

NORTHWEST newsbriefs

NEWSPAPER OKS SAME-SEX UNION ANNOUNCEMENTS

The *Oregonian* revealed Oct. 27 that it finally will begin publishing same-sex union announcements. The couples must be registered in Multnomah County or Ashland. The newspaper made the change as part of an overall revamping of its policy regarding engagements, weddings, anniversaries, birthdays and other occasions. The notices now will appear as paid ads in the "Celebrations" section, which will run Saturdays starting Dec. 7.

Since the *New York Times* began publishing same-sex union announcements Sept. 1, several large newspapers have followed suit, including the *Boston Globe* and *Charlotte [N.C.] Observer*. Editor Sandy Rowe said the *Oregonian* decision was based more on the need to improve a system that had become inefficient.

"There's some gay people who've asked me about it pretty regularly for the last couple of years, and my answer has always been, 'It really has to do with advertising and news,'" she told *Just Out*. "Everybody makes decisions in the context of what's going on in society, and I had been pushing to get this to advertising... in order to do them better for everybody.... This was really the right time, because I was not going to add another layer onto announcements that I did not think were effective."

According to Rowe, who was unsure whether same-sex couples would appear alongside newlyweds in the new format, the guidelines, rates and forms should be available by Nov. 4. She said the newspaper has received "a smattering of phone calls" both supporting and criticizing the inclusive policy.

"I'm sure that people will be divided on this.



Charlotte Comito (left) and Vonnie Core register their domestic partnership Aug. 20, making them eligible for the new "Celebrations" section in the *Oregonian*

I don't pretend to think that the decision to include them is something that will sit comfortably with everyone," she said. "We think it's the right decision."

For more information visit www.oregonlive.com.

MABON GOES TO COURT

The Committee for Constitutional Courts has appealed the Oregon Elections Division's July 5 decision to discontinue the political action committee, which was established in February to pay Lon Mabon's legal bills. PACs are required to support or oppose a candidate, measure or party in order for donors to be eligible for a \$50 tax credit.

The committee filed the appeals against Oregon Secretary of State Bill Bradbury, who happens to be Mabon's Democratic opponent in this fall's U.S. Senate race. The Oregon Citizens Alliance chairman is running on the Constitution Party ticket.

Meanwhile, Mabon appeared in court Oct. 2 to support alleged counterfeiter John S. Nolan, who is linked to the Freeman, the Montana group that in 1996 caused the longest federal siege in modern U.S. history. The defendant—along with co-conspirator Lyle Hartford Van Dyke Jr.—stands accused of passing about \$3 million worth of false financial notes featuring a picture of him and the Queen of England.

Constitutionalists demand reform of the U.S. monetary and banking system, which they believe is being illegally controlled by the private Federal Reserve. "These violations now threaten the economic stability and survival of our country's republican form of government," the party platform states.

According to the *Oregonian*, Mabon said U.S. officials are using the judiciary to punish people they think "stray off the reservation a little bit.... I think John followed the same principle the Federal Reserve follows. John Nolan's instrument is sounder than the Federal Reserve note is. This case will bring all that out."

It's been a busy month for Mabon. On Oct. 14 he filed his third stab at the Student Protection Act, which would prevent public schools from approving of, promoting or endorsing homosexuality or bisexuality.

If enough signatures are collected, the mea-

sure would go before voters Nov. 2, 2004. Oregonians defeated the 2000 version, and its 2002 sequel failed to qualify for the ballot.

INTERSEX ACTIVISTS CONFRONT AUTHOR

A group of eight intersex activists handed out educational fliers during an author appearance Oct. 25 at Powell's Books. They object to Jeffrey Eugenides' use of the term "hermaphrodite" throughout *Middlesex*, his novel about a Greek man who was raised as a girl.

According to Emi Koyama, intersex activists use the word to refer to each other the same way some gay men use "fag." She told Eugenides that this does not make it acceptable to use the term liberally.

"I am hoping that he understands the pain associated with the word and that he would not spread the misinformation that it's OK to refer to intersex people as 'hermaphrodites' in general," Koyama said. "He was visibly nervous when I went to speak with him."

QUILT CHAPTER IN STITCHES

The Portland chapter in charge of the AIDS Memorial Quilt might be forced to close in 2003 because of a massive restructuring of the NAMES Project Foundation.

According to local chairwoman Dawna Bell, the national organization has been in financial trouble since 1996. A recent move of the headquarters from San Francisco to Atlanta and a subsequent change in management led to a restructuring of rules and regulations, and the

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