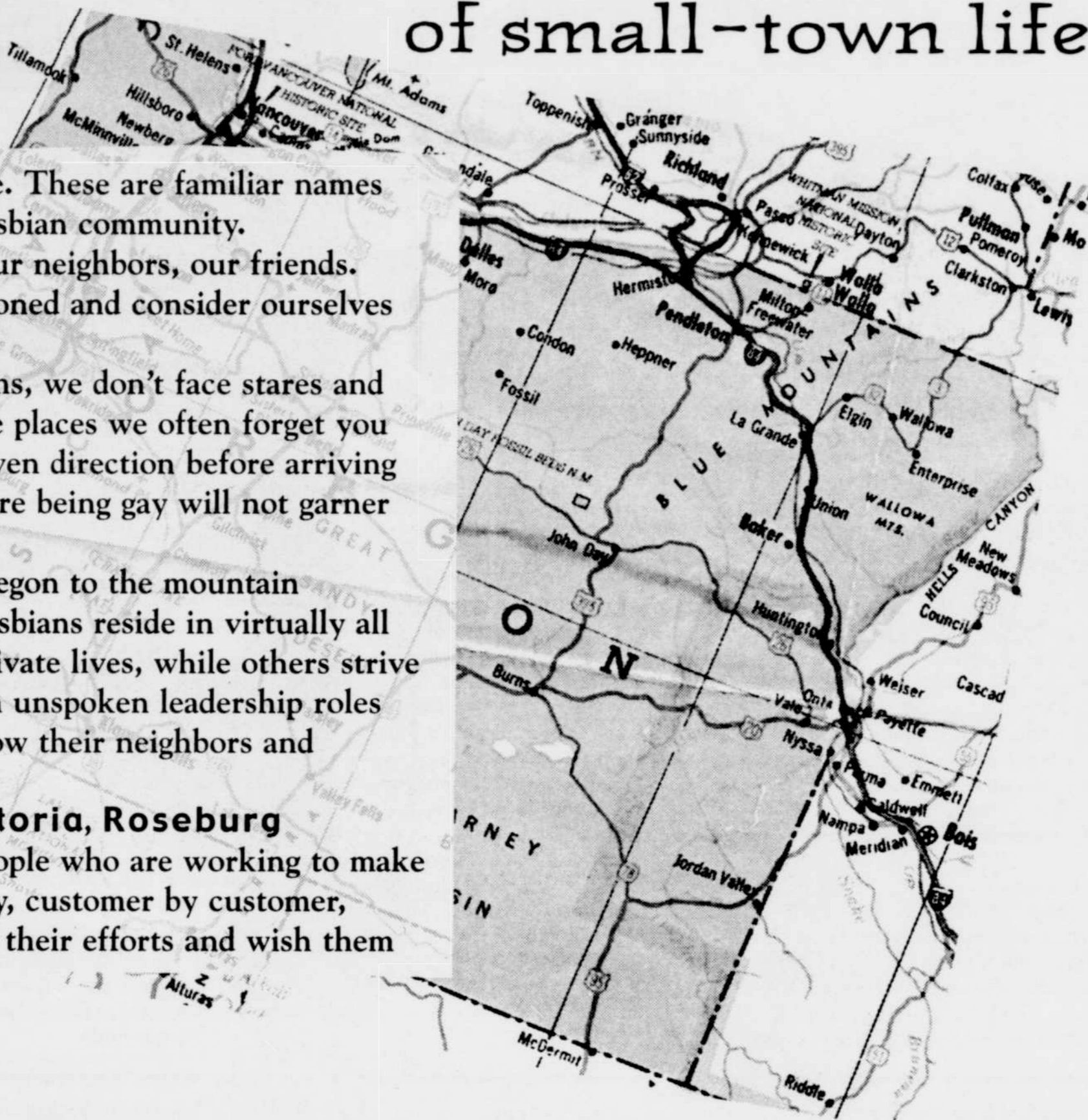
Rural folks share stories of small-town life

Stark Street, Old Town, Hawthorne. These are familiar names and places to Portland's gay and lesbian community. Here we know our merchants, our neighbors, our friends. Here we are comfortable and cocooned and consider ourselves safe and free to be who we are.

In these places we don't see "Yes on 9" signs, we don't face stares and gibes and harassment from strangers. In these places we often forget you don't have to travel too many miles in any given direction before arriving at smaller towns, communities and cities where being gay will not garner immediate and unspoken acceptance.

