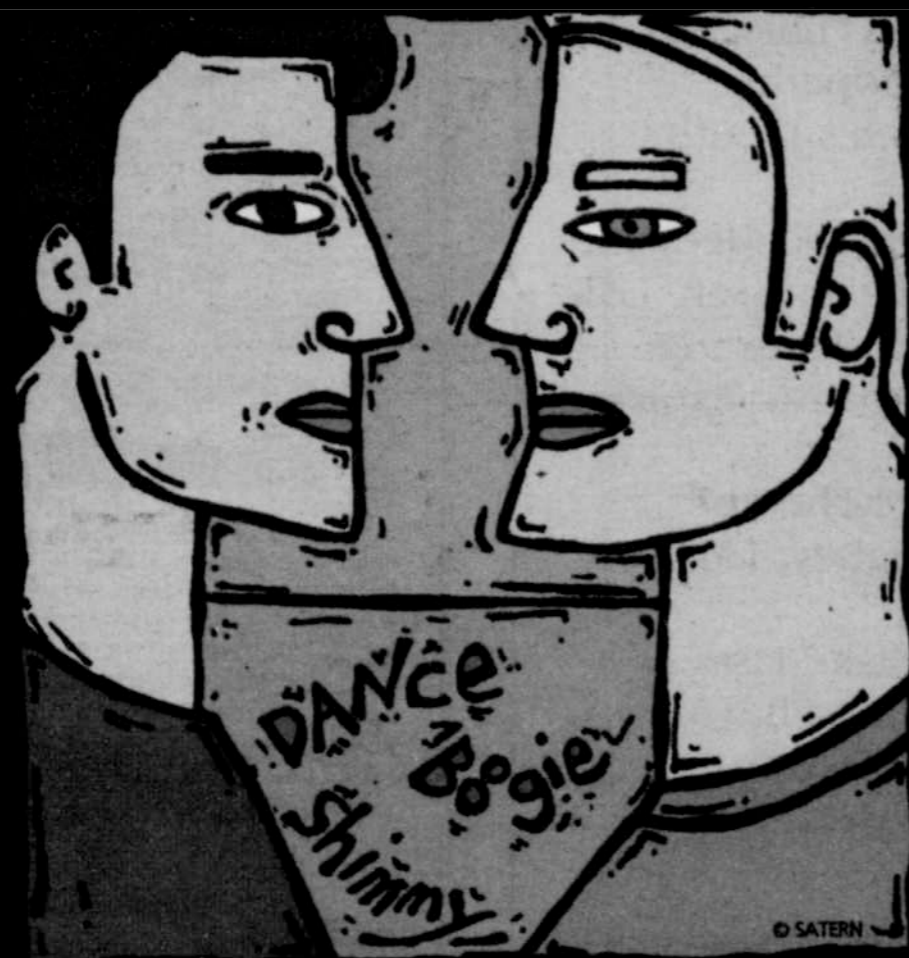


# PORTLAND GAY MEN'S CHORUS



3rd Annual

## Rainbow Ball

Once again the chorus will kick up its heels and spin tunes from the mind altering Disco Inferno Days. So, dust off your platforms, squeeze into your favorite Vanderbilt or Jordache Jeans and boogie, oogie, oogie till you just can't stand it no more. Creative dance attire is encouraged and awards for the zaniest costume will be presented through out the night of groovin' and shakin'.

Friday, June 14, 2002

9 p.m.—1 a.m.

Crystal Ballroom  
Dwntwn PDX



The Official kick off to the Pride Northwest Weekend!  
70's and 80's Retro Disco Inferno!

To Purchase Tickets Contact: PGMC @ 503-226-2588 or  
Online @ [www.pdxgmc.org](http://www.pdxgmc.org)



