

NORTHWEST newsbriefs

BRO SETS SAIL

Basic Rights Oregon announced an aggressive agenda for the 2003 legislative session during its annual dinner Sept. 13. The fund-raiser's theme was "Setting Sail."

Executive director Roey Thorpe said the nonprofit organization plans to introduce a civil rights bill protecting gay, lesbian, bi and trans people in employment, housing and public accommodation. It would make Oregon the 13th state to ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and only the third to include gender identity.

"Every week we get calls...from people across the state whose lives are deeply affected by prejudice," Thorpe said. "A young man in Bend fired from his very first job as a construction worker because

his boss heard that he's gay. A woman from Coos Bay fired from her dream job as a bus driver because when her boss, who was titillated when he found out she's bisexual, fired her when she asked him to stop sending her erotic e-mail. A transgendered woman in Klamath Falls won't leave her house dressed as a woman because she's afraid she'll be evicted from her apartment. A lesbian couple in Hillsboro was harassed by their landlord until they had no choice but to move."

The Oregon Citizens Alliance failed to collect enough signatures to place the anti-gay Student



Oregon Secretary of State Bill Bradbury, the Democratic nominee for U.S. Senate, takes the mike Sept. 13 as fair-minded candidates introduce themselves during the Basic Rights Oregon Annual Dinner

Protection Act II on the ballot this fall. Thorpe said this gives BRO "an enormous opportunity...to literally take back the civil rights agenda."

LEATHER CHAFES WOMEN

Concerned Women for America issued a statement Sept. 12 urging Portland Mayor Vera Katz to rescind her proclamation for Leather Pride Week, calling it "a celebration of sexual violence." The anti-gay Christian organization claims to be the nation's largest public pol-

icy women's group with more than 500,000 members.

"The mayor should be ashamed of herself for using the good name of Portland's citizens to encourage perverse, criminal behavior," Clackamas-based state director Suzanne Brownlow said. "In fact, she has disgraced all of Oregon by this absurd action."

Blackout Leather Productions and Portland Leather Alliance sponsored the series of meet-

ings and parties from Aug. 3 to 11. Portland and San Francisco are the only cities in the United States that have issued mayoral proclamations formally acknowledging the positive contributions of the leather and fetish communities.

"Is this how we want to be known?" Brownlow said. "Katz seems intent on outdoing San Francisco officials as the laughingstock of the nation when it comes to supporting bizarre behavior."

Brownlow linked the proclamation to the case of a Seattle transient who allegedly was held as a "sex slave" for eight days in Brush Prairie, Wash. Two men were arrested and charged with kidnap, rape and assault Sept. 5.

"Such sadistic practices are becoming more common as 'leather pride' goes mainstream," Brownlow said. "Mayor Katz might argue that her endorsement is limited to 'consensual' behavior, but the line keeps getting redrawn, and real victims are emerging."

The Sept. 12 edition of *Culture & Family Report*, a CWA-affiliated publication, features a lengthy article about the proclamation. It includes sections about the origin of the "hanky code" as well as clinical descriptions of fisting, "a sadistic perversion...in which one man inserts his hand and arm deep inside another man's behind."

"Whereas 'your honors' of old have paid tribute to visitors with keys to the city, perhaps Mayor Katz can now present keys to the city's fur-lined handcuffs and bondage chamber," CWA president Sandy Rios said. "It's amazing to behold how—in the name of 'diversity'—committed liberals can't say no to any perversion, yet we're supposed to somehow



Gubernatorial candidate Ted Kulongoski gets lei'd

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TEMPTATION
CAN TAKE MANY *forms.*

TWIST

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