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Just Out

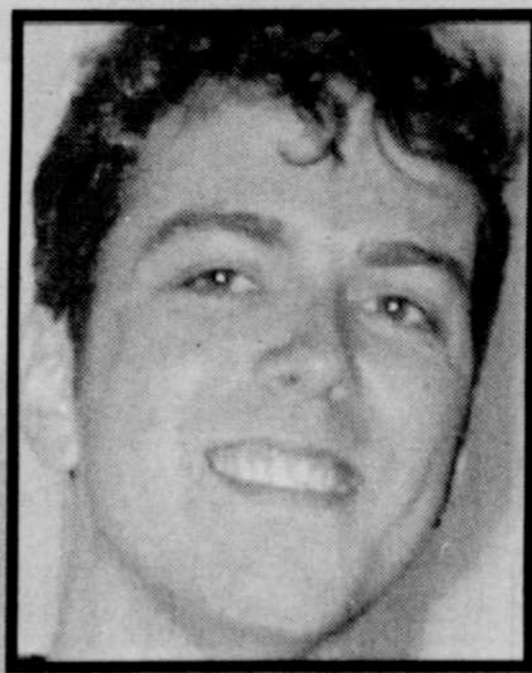
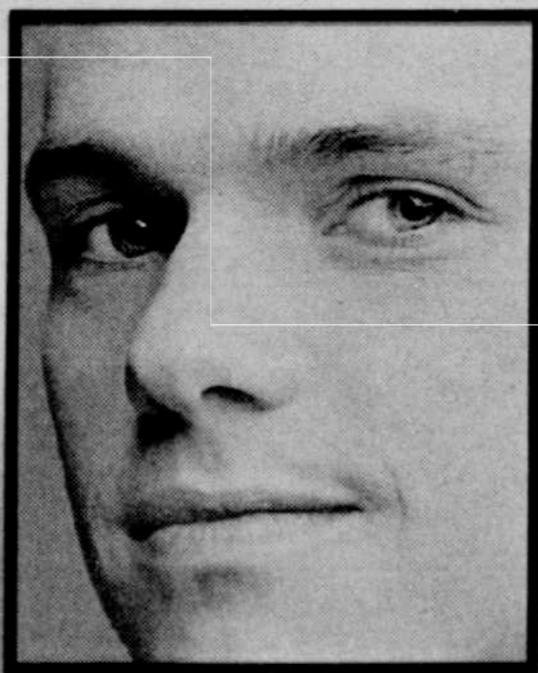
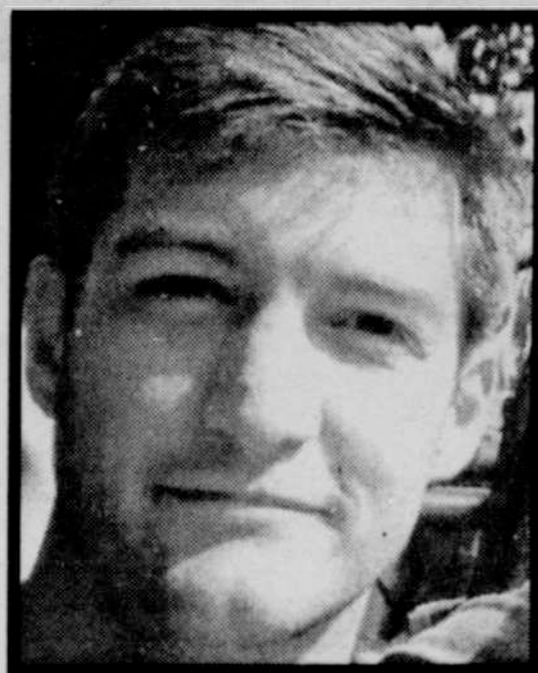
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inside

Portland welcomes
choral conference

Portland, Oregon FREE



Former Oregonians make it big in Tinseltown

by Jim Radosta

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Just out

Surviving the ex-gay movement

How one man made
it out alive—and gay

BY PETER ZUCKERMAN

1. No masturbation.
2. No homosexual contact.
3. No physical expression of homosexuality.
4. You must give two public confessions.
5. You must join Sexaholics Anonymous.
6. You must join Portland Fellowship, a religious group that will make you straight.
7. You must get counseling from a conservative Baptist criminal psychologist who specializes in sex offenders.
8. You must make a weekly confession to two Baptist church staff members.

Refusal to obey these orders will result in the following:

1. You will be excommunicated from the Baptist General Conference. Interaction with the church that has dominated your whole life will be forbidden.
2. You must relinquish most of your friends.
3. Your spouse and children—if you have them—will be humiliated.
4. God will punish you in hell.



This was the plan laid out for Jim Strouse, the 40-year-old pastor of First Baptist Church in Ephrata, Wash., the husband of Donna, the father of Rebecca,

Michael and Sam—and a gay man.

When the deacons of his church learned their spiritual leader was not straight, they confronted him and compelled him to answer these questions: Are you going to be true to your church? Do you strive to be a God-fearing Baptist who will “move heaven and earth” to change your sexual behavior?

What’s more important to you: your soul and your eternal afterlife or your heinous sexual behavior—a sexual behavior that, with God’s help, you can change? Will you choose your family and your holy community or your homosexuality?

What do you want to do? The deacons pressed him further. Choose now: heaven or hell?

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