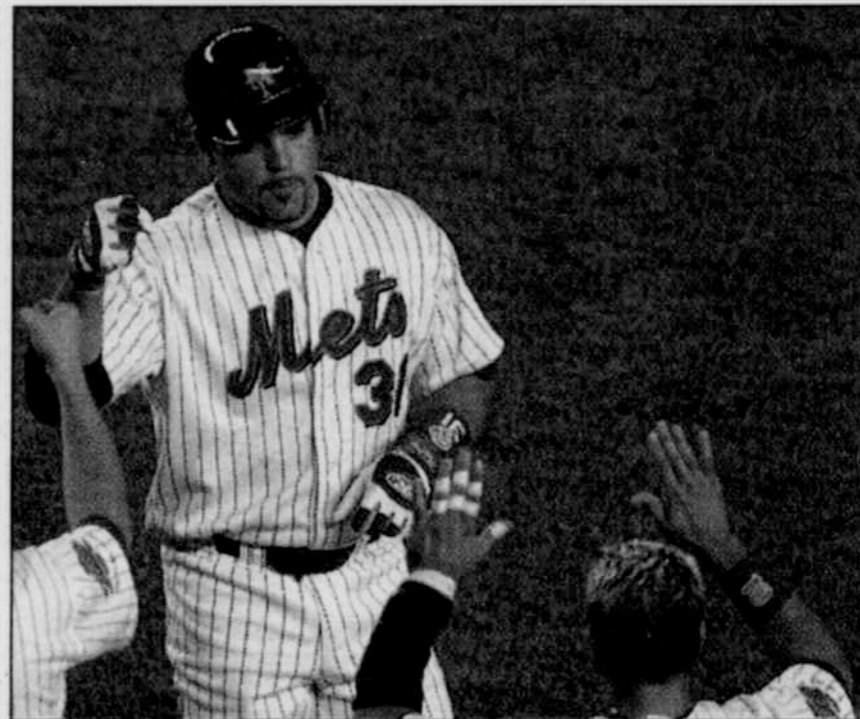
## NATIONAL news

### NEW YORK

Prompted by speculation resulting from a May 20 gossip item in the *New York Post*, New York Mets All-Star catcher Mike Piazza announced at a press conference last month that he is not gay, reopening the public discussion about whether and when an openly gay athlete will be able to play in professional team sports.

His remarks were in response to unsubstantiated rumors about Mets manager Bobby Valentine's comments in the upcoming issue of *Details* magazine. According to the *Post*, Valentine's suggestion that major league baseball is ready for an openly gay player was calculated to precede one of his own players coming out. (Amid intense mainstream news coverage of Piazza's press conference, the *Post* found itself in the spotlight again when sports columnist Wallace Matthews abruptly departed under contentious circumstances after he publicly criticized the paper's sensationalistic treatment of the story.)

"The current media frenzy and guessing game of 'Who is the gay baseball player?' doesn't serve anyone unless it leads to a discussion of the larger issue of homophobia in sports," said Cathy Renna, Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation news media director. "And we'd hope that Mike Piazza and Bobby Valentine are right and that the current environment would allow sports professionals to be open about their sexual orientation. However, the absence of openly gay athletes in team sports tells us pretty clearly that this is not the case."



Mike Piazza is congratulated by teammates after hitting a solo homer against the Philadelphia Phillies during the seventh inning May 29 at Shea Stadium in New York

### ALASKA

The American Civil Liberties Union filed an appeal May 22 in the Alaska Supreme Court in a case challenging the "Catch-22" of the state banning gay marriage and then saying marriage is the only way its employees can get benefits for their partners. The same day, an uninsured stay-at-home mother filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the case, saying she cannot get health benefits through her same-sex partner's job as a public employee—but was denied Medicaid benefits because the government assessed her need as though the women were married.

"I need health insurance—which I can't get from my partner's taxpayer-funded employer because we aren't married and I can't get from the Medicaid 'safety net' because we're treated like we are married," Mari Billington said. "I want our

state Supreme Court to hear exactly how this affects real families—how it affects my family."

The ACLU initially filed the case in state court three years ago, shortly after Alaska's voters passed a constitutional amendment barring recognition of gay marriage. Although the suit does not seek to invalidate that initiative, attorneys say that in light of the prohibition, using marriage as the litmus test for benefits constitutes discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender, thus violating the state constitution, which guarantees "all persons are entitled to equal rights, opportunities and protections under the law."

Last November, an Alaska Superior Court judge ruled that the benefits policy does not discriminate because it treats unmarried straight couples no differently than it treats unmarried gay people. Jennifer Rudinger, Alaska Civil Liberties Union executive director, said this reasoning "defies all logic and common sense—of course the state discriminates against gay couples when it conditions benefits on a status that gay couples cannot attain."

### TEXAS

Efforts to end discrimination at ExxonMobil gained enormous momentum May 29 after a record number of shareholders at the company's annual meeting in Dallas voted to add sexual orientation to its equal employment opportunity statement.

"We are extremely heartened by today's vote, where 23.5 percent of shareholders, representing \$63.75 billion in company stock, voted against discrimination and in favor of an inclusive company policy," said Elizabeth Birch, Human Rights Campaign executive director. "We hope this stunning vote encourages the management and board of ExxonMobil to adopt an integrated



From left, Shelley Alpern of Trillium Asset Management, the Rev. Roger Wedell of the Dallas Lesbian & Gay Alliance and Elizabeth Birch of the Human Rights Campaign react to the ExxonMobil shareholder vote during a press conference May 28 in Dallas

PHOTO BY KIM I. MILLS