

Smith is no ally

TO THE EDITOR:

Come on! What is this? A Gordon Smith love fest???

Sure, he now reveals he feels the pain of hate crimes like the one committed against Matthew Shepard. He now says he likens the discrimination he experienced as a Mormon to homophobia.

I am disgusted/sick/tired/outraged to witness the gay community honoring him. (That's right—the conservative, richest turncoat national gay organization known as the Human Rights Campaign gave an award to Gordy at its latest affair in Portland!!!) As if that wasn't nauseating enough, I got to hear the praises of Smith in a *Just Out* article ["Progress Report," Feb. 2].

Let me be blunt: Gordon Smith is a conservative (forget the "compassionate"), no doubt being groomed as I write this for further fame and political fortune as a darling of this current republication dynasty. (I just read he already has raised \$1 million for his next campaign.) He is reactionary, anti-labor, anti-union, anti-feminist, anti-affirmative action and anti-environmentalist. (Need I add more?)

The fact that I feel the need to point this out is astounding to me. I do not trust Smith's politics, his sincerity or his principles. I never would see him as an ally to the lesbian, gay, bi and trans community and hope like hell he gets voted out of office.

Gay community: Pay attention to who you consider an ally. If Smith authentically is having a change of heart, then I'll wait for his other right-wing, conservative views to transform before I consider him a brother in the fight for justice, freedom and dignity for all people.

WENDY JUDITH CUTLER
Portland

Politics as usual?

TO THE EDITOR:

Rupert Kinnard's commentary put into words many of the thoughts I have had during the past several years ["Don't Be Bamboozled," Feb. 16]. "Political correctness" has become another way for those who just don't "get it" to dismiss and denigrate those on the receiving end of bigotry and oppression and/or those who attempt to alleviate social ills in ways small and big.

Longtime activist Grace Paley talks about the "arrogance of safety." How easy it is for individuals whose lives have been filled with respect, opportunities and creature comforts to cross the line between innocent ignorance and self-deception.

Unfortunately, too few voices are heard speaking the truth about serious issues in the United States. To do so would challenge the comfort zone of too many people who think their lives are divorced from issues of poverty, affordable housing, health care and discrimination.

It is, indeed, "trendy" to lack compassion about these issues. It would be great if more people could remember, "There but for fortune go I."

DONNA COHEN
Portland

The closet opens

TO THE EDITOR:

At the risk of being labeled either naive or in denial, I will say the recent exposé of mental, emotional, financial and physical abuse within the nonstraight community was both astonishing and unsettling ["The Second Closet," Feb. 2]. I have seen this "keep it in the closet"

et" attitude in other minority groups and within females across the board, but I really did not think this sort of behavior went on, except for the rare fluke, in the nonstraight world.

The first step is to "come out of the closet," so to speak, because from awareness comes knowledge and from knowledge comes action. My guess after reading this article several times is that the reason a lot of people are not talking about this issue is because they were victims and are dead.

JOHN BOYNTON
Portland

Sold short

TO THE EDITOR:

Deborah Betron says: "With every dollar you spend, you have a choice. Yet, over and over again, people call up just any old company with an ad in the paper, when instead you can call up somebody in the community" ["Sold on Success," Feb. 16].

Bullshit! I called every Realtor in this community that I know of, and not one seemed the least bit interested in helping me find a property.

Finally, I called one of the largest and best-known real estate companies in this area and got an excellent, professional Realtor who helped me find and sold me my dream property.

JAMES E. SMITH
Portland

notables

Charlie Stiffler, 1983-2001

Charlie Clifford Stiffler died Feb. 14. He was 17.

He was born June 13, 1983, in Bend, where he attended Mountain View High School. He was active in the Environmentalist Club, the band and a parent/student debate team. He also was involved in the arts and loved horseback riding and dogs.

He worked at the Job Corps Center in Troutdale from July to November 2000, then moved to Portland, where he was a student at the Northwest Film Center.

