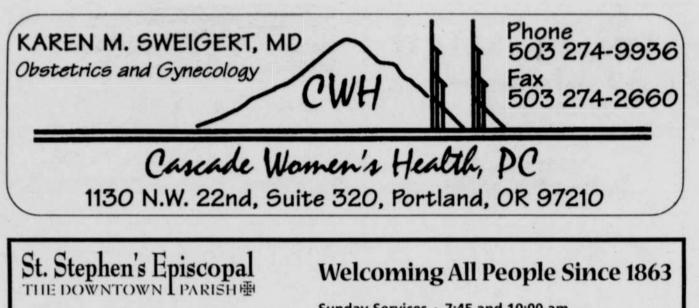
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NORTHWESTNews

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new location is a safer one with a lot of potential for growth.

Every month, the center serves about 500 youths and between 30 and 40 newcomers. On weekends, more than 70 kids drop in.

Vanguard Youth Services gets its name from a group of queer youth who led an uprising in San Francisco prior to Stonewall in 1969. Services include SMYRC, Roots and Branches, Washington County Pride Project and Bridge 13 speakers bureau.

For more information call 503-872-9664 or visit the Internet site www.smyrc.org.

KROEKER ANNOUNCES WALK-A-THON

Sortland Police Chief Mark Kroeker will serve as government chair for the second annual "Walk as One" fund-raiser April 7. The event, sponsored by the National Conference for Community and Justice, will give people an opportunity to come together and celebrate diversity, organizers say.

All walk-a-thon proceeds will fund the conference's programs for area youths. The programs are designed to enhance their ability to understand and deal with issues of stereotyping and prejudice while encouraging respect, civility and appreciation of differences in their social interactions and peer relationships.

Event coordinator Erin Bennett-Howard said her organization hopes to raise \$100,000 and attract 1,000 walkers. Last year, the inaugural walk raised about \$40,000.

The walk will start and end at the Rose Garden Commons, where a multicultural festival will feature food, music and prizes. All walkers are welcome; there is no registration fee.

Walkers will gather to celebrate the Pacific Northwest's different cultures, races, ages, abilities, faiths, ethnicities, sexual orientations and genders, Bennett-Howard says. "This is inclusive of everybody."

set his house on fire. Mark Williams, who resides in the Rockwood district near the Portland city limits, is a father of two.

His children now are living temporarily with a family friend because they are afraid to be at home. His roommates and their child also have left the home because of safety concerns, he says.

Williams moved to Portland from Ashland in the mid-1990s. Since then, he says he's been faced with challenge after challenge, most recently losing his job working with developmentally disabled adults and now being the victim of a hate crime. He says he is being evicted from his home later this month for reasons unrelated to the incident.

Portland's mainstream press covered the hate crime, but Williams is upset because some members of the media used his name and photograph after he requested anonymity. Since the media attention, he says he's been targeted with verbal harassment on Gresham's streets because he is gay.

Williams is finding little support from the community, he says. But Love Makes a Family, a gay family advocacy group, is helping him out and will be meeting with school officials soon. Executive director Bonnie Tinker says he likely needs to get out of the area and into a more supportive atmosphere to raise his children.

A Gresham Police Department spokesman says the incident has been assigned to a detective who will conduct an investigation that will include speaking with Williams' neighbors. Williams says he hasn't heard from the police since they initially responded to his complaint.

To offer your support call Love Makes a Family at 503-228-3892 or send e-mail to Imfamily@teleport.com.

JUDGE RULES FOR **FREEDOM OF CHOICE**

ultnomah County Circuit Court Judge Robert W. Redding issued a strong finding affirming the right of the Freedom Socialist Party to appear on election ballots. In a sweeping summary judgment decision, he ruled that prohibiting the party from running candidates under its own name would be an unconstitutional restriction on the organization's rights to free speech and association under the First Amendment. In 2000, the Oregon secretary of state

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For more information call Bennett-Howard at 503-231-2436.

MAN'S HOME VANDALIZED

Gresham man woke up Jan. 23 to find anti-gay graffiti scrawled across the front of his home and signs that someone tried to



Mark Williams says his children are afraid to be at home since the hate crime occurred