

ADVICE

Southern discomfort

Mother-in-law's visit creates hospitality havoc

Grace Space, a multidominational spiritual center led by the Rev. Stephanie Torres, holds Sunday evening celebrations. (5 pm, Friends of Multnomah, 4312 SE Stark St. 503-287-3216.) (11/01)

Integrity, the gay and lesbian ministry of the Episcopal Church, meets on the second Friday of each month in the Morrison Room at Trinity Cathedral. Eucharist is celebrated at 6:45 pm followed by a potluck and fellowship. (147 NW 19th Ave. 503-289-1687.) (11/01)

Interfaith Spiritual Center, spiritual directors from various world religious traditions are available for guidance, classes and retreats. (Second Floor, 3910 SE 11th Ave. 503-233-2026, ext. 3. www.spintone.com/~isc. (11/01)

Compassionate Heart Sangha, a lesbian and gay meditation group, meets in the Buddhist Vipassana tradition. (7:30-9 pm Wednesday, Flanders House, 2926 NE Flanders St. Jon 503-239-5539.) (11/01)

Lincoln Street United Methodist Church is an open and accepting congregation of progressive Christians. (9 am Sunday, 5145 SE Lincoln St. 503-231-1930.) (11/01)

Metanoia Peace Community (United Methodist) is a "house church," bringing gay and straight together. (Daily prayer 7:20 am, Sunday gathering 6 pm, 2116 NE 18th Ave. 503-281-3697. www.tearsoup.com/metanoia.) (11/01)

Metropolitan Community Church of Portland holds ecumenical Sunday morning worship services at 9 and 11 am. Sunday school for children is held during the 11 am worship service. (2400 NE Broadway, 503-281-8868. info@mccportland.com.) (11/01)

Potter's House Ministries Life Center, Evangelical and charismatic Christian. (3830 SE 62nd Ave. 503-775-5024.) (11/01)

SisterSpirit offers women's spirituality celebrations, discussion groups, a drumming circle, workshops and classes. Schedule of events available. All women are welcome. (Suite 102, 3430 SE Belmont St. Mailing address: PO Box 9246, Portland, OR 97207. 503-736-3297. sistersp@teleport.com.) (11/01)

Southminster Presbyterian Church is a challenging, supportive community that welcomes all people. It is the first More Light Presbyterian Church in Oregon. (10 am Sunday summer, 9:30 and 11 am Sunday winter, 12250 SW Denney Road, Beaverton. 503-644-2073.) (11/01)

St. James Lutheran Church, a reconciled in Christ congregation, welcomes all people for traditional liturgical worship. (9 and 11 am Sunday, 1315 SW Park Ave. 503-227-2439.) (11/01)

St. Philip Neri Catholic Church offers a gay-positive community for Catholics and their friends. Mass at 7:30 pm Fridays followed by a social. (Paulist Center, 2408 SE 16th Ave. 503-231-4955.) (11/01)

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church has been welcoming all people since 1863. (12:10 pm Wednesday and 7:45 and 10 am Sunday. Sunday school and child care at 10 am, SW 13th Avenue at Clay Street. 503-223-6424.) (11/01)

Unity Church of Portland is an all-inclusive community following Christ's teachings and celebrating diversity and truth without trappings for 75 years. Sunday school and child care available. Potluck first Sundays. (10 am Sunday, 4525 SE Stark St. 503-234-7441. unityprtind@wwdb.org.) (11/01)

University Park United Methodist Church is a

member of the network of reconciling congregations and meets for worship at 10 am Sundays. (4775 N Lombard St. 503-289-7843.) (11/01)

Zion United Church of Christ, an open and affirming congregation, is open to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and heterosexual people who wish to worship in a Christ-centered, warm, caring, multiage/race/cultural faith community. (11 am Sunday, 2025 NE 23rd Ave., Gresham. 503-665-8741.) (11/01)

Washington: Spirituality

East Vancouver United Methodist Church, Reconciling, welcoming. (10 am Sunday, 5701 MacArthur Blvd. 360-693-4761. ourclarkcounty.columbian.com/273.) (11/01)

First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Two Sunday services, traditional and "less traditional" in an open and affirming congregation. (1220 NE 68th St., Vancouver. 360-693-1476.) (11/01)

