

**STARK STREET HOTEL REOPENS**

The Ben Stark Hotel, closed and boarded up for months, reopened in late September using its original name: the Clyde Hotel. Owner Pina Zaver, who hails from San Francisco, said she wants to return the establishment to its original Victorian-era look and charm.

The 98-room hotel, located at 1022 S.W. Stark St., has 25 remodeled rooms available for guests. Rates are between \$59.99 and \$140 a night.

The hotel, built in 1912, is registered with the Oregon Historical Society. Zaver said it was one of Portland's most expensive properties for almost 50 years before it deteriorated.

She said the three-story hotel constantly will be upgraded during the next two years. The renovation started last January.

Zaver said that most of her guests so far have been travelers who were familiar with the Ben Stark Hotel but that she welcomes new guests and hopes the gay community will visit. "We're gay friendly."

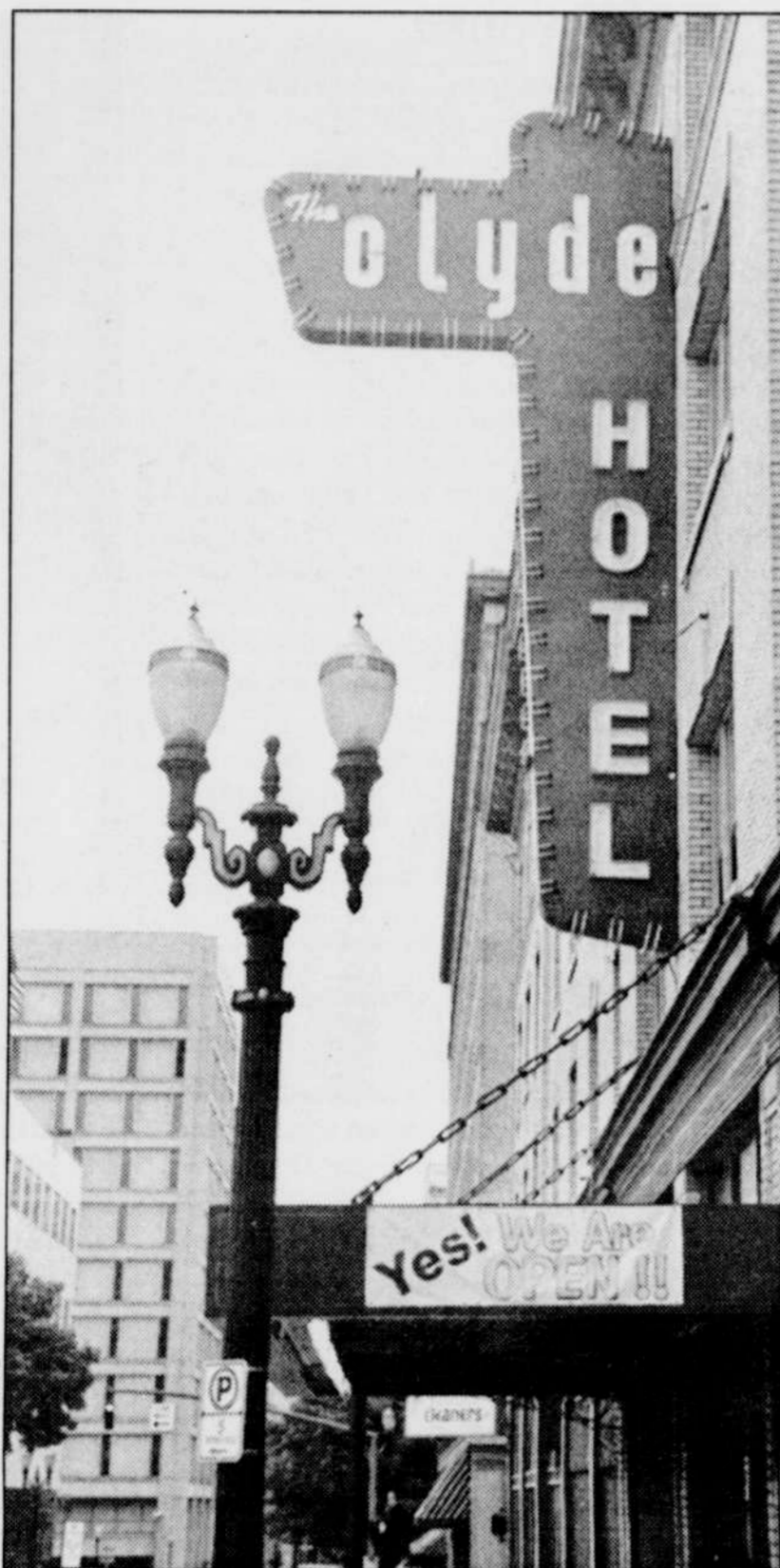


PHOTO BY MARTY DAVIS

The Clyde Hotel is back in business after months of renovation

**LEGAL MARIJUANA USE NOT WIDELY UNDERSTOOD**

Cliff Spencer says that the Medical Marijuana Act of 1998 needs some work but that it allows important relief for many people. He thinks even more could benefit from the legislation if they knew about it.

The program, administered by the Oregon Health Division, allows patients to use marijuana as medication for cancer, glaucoma and HIV/AIDS. But users also can qualify if they experience severe nausea, seizures, severe pain and persistent muscle spasms not associated with these qualifying diseases.

Two organizations, Voter Power and the Stormy Ray Foundation, help people interested in seeking relief through medicinal marijuana. A doctor's endorsement is required, and people need good advice to get that signature, Spencer said.

Others seek information about how to grow plants within the guidelines set out in the law. The groups also work to educate the public and to eliminate the stigma surrounding medicinal marijuana use.

Money can be an issue even before enrolling in the program. Some can't afford the \$150 application fee and need help getting financial aid.

"The program has been a tremendous success," said Spencer, who uses the plant to relieve chronic pain and muscle spasms.