He is survived by his parents, Jordi (Carlson) and Cliff of Bend; sister, Capri of Bend; grandparents, George and Dorothy Carlson of Springfield and Roy and Bonnie Lahti of Springfield; and dog, Zipper.

A memorial service was held Feb. 21 at First Congregational Church. Final disposition was by cremation. Arrangements were by Omega Funeral & Cremation Service.

Remembrances may be made to a scholarship fund in his name by writing to Bank of the Cascades, East Bend Branch, 2650 N.E. Highway 20, Bend, OR 97701.

corrections

The Feb. 16 article "Touched by a Latte" should have indicated Touchstone Coffee House proprietor Becky Bilyeu leases the building at 7631 N.E. Glisan St. Also, the hosts of open mike night now are Hope Suggit and Ajay.

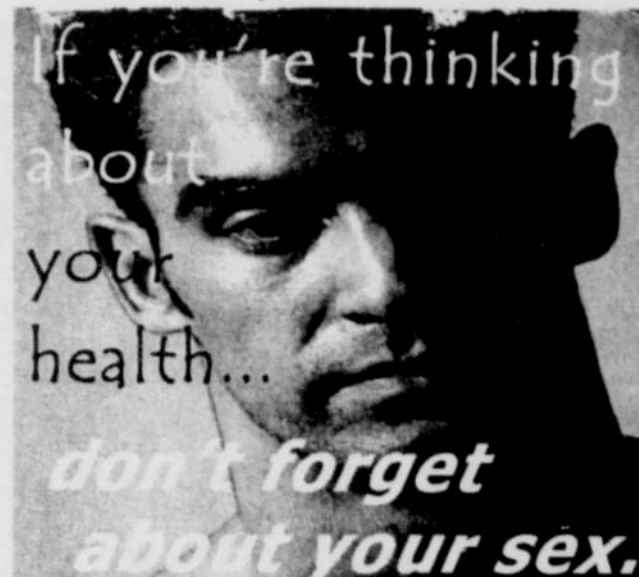
The Feb. 16 brief "Annual Sweethearts Ball Sets Record" misidentified the Friends of People with AIDS Foundation and Miss Sweetheart of Portland Chastity Frustration. Also, the amount raised was \$8,517.55.

Just Out regrets the errors.



10% Discount
with this ad

Lane's
House of Collectibles
& Consignments
2880 SE Gladstone St
(503) 236-1712



STD screening and treatment
HIV testing with or without names
Hepatitis A/B vaccination

MULTNOMAH COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
426 SW Stark, 6th Floor • (503) 988.3700

KBOO

90.7 FM Portland • 92.7 Columbia Gorge
100.7 Willamette Valley

QUEER, QUEER WORLD • 9:30 AM THURSDAYS

THIS WAY OUT • 6 PM TUESDAYS

Independent Listener-Sponsored Community Radio



Your fresh flower professionals

JACKSON'S FLOWERS

3804 N. E. Sandy Blvd. Portland, OR 97232
(503) 282-0657 • 1 (800) 303-0657



www.JacksonsFlowers.com

Our Hands Move Hearts™



Injured? ...Call me



Hala Gores, P.C.
Attorney at Law

Free Consultation
No Fee Until We Get You Money

503/ 295-1940

12th Floor
621 SW Morrison
Portland



Proudly serving our community since 1989 in personal injury claims including:

- Auto & Motorcycle Accidents
- Bicycle & Pedestrian Accidents
- Medical Malpractice
- Wrongful Death
- Defective Products
- Insurance Claims

You Deserve Full Compensation for:

- Pain & Suffering
- Medical Expenses
- Lost Earnings
- Property Damage
- Car Rental

**Integrity,
Experience
& Results**

Intimidated

by the typical jewelry stores?

Now you have someone on your side.



James Giardina
manager

I want you to always have a wonderful experience when it comes to selecting a piece of jewelry. I specialize in custom design at the most affordable price.

I want to be your new downtown jeweler!



Oregon's Family Business of the Year
(503) 223-5051
539 SW Broadway
www.larogs.com