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**NORTHWESTnews**



Dozens of people gather for the Rally Against Hate on Oct. 7 at the Washington County Courthouse in Hillsboro

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**WASHINGTON COUNTY RESIDENTS ATTEND RALLY**

About 150 people gathered Oct. 7 at the steps of the Washington County Courthouse for a Rally Against Hate. The event was held to commemorate the Aug. 26 murder of Loni Okaruru, a trans woman from Aloha, and to kick off National Hate Crime Awareness Week.

Among the rally organizers was Patricia Keeney, a spokesperson for the West County Coalition for Human Dignity and a member of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. She said she was moved by several of the speakers, especially Hillsboro Police Chief Ron Louie.

"We felt very good about this event," Keeney added. "It was a labor of love, and you could see it."

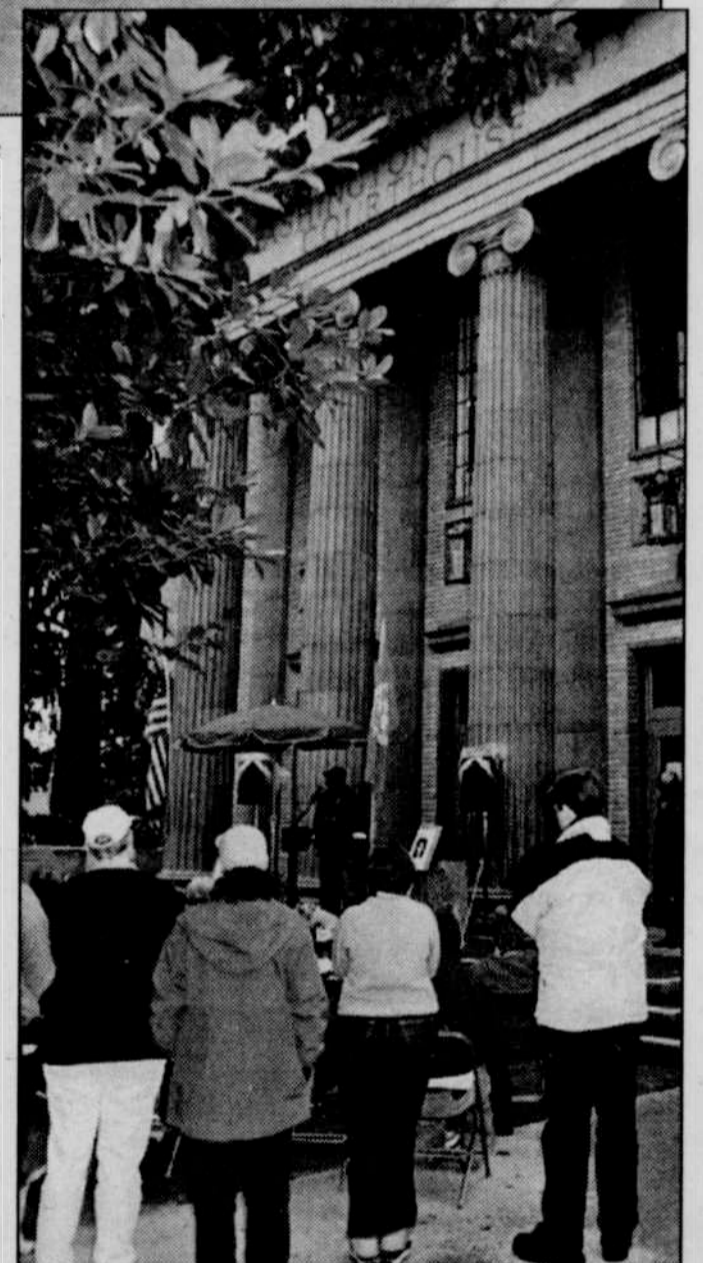
The rally featured a number of performers and informational tables as well as a Pledge to End Prejudice for people to sign. As a symbolic gesture to the victim's Siapanese family, the audience also was invited to make paper flowers and eat fruit during the event.

After the rally Keeney said the amount donated to the Loni Okaruru Memorial Fund jumped to \$1,400, which will supplement the \$2,500 reward for information leading to the arrest of those responsible for the murder. If nobody is found—which unfortunately seems increasingly likely, she added—the family has asked that the money be donated to a youth group in Washington County.

Keeney was impressed with the large turnout despite the rainy weather and the U.S. retaliation against Afghanistan, which began that same day. In fact, she said the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks provided an alarming example of the devastating effect of hate, which authorities believe resulted in Okaruru's death.

"It's important for us to speak out against this act," Keeney said. "This is one way not to feel helpless...to stand up against this kind of violence."

*Contributions for the Loni Okaruru Memorial Fund may be made by writing to Bank of America, Hillsboro Banking Center, 409 E. Main St., Hillsboro, OR 97123, or by visiting any local branch.*



**LESBIAN BEREAVEMENT GROUP FORMED**

A Lesbian Bereavement Group has been formed for women who have lost their partners to cancer or other circumstances. It will be facilitated by Chaplain Patricia Valentine and the Hambleton Project, which provides education, advocacy and direct services to lesbians with cancer and other life-threatening conditions.

The group will gather at 7 p.m. Nov. 1 in Northeast Portland. Meetings will be held on Thursday evenings for six weeks.

*For more information or to register, call volunteer coordinator Erin Sexton at 503-335-6591.*

**SENIOR HOUSING COMMITTEE WILL MEET**

A meeting has been scheduled for the newly formed committee that seeks to lay the groundwork for housing for gay and lesbian seniors. It will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Oct. 30 in the third floor board room at the downtown YWCA, 1111 S.W. 10th Ave.

*For more information call 503-286-3575.*

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ATTORNEYS AT LAW

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*\*of counsel †licensed Oregon, Washington, and Colorado*

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