

NORTHWESTnews

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"sexual do's and don'ts" to a philosophy "that looks at the broader and more comprehensive picture of health in the gay community, recognizing that gay men are not going to make good decisions if they are not supported in their social and cultural environment."

Beardsley also served as chairman of the Gay Life Health Network, which held a number of racy forums designed to get men talking about safer sex. The infamous events included *Tunnel of Love: The Greatest Hole on Earth*, a frank discussion of anal sex; *Oral Fixation*, a primer on blowjobs; and facilitated discussions following performances of *The (Bad) Boy Next Door*, Tony Valenzuela's one-man show about barebacking.

Between 200 and 400 men attended the forums, which Beardsley considers "pretty impressive." Unfortunately, he says, Gay Life has disbanded because financial and manpower support were lacking.

"I think we did some really good stuff, and I believe that we were doing prevention efforts that nobody else was doing in Portland," he says. "Hopefully in the future another organization will pick that up."

Beardsley, 33, says he lived longer in Portland than any other place in his life. But he won't have a chance to get too homesick:



Kip Beardsley is now the state AIDS director for Arizona

He'll be back in town about twice a month to see his partner, Matthew Nelson, Equity Foundation executive director.

"I miss the city and my friends there," he says. "I plan on staying connected to the community in Portland."

REPORT RANKS OREGON AMONG BEST STATES FOR QUEER FAMILIES

The rights and responsibilities granted to sexual minority families vary dramatically from state to state, county to county and often judge to judge—with no state providing equality under law, according to a new report released March 8 by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation.

In the year after the enactment of civil unions in Vermont, some courts and legislators began to engage in a new dialogue on the status of these families, and a few states have passed some limited new protections and benefits, according to *The State of the Family: Laws and Legislation Affecting Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Families*. The report also shows just how vulnerable gay and lesbian families are without the security, benefits and protections afforded by civil marriage in U.S. society.

"Gay and lesbian families are living on a fault line," said Elizabeth Birch, HRC executive director. "Even the most expensive and carefully crafted safety net leaves couples, parents and children vulnerable—and will continue to do so until the law catches up with the realities of the changing family."

The report ranks states on 14 indicators, including laws covering marriage, civil unions, domestic partnership, adoption, safe schools, discrimination, hate crimes and sodomy. It found that no state provides full equality to sexual minority families.

According to the report, the 12 places that scored the highest are the District of Columbia, Vermont, California, Connecticut, New Jersey,

Minnesota, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York, New Hampshire, Oregon and Washington. The lowest-scoring states were Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Mississippi, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah and Virginia.

"We applaud the fair-minded state legislators and judges who have recognized that all families deserve equal protection and call upon their colleagues nationwide to follow their lead," said Seth Kilbourn, HRC national field director. "As the report makes clear, however, we have a long road ahead of us as we strive to achieve civil marriage for gay and lesbian couples and establish some level of security—piece by piece—along the way."

Copies of the report can be obtained by contacting HRC FamilyNet at 202-628-4160 or familynet@hrc.org.

JACKSON RECALL EFFORT ABORTED

It appears Portland Public Schools board member Derry Jackson, who was the target of a recall effort after making anti-Semitic and anti-gay comments last year, will be staying in office until 2004. Chief petitioner Jeff Muir abandoned the campaign Feb. 28 because monetary support fell far short of his \$40,000 goal.

"We are tremendously grateful for the efforts of the many citizens who have given their signature, time or money to help," he wrote on the Internet site DumpDerry.org. "It is our sincere hope that our community continues to confront the issues that prompted our campaign." □

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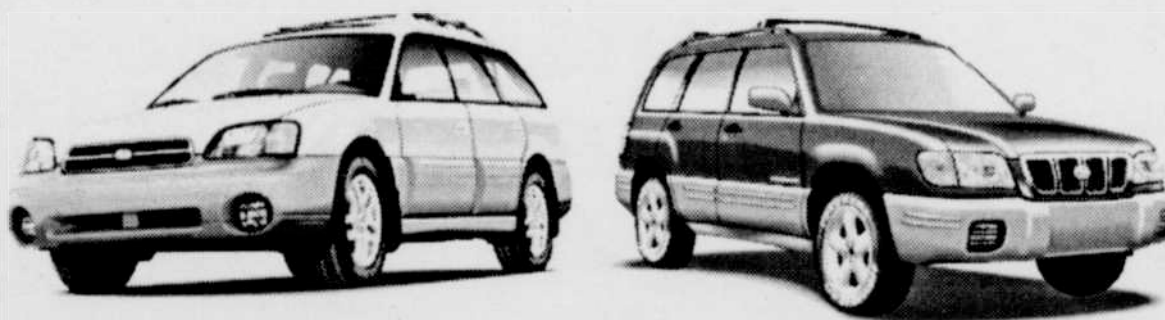
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