Metropolitan Community Church of the Gentle Shepherd, (10 am Sunday, 913 W. 13th St., Vancouver. 360-695-1480.) (11/01)

Michael Servetus Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, a home for the liberal religious spirit. (9:15 and 11 am Sunday, 4505 E. 18th St., Vancouver. 360-695-1891.) (11/01)

Willamette Valley: Spirituality

First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, is an open and affirming congregation offering worship and church school. Child care provided. Wheelchair accessible. (10 am Sunday, 700 Marion St. NE, Salem. 503-363-3660.) (11/01)

Gay-Straight Alliance of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem meets for a potluck on the third Sunday of each month. (6 pm, 5090 Center St. NE. 503-363-8716.) (11/01)

Interfaith Spiritual Community meets for inspirational messages, children's celebrations and joy every Sunday at the Heart Center. We honor and celebrate all sacred paths, recognizing each person's divine gifts and supporting spiritual growth, healing and enlightenment. (6-7:30 pm, 1578 Commercial St. SE, Salem. 503-763-6030.) (11/01)

Morningside United Methodist Church is a reconciling congregation where everyone is welcome to participate in the full life of the congregation. (8:30 and 11 am Sunday, 3674 12th St. SE, Salem. 503-364-5013.) (11/01)

Sweet Spirit Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) holds worship at 11 am Sundays followed by coffee and fellowship as well as potluck lunches every second Sunday. (American Legion Hall, 4774 Lilac Lane NE, Salem. Mailing address: Pastor Ken Kerr, PO Box 12753, Salem, OR 97309. 503-315-7923.) (11/01)

YOUTH

Metro: Youth

Expression is a free art/expression support group for GLBT youth between 13 and 23 in Gresham. Hang out and have fun every Friday! Sponsored by Roots and Branches. (Jonathan 503-872-9664, ext. 28.) (11/01)

Outside In operates a clinic for anyone who can't qualify for the Oregon Health Plan as well as a needle exchange service that includes exchange for those who inject hormones. It also has some transitional housing for youth 20 and younger as well as for youth who are HIV-positive and younger than 23. It also plays host to **VOICES** (Voices of Individual and Community Empowerment from the Streets), a self-support group for queer youth. (10 am-6 pm Monday-Friday, 1236 SW Salmon St. 503-223-4121.) (11/01)

Pride Project brings together Washington County lesbian, gay, bi, trans and questioning youth to plan and attend monthly social events. Also information, referral, support and advocacy services for Washington County. (Molly 503-260-5792 molly@prideproject.org.) (11/01)

Rainbow is a multicultural peer support and activity group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans and questioning youth. (4:30 pm Wednesday, Metropolitan Community Church of Portland, 2400 NE Broadway, 503-281-8868.) (11/01)

Sexual Minority Youth Recreation Center (SMYRC) offers drop-in computer access, pool tables and an informal place to hang out and plays host to weekly youth support groups including Windfire, Trans Youth Group and Personal Deity Proxy (a creative group). (4-8 pm Monday and Wednesday, 4 pm-midnight Friday and Saturday, 2100 SE Belmont St. 503-872-9664. www.smyrc.org.) (11/01)

Youth HIV/STD Prevention Project provides fun and educational programs along with counseling and testing to queer youth in a friendly, relaxed environment. (503-872-9664.) (11/01)

YouthNet, a program of Love Makes a Family, offers tutoring and mentoring for lesbian, gay, bi and trans youth as well as for children of LGBT parents. (503-227-1981.) (11/01)

Southern Oregon: Youth

Southern Oregon Youth Outreach (SOYO), a group for gay, lesbian, and bi youth between 14 and 20, meets on the first and Thursdays of the month in Ashland. (541-488-6990.) (11/01)

Washington: Youth

Teen to Teen Sexual Minority Youth Program offers education, support and advocacy to gay, lesbian, bi and trans and questioning youth in Vancouver, Wash. Meets 6-8 pm Tuesdays and 3:30-5:30 pm Thursdays in Suite M100 at Cascade AIDS Project, 1104 Main St. (Amanda 360-693-1188.) (11/01)

