



PHOTOS BY MATTY DAVIS

PHOTOS BY CHENE CUMMINGS

just asking **Portland Mayor**

Vera Katz defends her decision to proclaim Leather Pride Week: Are you glad she stuck to her guns, or do you feel she handed Christian conservatives more ammunition to use against us?

I am very glad that Vera stuck to her guns on proclaiming Leather Pride Week, and just to be fair, I think we should proclaim the following week "Christian Conservatives Leather Pride Week" or "Leather Conservatives Christian Pride Week." Those Christians need to seriously CHILL OUT!!! Always remember, "Don't knock it until you've whipped it!!!"

CHRIS SCHLEGEL
Portland

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I am glad she stuck to her guns!!! It is nice to have a mayor with the cojones to do things like this. Another reason why I love living here.

EVA HOFFMAN
Milwaukie

...

As a community are so diverse that I feel her decision is the right one. It does not matter to the Christian conservatives what we do or don't do. If they disagree it's their right—if it was not for Leather Pride Week, it would be for something else—but it is also our right to be who we are.

DEBRA COX
Portland

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As a servant to the leather community of Salem and a contestant in last August's Mr. and Ms. Oregon State Leather Contest, I wholeheartedly support Mayor Katz's decision to "stick to her guns."

I was granted the rare honor of being present when the proclamation was announced publicly, and I can tell you honestly, you could feel

the pride and excitement fill the room. What these Christian conservatives don't get is that "safe, sane and consensual" does not in any way condone the illegal acts of sex with children or bestiality.

In Oregon, a child younger than 18 cannot legally give "consent," nor can any animal. That is why it is called "the age of consent."

Another thing that tends to wrinkle my leathers is the way these Christian conservatives tend to lump the entire leather community, and gay community as a whole, into this whole "child molester/bestialist" group. The difference between B/D/S/M and sexual violence is the "safe, sane and consensual" creed of the people who practice this lifestyle.

Violence of any kind is far from safe, sane or consensual. When are these people going to learn that the louder they yell against us, the more our whispers are heard?

So, to all my leather brothers and sisters out there: Hold your heads high. Portland is one of only two cities nationwide to recognize, by mayoral proclamation, the leather community as a viable and important part of the whole community.

JIMI LANE
Mr. Salem Leather 2002

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Leather Pride is a celebration that is not limited to a gender or a sexuality. The conservative movement and coalitions need no "ammunition" from anyone. Their own fears fuel their debates and lives. It is amazing how something so simple can become so complex. Hooray for a mayor who sees this clearly.

MICHEIL MACCUTCHEON
Dover, N.H.

next issue How do you feel about U.S. Sen. Gordon Smith's advertisement featuring Judy Shepard? Do you think Matthew would have liked him? (Please see related item on Page 7.) Respond at www.justout.com. (Don't forget to include your name, city and daytime telephone number.)

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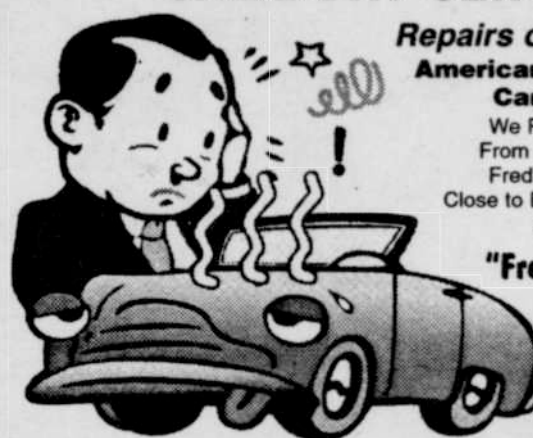
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