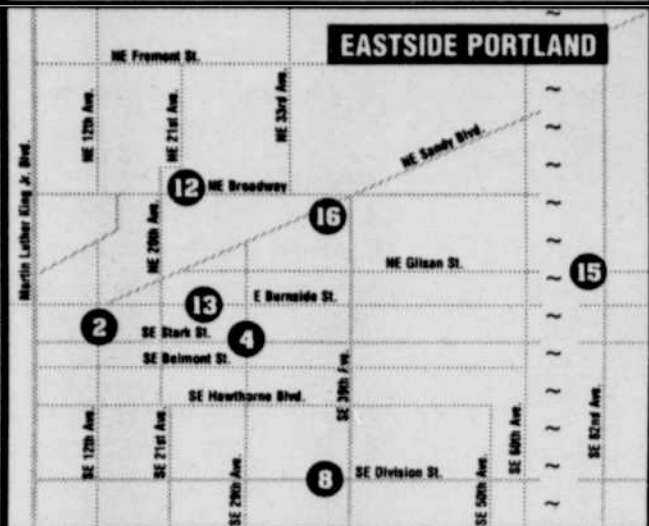


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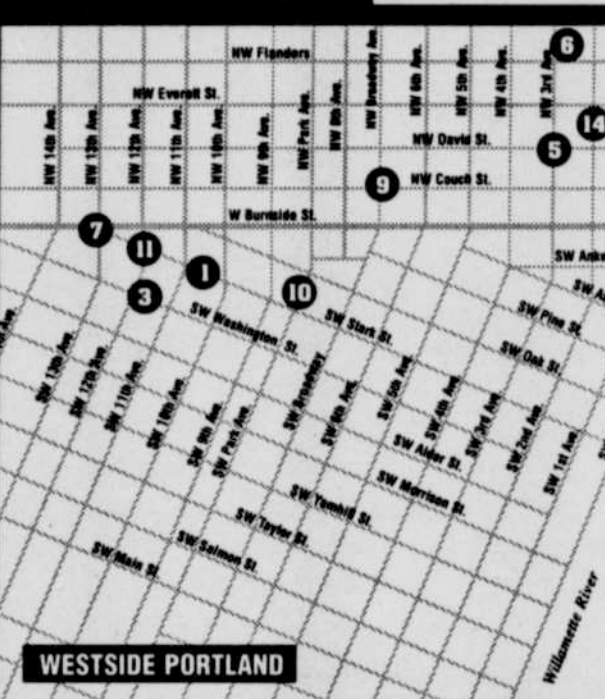
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It's tiara time again,
so y'all come on down
to the Cotillion

BY KIMBERLEE VAN PATTEN

The Imperial Sovereign
Rose Court is
pleased to present
the 30th annual

White Knight and
Debutante Ball on
Feb. 3 at Embers
Avenue, 100 N.W.
Broadway. Doors
will open at 5 p.m.,
and the ball will
begin at 6 p.m.

The suggested
donation is \$5. The
evening will be a cel-
ebration of the suc-
cessful year of White
Knight V Josef A. Foxx
and Debutante XXIX Ms.
Savannah as well as 20-year
Debutante IX Breezy Dee and 10-
year Debutante XIX Whyna Boutit.

This contest is for pageant "virgins" who
never have held a title. Each contestant will be
judged on poise, appearance, questions and
audience appeal.

Now for a little history lesson. On April 9,
1972, Tracey St. James, the 14th Empress of
the Inland Empire of Oregon, crowned the
ISRC's first Debutante, Doni Lamé.

I recently asked Doni about this night
almost 30 years ago at the Zodiac club. She
says, "I really don't remember much except
that I was in an all-white gown created by
Tracey St. James. Roxy was one of the other
contestants, then I stepped on Roxy's train and
I looked like Ruth Buzzi from *Laugh-In*."

The Debutante Ball was started in the
spring of 1972 as a means of recognizing new-
comers to the ISRC.

"It was basically a way to recruit new drag
queens to the organization," Rose Empress XV
Darcelle says. "The purpose really hasn't
changed at all since the first pageant. It has
always been a coming-out party."

The contestants always have worn white, as
is traditional with Debutantes, to symbolize
their purity and innocence. Past Debutantes
include Christi Douglas, Lorelei Lee, Megan
Bloom, Regine, Samantha Michelle, Brenda
Bonn Bonn, Jennifer Desire, Crystal Jar, Brit-
tney Michaels and Paige Turner, to name a few.

Even more incredible is the list of Debu-
tante contestants who ran but did not win,
including Monica Rey, Misty Waters, Nikki
Carr, Champagne, Mother Louis, Bertie Mae
Heifer and Roxy.

A recent conversation with Portland
celebrity Snickers LaBarr revealed fond memo-
ries of her crowning as Debutante IV in 1975
at the Top of the Cosmo. She remembers com-
peting with seven other contestants all in
white and being crowned by Rose Empress
XVII Elsa Daniels.

Although she never won the title of Debu-
tante, Champagne remembers the night she

ran as if it were yesterday.

By her own admission
she was devastated by
a loss to Simply Joey
in 1979 and went to
Daddy Frank for
consolation.

Daddy Frank
comforted the
young Cham-
pagne and assured
her that she had a
bright future
despite losing this
particular pageant.
Just four years later,
Champagne became
Rose Empress XXV and
had the honor of crown-
ing Debutante XII Jennifer
Desire.

Probably the most bizarre

Debutante Ball in history was staged in the
spring of 1985 at Embers Avenue. Ginger O.,
who had been crowned the year before in a
dress made of satin sheets by Rene Fontaine,
was the reigning Debutante. However, she did
not make it through her year and was not pre-
sent at her stepping-down ceremony.

So, to prove the ability of drag queens to
improvise and accessorize, a wig head complete
with makeup, wig, crown and boa was placed
on the stage all night to represent the missing
Debutante, and the ball went on as planned.
Several contestants ran that night including
such notables as Ginger Jar and Basket Case,
but the victor proved to be Veronica, who
remains the oldest Debutante ever crowned in
the history of the ISRC.

About 10 years later, in the spring of
1996, Rose Emperor XXII Michael and Rose
Empress XXXVIII Misha crowned the first
female and last solo Debutante, Krystel
Belle-Rose. The following year, the ISRC
operations manual was changed to include
the title of White Knight.

That spring, David Boulevard became
White Knight I, followed by White Knight II
Chuck Rockefeller and White Knight III Ty
O'Dora. In 1998, Nikki West was crowned
Debutante XXVIII but reigned alone, as no
White Knight contestants ran for the title.

White Knight V Josef A. Foxx and Debu-
tante XXIX Ms. Savannah were crowned Jan.
29, 2000, at "Once Upon a Time." After a full
year of representing the ISRC, these two de-
dicated court members are ready to step down.

"Cotillion...A Night Down on the Planta-
tion" is the theme for this annual "white
party." So dig out your hoop skirt and parasol
and join the fun at this year's White Knight
and Debutante Ball. **jo**

KIMBERLEE VAN PATTEN, Rose Emperor
XXIII, is a hard-working member of ISRC and
co-chair of Peacock in the Park.

Reigning royalty
Josef and Savannah