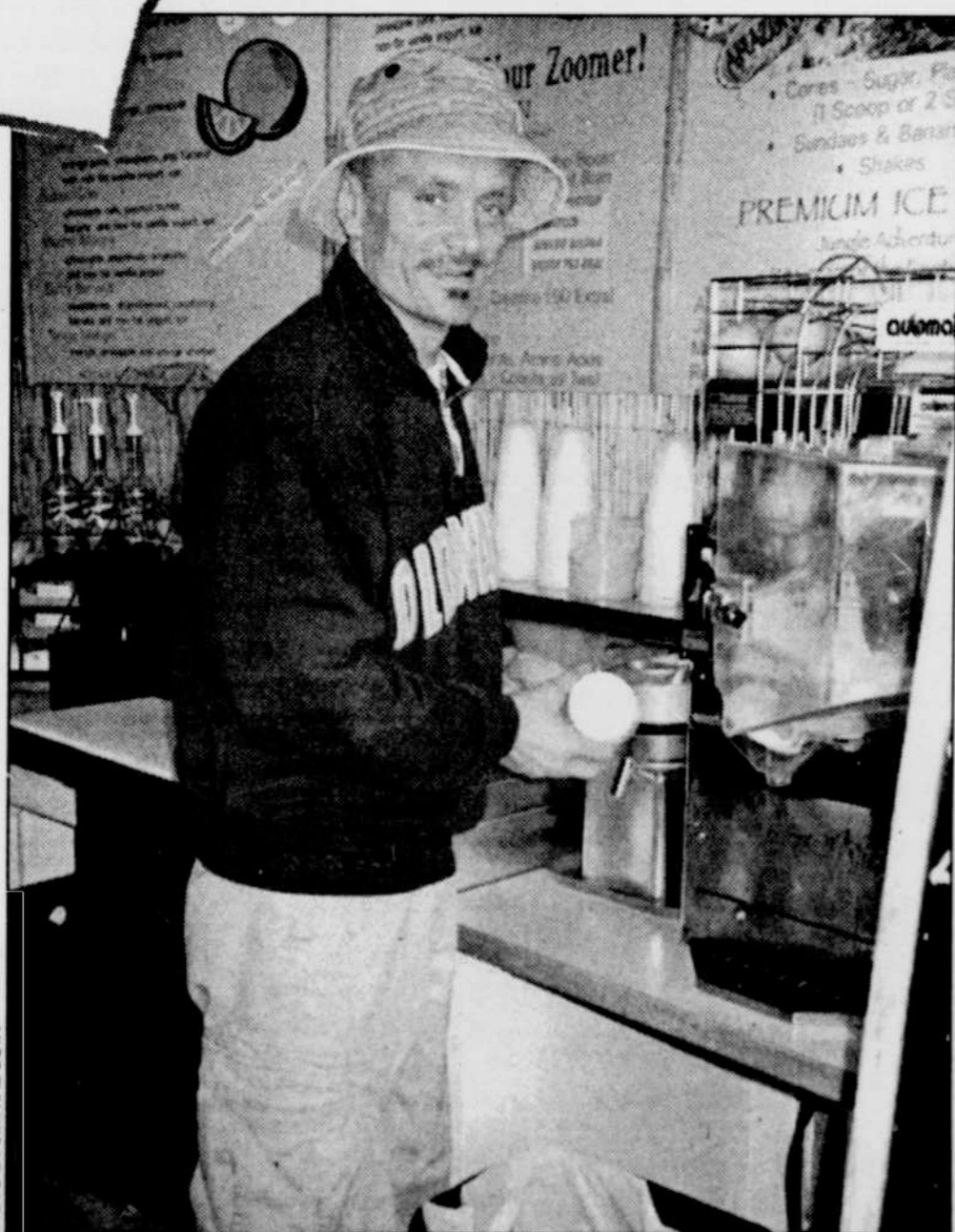
From the coast to the deserts of eastern Oregon to the mountain communities of southern Oregon, gays and lesbians reside in virtually all parts of the state. Many are quiet and lead private lives, while others strive to create their own community. Some take on unspoken leadership roles and are determined to lead by example, to show their neighbors and co-workers the value of honoring all people.

Journey with us now as we take you to **Astoria**, **Roseburg** and **Sheridan** and introduce you to five people who are working to make a difference in their communities—day by day, customer by customer, neighbor by neighbor. We commend them for their efforts and wish them great success with their endeavors.



PACIFIC PRIDE

For Chadd-Paul Flues, home is where the heart is by Jim Radosta



Chadd-Paul Flues hopes to bring a little Portland flavor to Astoria

PHOTO BY JIM RADOSTA

What a difference a year makes.

In 1999, Chadd-Paul Flues was living in the big city, working for the big company and enjoying the big social scene.

So, did he move home to Astoria in order to slow down and simplify his life? Hell, no.

Today, the 39-year-old owns two popular eateries, leads a gay men's support group and serves as an outspoken community advocate. Somehow, he also finds the time to envision making the world a better place.

Like most small-town natives, Flues couldn't wait to fly the coop as soon as he came of age. "I didn't really like Astoria growing up because it was a boring town. I didn't really feel like I fit in."

After earning an agricultural science degree from Oregon State University in 1987, he moved to Portland in hopes of eventually teaching vocational education. But before he knew it, his career goals shifted, and he ended up in the restaurant industry. "I had changed from an egghead into more of a professional businessperson."

Flues learned a lot during his 10 years at McGrath's Fish House in Milwaukie but was ready to venture out on his own. Having frequented Northwest 23rd Avenue's cool diners and funky shops, he knew his hometown could use a dash of hipness.

And he missed his parents, two sisters, cousins, aunts and uncles. "Even though I like

Portland, I enjoy being with my family. My homing instinct kicked in."

He and his niece, 23-year-old Teona Dawson, launched the casually upscale T. Paul's Urban Cafe in downtown Astoria last February. About a block away is Zoomers—a jungle-themed joint specializing in juice, smoothies and ice cream—which opened in August.

Flues, who is quick to insist he is a humble guy, admits the response has been tremendous. "The opportunity was ripe here to bring in some culture and community and creativity."

The blooming entrepreneur isn't solely focused on financial success, though. He is a board member for the North Coast Pride Network, which publishes a quarterly newsletter, maintains a resource center and presents "Gertrude's Wilde Social Mixer" every month.

Flues, who participated in Cascade AIDS Project's Men Talk while in Portland, also leads a men's support group. About a half-dozen guys show up every other Sunday for casual discussions about relationships, sexual concerns and other issues.

As if that weren't enough, he also consistently voices his opinion in the *Daily Astorian* about dilapidated downtown buildings, green-spaces and hate crimes. Flues draws on the history of his hometown, the oldest settlement west of the Mississippi River, for inspiration. "Just like Lewis and Clark, Astoria has lots of

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