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NORTHWEST newsbriefs



Gail Shibley took gubernatorial candidate Ted Kulongoski on a memorable ride through downtown during Portland Pride 2002

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ability for future generations to meet their needs as well."

Shibley assumed her duties within the Kulongoski administration in February. She oversees a Portland-based state office that protects public health through a wide scope of environmental and public safety programs. Among her responsibilities are drinking water quality standards, health care licensure, emergency medical services, radiation protection and environmental services, including programs for managing lead-based paint and cleaning up clandestine drug labs.

Shibley broke new ground for sexual minorities when she became the state's first openly gay elected official in the 1980s. She also served several years as Oregon's first openly gay or lesbian state legislator.

"Through work and progress and a high public presence, we can achieve a day when this is just an everyday occurrence...when the phrase 'lesbian legislator' will be as passé as I believe 'lady lawyer' now has become"

—Gail Shibley

Throughout this time, Shibley has remained mindful of her public position as a positive role model for sexual minorities. "The fact that I am female and lesbian makes it all the more easy to appreciate communities in this state who don't feel they receive the attention and focus and understanding that is important, particularly when it comes to public and environmental health," she says.

At the same time, Shibley is committed to a future when a person's sexual orientation isn't newsworthy. "Through work and progress and a high public presence, we can achieve a day when this is just an everyday occurrence...when the phrase 'lesbian legislator' will be as passé as I believe 'lady lawyer' now has become."

IMMIGRANTS CAN LEARN ABOUT LEGAL RIGHTS

The Portland chapter of the Lesbian and Gay Immigration Rights Task Force will hold a legal clinic for queer and HIV-positive immigrants and their partners 6:30 p.m. April 24 in Room 338 of Portland State University's Smith Memorial Center, 1825 S.W. Broadway. The meeting will feature a presentation, social time and free consultations with lawyers.

The purpose is to educate and inform people affected by discriminatory immigration laws about their rights. The Immigration and Naturalization Service does not recognize same-sex couples as family and, therefore, do not provide for their ability to remain together in the United States.

For more information call 503-471-1568 or e-mail lgirtfpdx@hotmail.com.

CIVIL RIGHTS FORUM TO ADDRESS HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

Housing advocates and providers, social service agencies and civil rights supporters will gather April 25 at the DoubleTree Columbia River Hotel for the forum "Fair Housing: Moving Forward in Uncertain Times."

The event, in honor of National Fair Housing Month, will feature speakers, educational workshops and a plenary to discuss future strategies. Also featured will be a new exhibit on the history of housing discrimination in Oregon and a scene from the new play *Time Out of Mind*, which examines the powerful role played by the Ku Klux Klan in the state during the 1920s.

The forum is sponsored by the Fair Housing Council of Oregon, which enforces federal, state and local laws banning housing discrimination. These laws protect renters and homebuyers from discrimination based on sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, gender, familial status, disability, source of income, marital status and age.

The nonprofit organization educates housing providers, tenants, social service groups and local governments about fair housing rights and responsibilities and responds to complaints from people who believe they have been discriminated against. The most frequent complaints received on the agency's hot line are from individuals with disabilities and families with children.

For more information call 503-412-6000.