

"The Gill Foundation is committed to addressing the needs of organizations in rural and nonurban communities, where resources often are not available to LGBT residents," Pease said. "LGBT people live in communities of all types and sizes. In order to ensure our full civil rights, it is important that work is done in all parts of our country."

The Oregon organizations are:

- **AIDS Support and Prevention of Josephine County** (Grants Pass): \$6,000 general operating support.
- **Equity Foundation Inc.** (Portland): \$42,500 program support over two years for the OutReach program and for capacity building support.
- **Western States Center** (Portland): \$45,000 program support for the Fair Workplace Project.
- **Deschutes County Coalition for Human Dignity** (Bend): \$2,500 program support for community outreach work.

PETITION TARGETS TRANS EVENT

An Oregon woman has organized a petition to protest Esprit, an annual weeklong event for members of the trans community, from gathering in Port Angeles, Wash.

"Every May, upward of 300 transvestites and other sexual deviants assemble from all over North America," Sarah MacKenzie's petition says. "Needless to say, the convention has harmed the town and the region in general by exposing impressionable children and youth to this sort of cultural pollution."

The Web petition received only 14 signatures, some from as far away as Florida, but 709 messages were left on the Internet site. Although many espoused disdain and even hatred for the trans community, many challenged those notions. According to the Internet site, the petition was submitted March 1 to Port Angeles Mayor Larry Doyle.

Esprit will attract 170 people between May 14 and 20 to the small coastal town. The annual event, held at the Red Lion Inn, is sponsored by trans organizations in Portland, Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia.

For more information visit the Internet site www.espritagala.org. To view the petition and comments visit the Internet site www2.e-thepeople.com and type in "transvestite" under the keyword search.



Esprit, an annual weeklong event for members of the trans community, is the target of a recent Web petition

HAS DR. LAURA FINALLY BEEN CANCELED?

Although Paramount denies it, Dr. Laura Schlessinger's television talk show likely has taped its final episode.

It began an indefinite hiatus Feb. 9, which the studio claims will last only two or three weeks, although it has set no date for production to resume. Insiders report the "extended hiatus" is likely Paramount's way of canceling the program without fanfare or criticism.

"People close to the show say that Paramount is so embarrassed by Dr. Laura that they

don't want to make any public comment about it—even to cancel it," said Scott Seomin, Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation entertainment media director. "Paramount Television Group executives are scrambling to salvage what remains of their reputations, and a cancellation announcement will result in stories about how they botched every step of their ill-advised relationship with Schlessinger."

Further evidence of cancellation continues to mount. On a recent radio show, Schlessinger returned to her most vitriolic tone in months, with angrily bitter attacks on the American Library Association and on school programs that, in her words, "advocate moral acceptance of various forms of sexual behavior generally considered not too acceptable by religious types." She also began encouraging contributions to an anti-gay group called Pacific Justice Institute, which opposes laws that prohibit harassment of gay students and teachers and which recently tried to block a gay-straight alliance from forming at El Modena High School in Orange, Calif.

"This is the most vicious version of Laura we've seen in a long time," said Cathy Renna, GLAAD news media director. "The renewed mean-spiritedness in her tone suggests... Paramount has finally and completely lost whatever control it had over her."

STOP THE OCA

The Rural Organizing Project and Basic Rights Oregon are teaming up to ensure the Oregon Citizens Alliance doesn't get an initiative on the ballot in 2002. The two groups will launch the "Decline to Sign" campaign dur-

ing a caucus and strategy session March 24.

Materials will be available to anyone who wants to participate starting in April. Because the vast majority of signatures are gathered in churches and neighborhoods, "Decline to Sign" strategies will include creative ways to combat the OCA by talking to friends, family and neighbors in every community.

To reserve your kit call 503-222-6151 or send e-mail to BRONerissa@aol.com.

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