

NORTHWEST newsbriefs

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hold its first meeting from 6 to 8 p.m. Feb. 27 at Central Library, 801 S.W. 10th Ave. Pizza will be provided.

The coalition will discuss the problem, what other groups across the country have done and fun projects it might want to take on. According to Cathryn Cushing of the Multnomah County Tobacco Prevention Program:

- Gay, lesbian, bi and trans people smoke at almost twice the rate of the general population.
- Smoking speeds the development of full-blown AIDS.
- Lesbians who smoke are at much greater risk for some cancers than other women.

• The tobacco industry is targeting the queer population with notorious campaigns such as Project S.C.U.M.

"Our friends and family members are dying from tobacco-related illnesses—more than die from car accidents, suicides, homicides and AIDS combined," Cushing says. "We can help."

DARCELLE HELPS SAVE COMMUNITY CENTER

Darcelle XV, Portland's premier drag queen, will headline a Feb. 16 benefit for the historic Linnton Community Center, which is located on U.S. Highway 30 about one mile northwest of the St. Johns Bridge at Northwest 107th Avenue.

An Italian-style dinner will be served at 6 p.m. Darcelle will be joined at 7:30 by her entire performance troupe for a night of her legendary "glitz, glamour and comedy."

Beer and wine will be served at a no-host bar. A dessert bar also will be available.

The event will raise money for the recently reopened center, which has been a longtime focal point of neighborhood pride and activity. It has served generations of families who relied on the facility for children's activities including 4-H Club and Girl Scout meetings, skating, volleyball, arts and crafts, a library, Sunday school and even a fully functioning weekday preschool.

Walter Cole, aka Darcelle, has special roots in Linnton. He grew up there and has fond memories of the center being an essential part of the neighborhood for generations of youth.

The building and programs closed in the summer of 2001 because of embezzlement by a former center director who since has accepted responsibility. The facility needs about \$30,000 in immediate repairs.

Linnton residents and businesses have been working together to raise money. Now the community is galvanized to restore the center to full-time operations. Already a morning preschool and afternoon after-school program have been re-established.

The event, which is for adults only, costs \$20 a person. Cash, checks and major credit cards will be accepted.

Raffle tickets will be sold for \$1 at the door, with 50 percent of the proceeds going to the winner and the other half benefiting the center. In addition, literary and history buffs will be able to place orders for the book *Linnton, A Town Too Tough to Die*.

For more information call 503-323-0213.

LET FREEDOM RING

An ethnically diverse panel of queers will attempt to answer the question "Does Freedom Ring for Our Gay Brothers and Sisters?" from noon to 1 p.m. Feb. 19 at Portland Community College's Rock Creek Campus, 17705 N.W. Springville Road.

Interested participants are encouraged to contact Gary Coleman, who co-founded the Portland Gay Men's Chorus, served as co-chairman of the host committee for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's recent Creating Change conference and works as a trainer for PCC.

For more information call 503-240-0761.



Queer activists mobilize against war Jan. 18 in downtown Portland

QUEER ACTIVISTS AGAINST THE WAR

About 25,000 people came downtown Jan. 18 to protest the increasingly inevitable U.S. war on Iraq. The peace rally included a large contingent marching with Pride at Work Oregon, an AFL-CIO affiliate for queer unionists.

The next day about 30 activists from Portland's sexual minorities community met at In Other Words bookstore to discuss the connections between radical queer politics and anti-war activism and how to become more visible advocates of radical change. Participants critiqued capitalism, linked cuts in social services to escalating militarism, pointed out the need for an active radical queer voice and called for a practical organizing response.

The group is open to all queer activists. It

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