

Specializing in home financing for gay men and lesbians.

Rose City
Mortgage Specialists

- FREE consultations
- \$0-down loans
- all credit & loan types

503.768.4248
www.RoseCityMtg.com

Retail Nursery - Landscape Services (OLBC#6774)

Gardening Workshops:

1pm, Sunday - Gardening Workshops Open to the Public

August 18 - "Designing for Maintenance: Tips for Easy Care Gardening"
Mike Smith, co-owner of Joy Creek Nursery

August 25 - "Summer Blazers: Flowers to Light Up Your Garden Until Fall"
Nadine Black, Certified Nursery Professional
Ramona Wulzen, Staff at Joy Creek Nursery

JOY CREEK
NURSERY

20300 NE Watson Rd
Scappoose, OR 97056

For Information Call:
503/543-7474
Open daily 8am-5pm

National Catalogue Sales ~ www.joycreek.com



Feel More Like
Yourself
With An
HotSpring Spa

- ★ BUILT FOR PLEASURE
- ★ SIZES AND MODELS FOR EVERY LIFESTYLE
- ★ QUIET, RELIABLE, AND EASY TO MAINTAIN
- ★ NOW SHIPPING WATER CARE PRODUCTS
- ★ ENERGY EFFICIENT



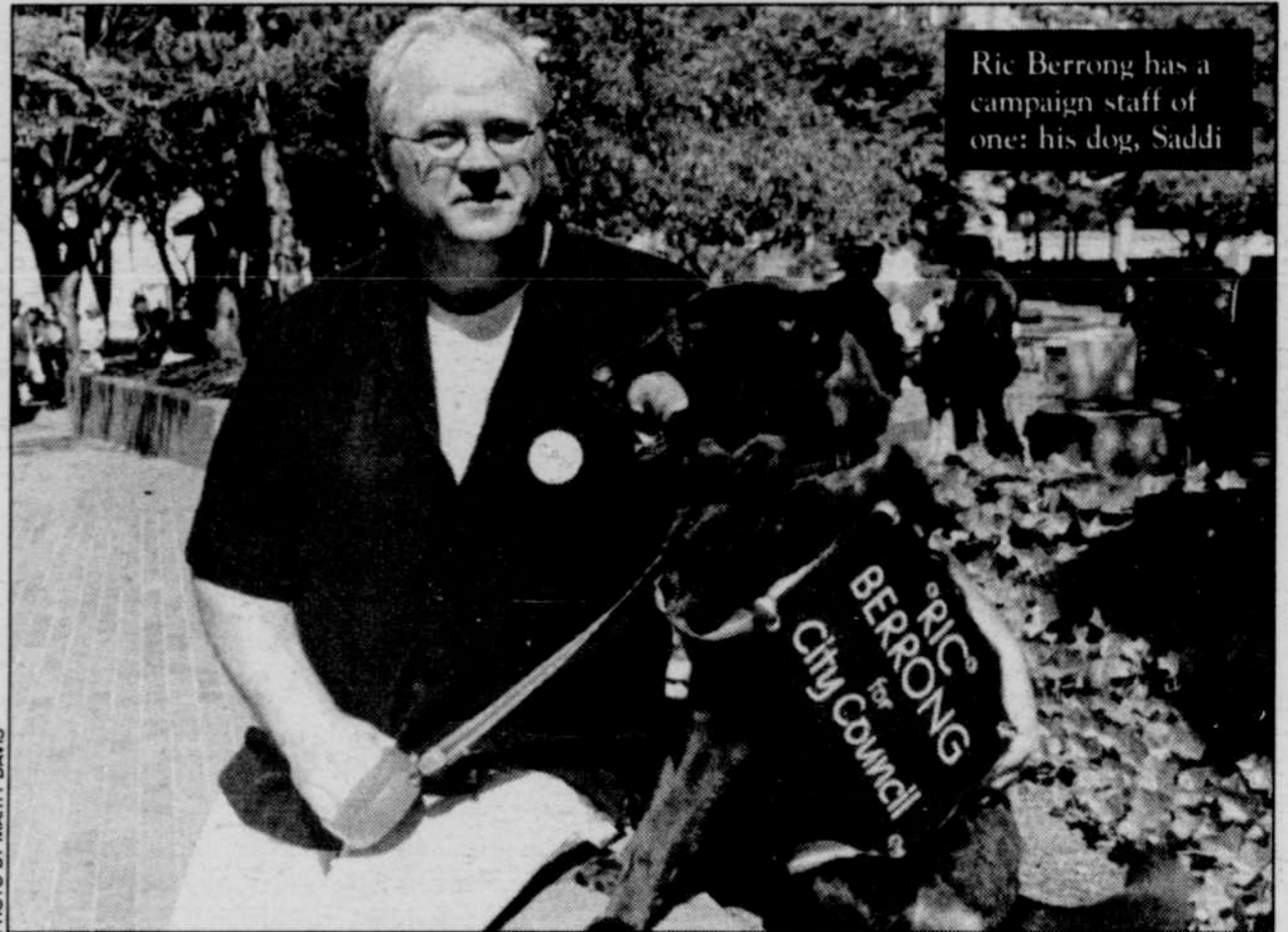
One of Life's Rewards

SPA SALES • SERVICE • SUPPLIES

<p>CLACKAMAS 503.650.8242 16112 SE 82nd Dr.</p>	<p>BEAVERTON 503.643.5002 10367 SW Canyon Rd.</p>	<p>SALEM 503.363.4000 3966 Silverton Rd. NE</p>	<p>BEND 541.388.0905 61249 S.Hwy 97</p>
--	--	--	--

VANCOUVER 360.892.5905

Visit us online: www.orhotspringspas.com



Ric Berrong has a campaign staff of one: his dog, Saddi

ONE VOICE

Openly gay man runs low-budget campaign based on his passion for Portland

by Sarah Leimert

Portland City Council candidate Ric Berrong is not afraid of a challenge. In addition to facing formidable opposition from 15 other people, the 40-year-old is running as an openly gay man. He knows his sexual orientation will play a role in his candidacy.

"I am an openly gay man—have been for the last five years," he says. "There will be those who vote for me because I am gay. And there will be those who won't vote for me for the same reason. All I can do is hope that people will look at the issues."

Berrong was born and raised in Portland and expresses a great love for the city and its potential as a growing metropolis. "This isn't something I just want to do for kicks," he says. "I really am passionate about this city."

Berrong, who attended Franklin High School and Mt. Hood Community College, has been a delivery driver in Portland for the past 12 years. He works full time for the Irwin-Hodson Company.

He has no prior political experience to draw from. "But I view being an average citizen working for all the citizens as a positive," he says.

With a campaign slogan of "one voice can make a difference," Berrong would like his candidacy to be based on his love for and dedication to Portland, not how much money he has in his campaign coffers.

"I'm not rich," he says. "So [I'm] making little fliers, handing them out, walking my dog around with a sign. While other candidates expect to spend a great deal of money to get elected, I do not want to buy this position, I want to earn it."

