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QUEER JEWS INVITED TO POTLUCKS

The monthly potluck series for gay, lesbian, bi and trans Jews has announced its winter schedule.

Keshet, which means "rainbow" in Hebrew, celebrates diversity and provides a tremendous opportunity for fellowship. The gatherings are coordinated by counselors at Jewish Family & Child Service.

The first potluck, held in late May 2002, was inspired by the large numbers who flocked to a showing of *Trembling Before G-d*, a documentary detailing stories of Orthodox gay men and lesbians attempting to balance their spirituality and sexuality. The dinners now draw more than 30 people each month.

"Keshet reflects the best aspects of our Jewish community in that all are welcome from the most observant to the most secular," coordinator David Molko said. "What brings us together is our desire and commitment to expand and redefine the concept of family."

The next event features a vegetarian potluck and songs with Rabbi Aryeh Hirschfield at 5 p.m. Jan. 12. Dinners also are scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Feb. 21 and 5 p.m. March 16.

For additional information, directions and to sign up for a potluck dish, call David Molko at 503-226-7079, ext. 14.

HAIL MARY

Esera Tualo, the former Oregon State University football player who came out



Keshet coordinators David Molko and Laney Kibel welcome all queer Jews—from the most observant to the most secular

of the closet on national television in October, will attend the 26th annual Aspen Gay & Lesbian Ski Week from Jan. 19 to 26 in Colorado.

The event, billed as "the world's premier ski party for charity," will attract about 3,000 participants for skiing, snowboarding, cultural activities, entertainment, night life, comedy and the annual Gay & Lesbian Film Fest.

Tualo played professional football for teams including the Minnesota Vikings, Jacksonville Jaguars, Carolina Panthers, Green Bay Packers

and Atlanta Falcons, with whom he went to Super Bowl XXXIII in 1999. He then retired to pursue a career in singing and acting.

He recently came out in an interview with HBO's *Real Sports* and was featured on the cover of the *Advocate* magazine. He hopes to be a role model for the "one kid out there who needs to know it's OK to be gay."

Tualo had considered suicide during the years when his sexual orientation was kept a secret. He now is in a committed relationship and is raising two children.

He will speak Jan. 21 at the inaugural Vision Dinner. Organizers expect a sellout crowd of 300 people for the event, during which a scholarship will be presented to an outstanding Colorado youth in memory of slain college student Matthew Shepard, whose foundation will be the beneficiary of proceeds raised during the week.

For more information and group discount tickets,

visit the Internet site www.gayskiweek.com. For reduced rates on air, lodging, transportation and event passes, call 800-367-8290.

SUIT SETTLED WITH BUILDING OWNERS

Attorneys announced Dec. 20 the settlement of their wrongful death lawsuit brought after Diane Alexis Whipple was attacked and killed by two dogs in her San Francisco apartment building Jan. 26, 2001.

One of the pet owners convicted in connection with the mauling, Robert Noel, is behind bars at the maximum-security Oregon State Penitentiary in Salem. He was transferred there Oct. 25 after a brief stay at the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility in Wilsonville.

According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, landlords Rudolph and Annette Koppl have agreed to pay an undisclosed amount of cash to Whipple's partner, Sharon Smith, and mother, Penny Whipple Kelly. "I am gratified that this portion of the suit has concluded," Smith said. "This has been very emotional for me; however, I do feel some measure of relief."

Attorney Michael Cardoza emphasized that the suits were brought to seek responsibility, justice and closure. "This was never about money," he said.

Lawyers will continue to pursue the civil suit against Noel and his wife, Marjorie Knoller. Last spring a jury found the couple guilty of involuntary manslaughter. □

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