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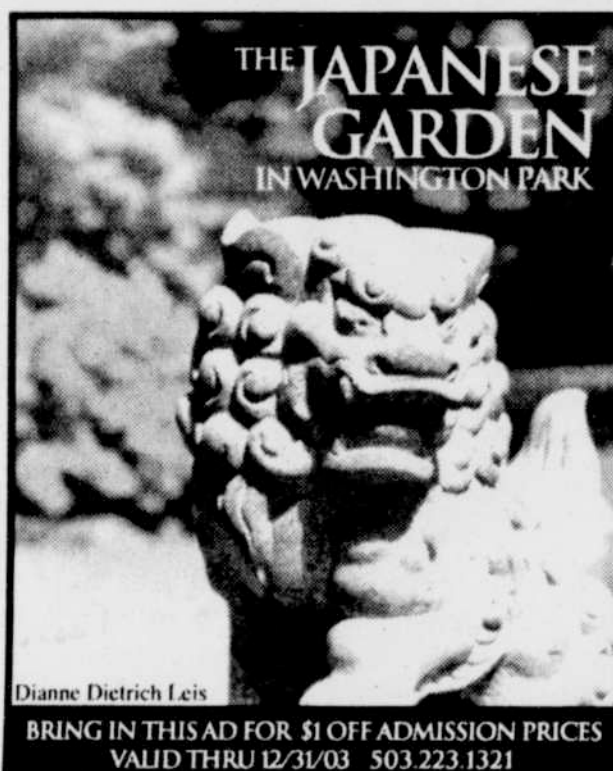
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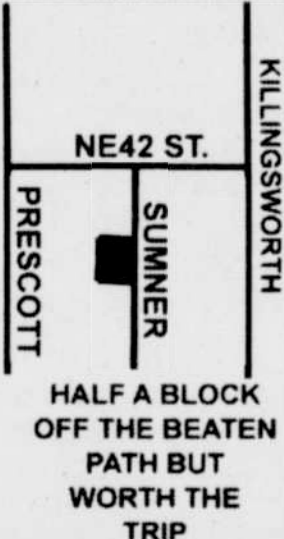
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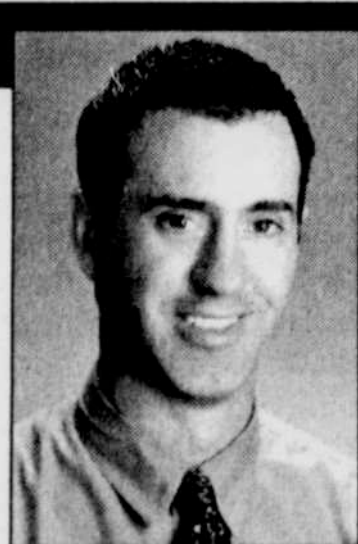
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Speak Out

Ad it up

TO THE EDITOR:

Distribution of *Just Out* among our community fills a huge need for many as a mode of providing information on issues that concern and interest your readers.

I just read your March 21 issue, and it struck me that your publication was more of an advertising venue for businesses than it was a resource of articles on topics and concerns your readers come to you to find. In this issue of *Just Out*, more than 73 percent of the 60 pages contain advertising. Of those 60 pages, 55 percent of the pages are actual ads.

I realize the need to have advertising, as it helps pay the bills and helps provide businesses that portray "acceptance" of gay and lesbian customers. But isn't that the purpose of Portland's Gay Yellow Pages?

I read your newspaper to get insight and information on local issues, not to be bashed with ideas of where I need to spend my money. When the *Just Out* newspaper is "just out" of room to provide informative articles for its readers, maybe it is time to re-evaluate where money is being spent to eliminate the horrendous need for so much advertising in order for your publication to survive and thrive.

Your intent toward filling a need in our community can be better served if you eliminate this mother lode of advertising and get on with the business of informing and entertaining your audience through articles of interest, not trying to sell so much space in your newspaper to make money. Where must the line be drawn?

