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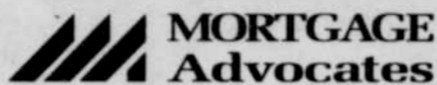
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NORTHWEST news

Continued from Page 9

to the size and scope of his art gallery, drew many people into the Pearl District."

The park's wooden boardwalk, lawn areas, stone aquifer and colorful public art already have made it a popular community gathering place. It is located at Northwest 11th Avenue between Johnson and Kearney streets.

helped find participants for focus groups, surveys and media development workshops.

"Both the messages and the delivery of this campaign were carefully designed to reach specific audiences in ways they will respond to," Kohn said. "We want people to know their lives matter and, if they are at risk of HIV, to get tested."

For more information call 503-731-4029.



Sam Adams commemorates National Pride Month on June 26 at City Hall

CAMPAIGN SEEKS TO INCREASE HIV TESTING

A new campaign that seeks to increase HIV testing got under way last month in Multnomah County, according to public health officials at the Oregon Department of Human Services. "Test Because You Matter" promotes HIV testing in groups that have high infection rates and are hard to reach: men who have sex with men, communities of color and injection drug users.

"It's critical that people at higher risk of HIV get tested so they know what their status is," state epidemiologist Mel Kohn said. "If they learn they are infected, they can get medical treatment and take steps to prevent their partners from getting the disease. On the other hand, if they test negative, they no longer have the stress of not knowing their status, and they have a huge incentive to protect themselves from getting infected."

The campaign delivers its message in a unique approach. Spanish and English materials are placed in restrooms, changing rooms and waiting areas because these are spaces where people are alone, undistracted and susceptible to public health messages, Kohn said.

Posters, brochures, wallet cards and an educational video are being distributed in a variety of outlets including bars, clubs, coffee shops, retail stores, restaurants and health care settings. Kohn said the project will expand statewide during the next four years.

The campaign was developed by Educational Message Services Inc., an Australian-based social marketing agency. Focus groups included people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Participants provided input on how to overcome barriers to HIV testing and helped shape messages that are culturally relevant and sensitive to specific groups. The African American Health Coalition, Cascade AIDS Project, Multicultural HIV/AIDS Alliance of Oregon and Multnomah County Health Department

CITY HALL CELEBRATES PRIDE

City employees had the opportunity to spend their lunch hour June 26 brown-bagging it while commemorating National Pride Month. Sam Adams, Mayor Vera Katz's chief of staff, played host to the Cultural Celebration Series event, which drew only a handful of people.

Those who did attend were treated to music by Lori Buckwalter of It's Time, Oregon! and presentations by Matthew Nelson of Equity Foundation, Marty Davis of Just Out and Norm Costa of Pride Northwest and the Sexual Minorities Roundtable. The Sexual Minority Youth Recreation Center was represented by Jacob Faeriesoul, and Multnomah County sent over David Martinez from Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey's office.

The headliners, albeit unintentional, for the get-together were Imperial Sovereign Rose Court royalty Empress XLIV Poison Waters and Emperor XXVIII Shelley. Waters celebrated, and bemoaned, the fact that Portland is a city so rich in diversity that a fully attired drag queen can walk through downtown and receive nary a questioning glance.

ODOT EMPLOYEE RECEIVES COMPLAINTS

The head of the Oregon Department of Transportation's civil rights office received dozens of complaints after mentioning Gay Pride Month in a June diversity calendar distributed to state employees. Amanda Vallejo, who also serves as chairwoman of the Salem Human Rights and Relations Advisory Commission, merely was passing on information provided by U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta about the annual celebration.

But then KXL-FM hatemonger Lars Larson came into the picture. The conservative talk show host gave out the e-mail addresses and telephone numbers of Vallejo and Patrick Cooney,

PHOTO BY MARTY DAVIS