The act only allows for users to grow their own marijuana. Spencer said many people don't have the knowledge or the financial resources to set up such an operation.

This leads them to buy marijuana on the black market, which is illegal according to the act. Spencer expects the advocacy groups to address these issues during the next legislative session.

People shouldn't be afraid to investigate medicinal use of marijuana, he said. The police do not keep a list of who is enrolled in the program, and Multnomah County's district attorney is now supportive, Spencer said.

Oregon has about 1,000 medicinal marijuana users. "Many more people who qualify aren't aware of the program," Spencer said.

For more information, call the Medical Marijuana Program at 503-731-8310, the Stormy Ray

Foundation at 877-600-6767 or Voter Power at 503-786-1905.

**CAUTION: RAINBOW FLAG AHEAD**

Portland Police Sgt. David Yamasaki, who helps report hate crimes to the Sexual Minorities Roundtable, says a disturbing trend is taking place on local roadways. "Road rage" incidents against drivers of cars displaying rainbows and other symbols representing gay pride have increased from zero to six in one month's time.

Yamasaki said victims are reporting these incidents citywide. No large-scale incidents were reported against sexual minorities, he added.

**TRANS BOOKLET WILL BECOME PART OF TRAINING**

The Sexual Minorities Roundtable and the Portland Police Bureau recently released a copy of "Transgender and Transsexual Issues for Law Enforcement," a new booklet that will be utilized in training officers.

The publication was designed to provide officers with a basic understanding of transgender and transsexual identity and expression. Topics covered include: legal documents and identification, search and custody issues and logistics involved in respecting the rights and privacy of transgendered and gender-variant people.

Earlier this year, the Multnomah County sheriff's department implemented new procedures for booking and incarcerating trans individuals. Although few transgendered citizens are arrested annually, the policies adopted are thought to be the most progressive of their kind in the nation.

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