

**MABON RELEASED FROM JAIL**

Imprisoned anti-gay leader Lon Mabon was released April 3 on a five-day pass to gather evidence in preparation for an April 5 deposition. An April 8 hearing will determine whether he must return to jail.

More than 50 people held a rally March 29 outside the Justice Center to protest Mabon's incarceration. They held signs demanding the release of the Oregon Citizens Alliance chairman and the imprisonment of Ronald Cinniger, the Multnomah County Circuit Court judge who had him thrown in jail Feb. 20.

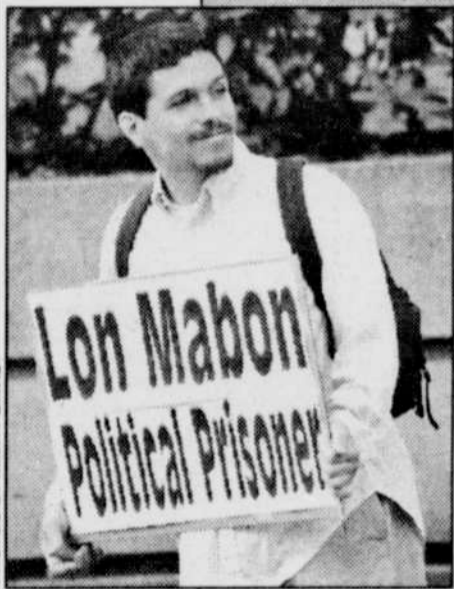
The case dates back to 1991, when lesbian photojournalist Catherine Stauffer was assaulted at a Measure 9 event. Mabon owes her more than \$40,000 but maintains he can't get a fair trial until judges take an oath that matches the state constitution word for word.

His wife, Bonnie, is collecting attorney fees through the Committee for Constitutional Courts, which is soliciting money by linking this lawsuit to the fight for gay rights. "The radical homosexuals want nothing less than the complete destruction of Lon and me," she recently wrote to supporters.

When asked what she meant by this accusation, Bonnie Mabon told *Just Out*: "I believe that the homosexuals have an agenda in our state, and I believe that the media has pretty much covered them and has ignored our side of the question.... They not only want us to shut our mouths, but they want



Protesters rally for Lon Mabon on March 29 outside the Justice Center



PHOTOS BY MARTY DAVIS

to have control of our schools, and they want our children to be taught that homosexuality is good and right and normal."

Other signs on display during the rally: "Churches Wake Up You Are Next," "This Is America! We Want Justice!" and the ever-popular "Protect Children from Homosexuality!" One that caught the attention of *Just Out*: "Lon Mabon for U.S. Senate."

Does this mean he plans on playing the role of spoiler in this year's election? "You'll have to ask him that," Bonnie Mabon said.

**GAY PARENTS PLEASSED WITH NEWS COVERAGE**

Steve Lofton, the Portland father whose family was interviewed by Diane Sawyer about Florida's gay adoption ban, praised ABC's coverage of the topic.

"I was very happy with it," he told *Just Out*. "I thought it was very informative for a lot of people who were kind of unfamiliar with what's

going on, and I was personally flattered with how much time she devoted to myself and my family."

Lofton and his partner, Roger Croteau, are raising five foster children, three from Florida and two from Oregon. The Sunshine State wants 10-year-old Bert back because he no longer tests positive for HIV and therefore is considered "adoptable."

The couple and their children watched the March 14 edition of *Primetime Thursday*—during which Rosie O'Donnell came out of the closet in support of them—on a 27-inch Sony television provided by the talk show host. "Prior to that they didn't have a TV, so it was a novelty for the kids," Lofton says.

He admits he wasn't surprised to learn Florida Gov. Jeb Bush rejected O'Donnell's recent request for a meeting. "I think it's a reflection of our current government."

The Web site LetHimStay.com, which explains the American Civil Liberties Union's lawsuit against the gay adoption ban, has received millions of hits since it was launched in mid-March. More than 200,000 e-mail responses have been sent to Florida officials in support of Lofton's family.

"It is clearly evident that a large number of people know about us and the plight," he says. "We've had a ton of supportive and positive response, and not one negative response."

**ROP PLANS STRATEGY SESSION**

The 10th annual Rural Caucus and Strategy Session will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. April 20 at United Methodist Church, 1450 Fern Ridge Road S.E. in Stayton.

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