

What is queer profit? It's the way we make our living, spend our dollars and prepare for our futures. It's lavender commerce. It's building community through support of gay-owned and gay-friendly business. It's mortgages, health care, child care,

THE QUEER PROFIT

by **Marty Davis**

The profitable part of *Just Out* is a tad shaky today. So far, and it's early in the day yet, we've had a broken water main—causing God only knows how much damage—followed by a fire alarm that was greeted with total apathy by the staff as we sat in a sugar-induced daze from eating Erin's birthday cake. All while listening to our new, not-so-soothing, ceiling-to-floor waterfall.

And now, a few notes from the world of queer profit.

You know something big is going on when you can't find a parking space in downtown Linnton on a Sunday night. Downtown where? Linnton is a small community a few miles west of Portland on Highway 30, near the St. Johns Bridge.

With dignity and fortitude, and not much by way of economic development, Linnton is the childhood home of Portland treasure Darcelle XV. On Feb. 16 Darcelle—or Walter Cole, as he was known in those days—came home to Linnton. Using the queer profit power of his persona, Darcelle and Company played to a packed, and I mean packed, house

MONEY TALKS

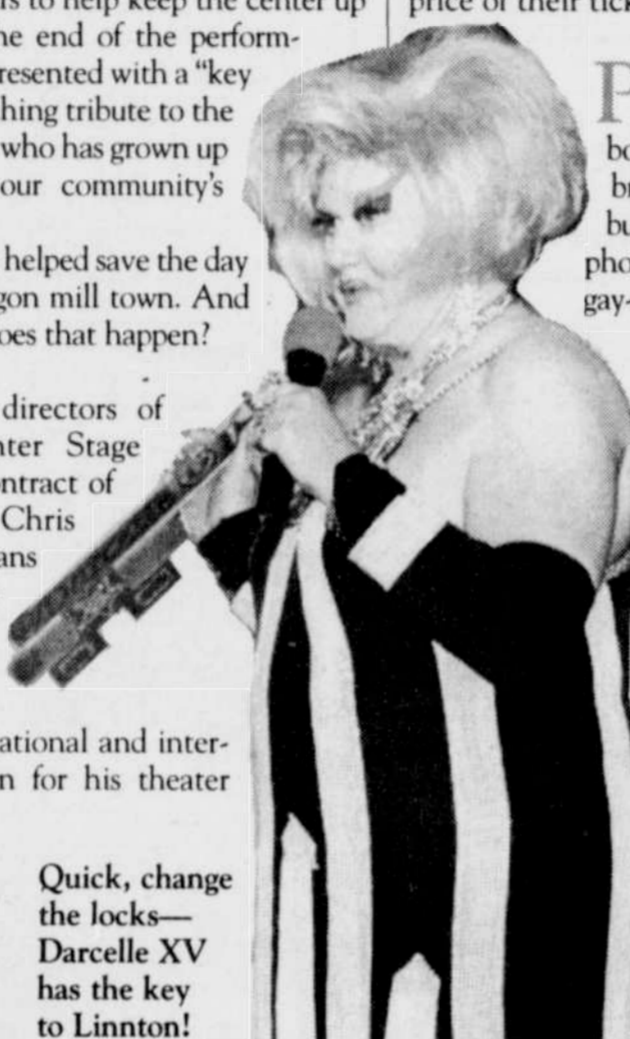
Linnton curtsies to drag queen; photographer snaps to it; comic snub is no laughing matter

at the Linnton Community Center. Poised, polished and professional, the troupe raised scads of dollars to help keep the center up and running. At the end of the performance Darcelle was presented with a "key to the city"—a touching tribute to the childhood of a man who has grown up to create one of our community's finest legacies.

Yup, queer profit helped save the day for a depressed Oregon mill town. And exactly how often does that happen?

The board of directors of Portland Center Stage has renewed the contract of artistic director Chris Coleman. This means audiences will be treated to his creative skills through at least 2006. Coleman has received national and international recognition for his theater endeavors.

Portland Center Stage partners with *Just Out* in presenting the gay and lesbian audience night of each



Quick, change the locks—Darcelle XV has the key to Linnton!

production. Attendees enjoy a reception with cast and staff, receiving additional value for the price of their tickets.

Photographer and Portland Area Business Association board member John Gress is branching out from his main business of taking award-winning photographs into dabbling with gay-themed merchandise.

Available for viewing on his Internet site, www.cafeshops.com/BITFO, is a gallery of his offerings—several of which I do not understand. They all have that casual Pacific Northwest look about them, though, and with spring rapidly approaching, well, a guy can just never have too many baseball caps. Remember to remove your cap when going to church.

Is this the beginnings of a dynasty in the making? Lesbian-fave Egyptian Club owners

have branched out and are operating Tennessee Red's in Southeast Portland.

The new managers are intent on making the locale—famed for sloppy, slurpy ribs—a dining and entertainment destination. It's karaoke at its finest (is that an oxymoron?) and it's your chance to eat, make merry and support gay business.

Here's a queer profit conundrum for you. Let's say that one of your favorite lesbian-identified performers is coming to town for a performance. Let's say that this particular performer made quite a to-do about coming out on her television show a few years ago. Let's say that this comedian's career has been carried for some time now on the backs and wallets of adoring lesbian fans.

Now let's throw in news from the promoter who has stated that Ellen—er, excuse me, this unnamed lesbian-identified performer—will not be specifically marketing her show to lesbian audiences this time around. Rather than advertise in the gay press—publications that nationwide have contributed greatly to the career success of our performer—their marketing dollars will go to other mainstream and alternative papers.

Yup, in Portland it's the skateboard paper that gets the bucks. But on a bright note to make us feel included, doggone it, this same promotion company has made sure that the gay press gets tons of info to ensure that the performer receives all the free publicity she can get.

I guess what really pisses me off is the fact that I went ahead and bought tickets anyway. I feel so used. ☹

Business news with a queer bent should be reported to MARTY DAVIS at marty@justout.com.

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