How about you publish this letter and ask for response from your readers and bump off one of the spaces you would use for one of your advertisers? Would you eliminate a full-page ad to pose this question to your readers and publish their responses?

Probably not. It's too bad that the need for money has taken over the intent to provide a great resource for a community that deserves better representation of who we are and what we accept as being our voice!

JACKIE PETRASE
Portland

Free for all?

TO THE EDITOR:

I used to live in the United States, and I am full of wishes that I may live there again.

My departure was quick and not so planned, as the war was approaching and the borders were tightening. Within two weeks my life was transformed, fleeing from the government that discriminates against the LGBT community nationwide to one that recognizes all diversities (Canada).

My partner of three years was illegal, and our daily lives were becoming so filled with the fear of being separated by the government that represents freedom. The same government that is killing women and children and has been for a while in Iraq.

The war is called "Operation Iraqi Freedom" and is being fought under this screen. It is obvious to anyone reading the news outside the United States or England that the war is economic. It is a shame that the citizens of the United States will allow a fight for others' freedom yet will not stand up for the oppressed on the home front.

Same-sex binational couples struggle daily in the United States, fighting a war for the freedom to be with the person they have chosen to love. Where are all those freedom-fighting people on this issue—out eating "freedom fries"?

JEFFERY T. CARLTON
Vancouver, British Columbia

Rat race

TO THE EDITOR:

There is a scene in the film *Schindler's List* in which Oskar Schindler put a Nazi pin on the lapel of his coat. How many American fascists now wear another pin on their lapels?

Adolf Hitler asked Germany to defend their "Fatherland." President Bush asked the United States for a "Department of Homeland Security."

Nazi propaganda referred to Jews, Russians and many others as "rats." U.S. propaganda has referred to Iraqis as "rats hiding in their holes."

Hitler "freed" many nations before Poland in 1939. Bush is killing now in his "Operation Iraqi Freedom."

Since our War Department became our "Defense Department" in the 1940s, the fascist military corporate industrial complex has pushed the United States into the largest bully on earth. This is not the "American dream"; however, it has become an "American nightmare" for every living thing.

ANN ARMSTRONG
Fairview

Fight for your rights

TO THE EDITOR:

State Sen. John Minnis, who introduced Senate Bill 742, and those who set a hearing for this blatantly unconstitutional bill are clearly unfit for office.

This bill threatens anti-war protesters and labor strikers with life sentences for broadly defined crimes of "terrorism." The bill also overrides laws that forbid the police from spying on people who are not committing crimes and from working with the FBI to target immigration violations.

Anti-war activists, unionists and immigrants have the right to organize against this profit-driven war on Iraq, to fight President Bush's attempt to smash unions under the guise of fighting terrorism and to live free from police persecution. SB 742 is a major building block in the police state that we are supposed to be protected from by the Bill of Rights.

The dictionary defines patriotism as devotion to one's country. What country are Minnis, Bush, John Ashcroft and company devoted to?

I think they are patriots of big business and corporate ruthlessness. For them, war is necessary and unions are an obstacle to their inhuman greed.

Meanwhile, the rest of the country is left to fend for itself. We are doing that by standing up for the wages and working conditions of ordinary people, organizing to stop this war from forcing us to kill and be killed for mega-CEOs' profits and exposing the racist roundup of immigrants.

Stop SB 742. Stop John Minnis and his cronies from savaging our state and federal constitutional rights.

ADRIENNE WELLER
Freedom Socialist Party

A few good men

TO THE EDITOR:

Will there be a special float in this year's Pride parade honoring gay military people who are serving in Iraq, losing their lives and possibly being tortured as prisoners? The "don't ask, don't tell" closet creates even more isolation, plus many gays sometimes lose their family's support during the coming-out process.

This is a lonely position to have to be in under such stress. Let's give support for Navy, Air Force, Army and Marine people from the gay world, who, as far as emotional support, have it tougher than anyone else.

Personally, I have been e-mailing the White House, senators and anyone else. It may not be