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BI GROUP FACES CROSSROADS

After five years at the helm of the Portland Bisexual Alliance, Sven Bonnichsen will resign July 1. Members and newcomers came to an emergency meeting May 14 to discuss the group's future.

"It's pretty clear that PBA can't continue like it has," Bonnichsen said. "It needs to reinvent itself or fold."

Almost 20 people attended the meeting and discussed the alliance's options. Most spoke about their desire for the group to continue as a social organization but questioned whether members had the interest and time to devote to political efforts. The alliance recently has been involved in the process of getting appropriate civil rights protection for transgendered people at both the city and county level.

No one attending the meeting talked of disbanding the group. "I don't get the feeling there's so little interest it's going to fold," one woman said.

Bonnichsen has devoted almost full-time hours to bisexual activism. He has been the driving force behind the Oregon Bi Conference, Portland Bi Day, "Bisexuality 101" workshops and a monthly community calendar.

The conference, which preceded the meeting, was well-attended, Bonnichsen said. He estimated at least 60 people participated in the daylong event at Portland State University.

Conference workshops included "One Couple's Solution to the Bisexual Conundrum," "Transgender from a Bisexual Perspec-

tive" and "The Bisexual Renaissance in Erotic Writing." The theme, "The Lavender Elephant in the Living Room," was a metaphor for bisexual people.

"We're something that both sides of the gay/straight struggle try to ignore," a message from the conference organizers read. "We often feel as if we're socially invisible. When occasionally we do appear in the media, the representations seem outrageous; we're usually made to look like freaks—material for the Jerry Springer show. Once homophobia and denial are swept away, society may find that bisexuals actually constitute a majority of the population."

For more information call 503-775-9717.

LEGISLATORS ATTEND RECEPTION IN SALEM

The Oregon Gay and Lesbian Law Association's "meet and greet" event with legislators April 11 attracted 11 senators and representatives. Staff members from 15 additional legislative offices also attended.

Sen. Peter Courtney and Reps. Randy Leonard, Richard Devlin and Jeff Merkley were among those who gathered at Willamette University's Alumni Lounge in



Sen. Ryan Deckert chats with Basic Rights Oregon board chair Harriett Merrick during the Oregon Gay and Lesbian Law Association reception

Salem. State Treasurer Randall Edwards also attended.

The association organized the reception so members of the sexual minorities community could introduce themselves to legislators and exchange details about informational resources. Organizers made it clear that the gathering was not intended to be a lobbying event.

The meeting was co-sponsored by 14 groups including Log Cabin Republicans, Veterans for Human Rights and Willamette University Multicultural Groups. OGALLA co-chair and former Rep. George Eighmey organized the event.

For more information send e-mail to geighmey@aol.com.

GLSEN CELEBRATES SUCCESS

Members of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network will celebrate a successful year in Oregon public schools during "Celebrating Pride" April 21. Donors who made the organization's work possible and members who took part in its programs throughout the year will attend.

GLSEN strives to build a "safe, strong community" by affirming the rights of all students in publicly funded schools to an education free of discrimination and harassment. The organization has openings for new board members and volunteers to work on special projects, phoning and fund raising.

For more information call Larry Smith at 503-297-6017 or send e-mail to glsenor@aol.com.

NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING COMES TO PORTLAND

The Portland Area HIV Services Planning Council is sponsoring a free three-day session in late April conducted by the nationally recognized Leadership Training Institute. Attendees will be people who work with HIV/AIDS advisory or planning groups, those interested in getting involved and others who want to learn how to organize within their communities.

The goal is to get more citizens advocating for the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act, which provides funding for programs targeting people living with HIV. A total of 30 applicants were selected to participate. 

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