Willamette Valley: Youth

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Youth Group for ages 13 to 18 offers support, information and fun. Free, confidential, drop-in. (4-6 pm Friday, Amazon Community Center, 2700 Hilyard St., Eugene. 541-684-3466.) (11/01)

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Youth Group for ages 25 and younger meets every Monday. (5 pm, Koinonia Center, 1414 Kincaid St., Eugene. 541-346-1134.) (11/01)

Rainbow Youth is a support group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth and their friends between 13 and 17 years old in the Salem-Keizer area. (503-581-5535.) (11/01)

DEAR MS. BEHAVIOR:

My new girlfriend recently informed me that her mother is coming to visit. We only have been together for six months, but Grace already has moved in with me. The problem is she has invited her mother to stay with us for a week in my small house and wants us to give her the bed while we sleep on the pullout couch in the living room.

This seems awkward to me, as I never have met the woman. I've tried to explain to Grace that a hotel or B & B might be more comfortable for all of us, but she insists her mother always stays with her, wherever she is. (For example, when visiting Grace at college, her mother stayed with her in the dorm and they slept in the same bed.) Grace says it's not in keeping with Southern hospitality to allow her mother to stay in a hotel.

Grace balks when I suggest that perhaps her mother could sleep on the couch or that she can have the house and we can stay in the hotel up the street. The only acceptable option to my girlfriend seems to be that we give up the bed.

Also, she wants me to remove all of my lesbian books and videos from the shelves in the living room so her mother won't feel "uncomfortable." I don't mind temporarily getting rid of the books that involve whips and pierced nipples or even the mildly erotic ones, but I don't see any reason to remove low-key dyke fiction, poetry or adventure stories. I also have a sculpture of two women embracing that Grace wants me to store in the closet.

But why is her mother's comfort more important than mine? What should I do?

—Tortured Hostess

DEAR TORTURED HOSTESS:

Do not agree to de-dyke your home. Ms. Behavior is not defending the quality of lesbian literature (and, depending on the author, thinks it actually might be a good idea to remove the lesbian poetry from your shelves).

But hiding part of your life—in the closet, no less—to make someone else more comfortable only reinforces homophobia. If anything, perhaps you can supplement your collection of lesbian art objects with labialike sea shells and artful photographs of nude women with shaved heads tenderly caressing.

Southern hospitality is one thing—it's reasonable to allow your



partner's mother to stay in your home—but sacrificing the lesbian love nest is a big mistake. Many a hot lesbian libido has been dampened by a maternal visit, even long after the fact.

It's best to use sheets you don't mind throwing out, because washing away the scent of the mother-in-law's perfume might not be enough to untaint them. You

definitely should worry if Grace suggests that you remain in the bed and that she and Mommy sleep together on the couch.

DEAR MS. BEHAVIOR:

I'm in a relationship with a nice guy. I'll call him Ben.

I've had several unsuccessful relationships lately with guys who are devoted to me. The more devoted they are, though, the quicker I seem to lose interest.

With Ben, who was a friend before he was my lover, I didn't even start out with much sexual interest. We'd fooled

around a few times through the years, but when my last relationship broke up, it seemed like a good idea to give it a try.

Ben is smart, funny, warm—a good catch by all measures. The sex is fine but not fantastic. I feel content but not ecstatic or romantic.

What are the odds this will work out? You seem to know these things. Does my life with Ben seem doomed?

I'm tired of moving boys in and out. I want this one to last.

—Eric

DEAR ERIC:

If the problem is based on a lack of chemistry between you and Ben, there's really no cure. It's OK to decide to settle for contentment as long as you understand it will not turn to passion. (Expecting otherwise would be like buying a schnauzer puppy with the hope that it might grow up to become a German shepherd.)

But if the issue is really that you never like men who are nice to you—which sounds possible, because you say it's happened several times with a variety of devoted boys—you probably are destined for a few good years of psychotherapy aimed at exploring why you hate Daddy for ignoring you and Mommy for loving you too much. Either way, it's probably best to start therapy now, just in case.

Write your confused and conflicted heart out to MS. BEHAVIOR at MsBehavior@aol.com.

Out Dancing presents the Solstice Ball on June 23 at PPAA