Through volunteer work with the Metropolitan Human Rights Center, Cascade AIDS Project and two Portland hospices, Berrong has been encouraged to become more involved with the sexual minorities community. "Involvement and education are essential for everyone's equality," he says. "I offer my voice to ensure all citizens are viewed and valued equally."

Berrong is a busy man with a long list of goals. In addition to working full time and running a campaign, he also is pioneering his own publishing company, Saisar Unlimited, and is writing a book, *Neni: A Celebration of*

Truth, which is scheduled to be published in the summer of 2003. When he is not hard at work on one of his projects, he frequently can be seen riding his bike or walking around downtown with his dog, Saddi.

Promoting Portland's out-of-state tourism is high on Berrong's priority list. In addition, he would like to encourage folks who already live here to explore the city.

"I've talked to people who haven't been downtown in years and won't come down here," he says. "They have one bad experience and they want to stay away...I want to show the city as being accessible and safe, because it really is."

Berrong also is troubled by the current condition of the Portland Police Bureau. He worries that Chief Mark Kroeker does not represent a "positive change for the future" of the department.

"If we are to be searching for a new chief of police, I would insist that we hire within the bureau, someone who knows the city," he says. "We will never find someone to please all the people, but at least we can find someone who respects all the people."

Another issue close to home for Berrong is the Burnside Triangle, Portland's gay culture district, which he says has the potential for development and a chance for redefinition. He calls upon the sexual minorities community and the city to improve the area, patronize existing businesses and encourage new ones to establish themselves.

"I totally support that," he says. "But what does [the Triangle] really represent? Basically, it's a bunch of clubs. I would like to encourage some businesses that are unique to the area—card shops, more bookstores, clothing shops."

Berrong wants to be sure every voice in Portland is heard, not just the well-financed ones. For example, "the recent decision of the current City Council to ignore the voice of the citizens and move forward with the [Oregon Health Sciences University] tram troubles me," he says. "I live in the neighborhood where the tram will [operate], and I believe there were other options that would have made everyone happy."

Berrong's intent is to play an instrumental role in securing the Rose City's future. "Portland has a charm and character all its own," he says. "As it grows into an even stronger and more successful city, we must ensure that we embrace and cherish the character that makes Portland unique." □

RIC BERRONG can be contacted at FaithfulQueer@aol.com.

SARAH LEIMERT is a Portland free-lance writer. E-mail her at sleimert@earthlink.net.