

Lifetime Achievement Award

A special Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented in honor of Ann Shepherd, who founded the Portland chapter of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays with her husband, Bill. She died of complications from heart disease Jan. 4 at the age of 84.

Shepherd unknowingly was enlisted as a civil rights activist in 1971—just two years after Stonewall—when her daughter Susie came out of the closet while home from University of Oregon on Christmas vacation. In 1976 she was appointed to a two-year term as the “token parent” on Oregon Gov. Bob Straub’s Task Force on Sexual Preference. In 1977 the Shepherds teamed with Chuck



Ann Shepherd

and Rita Knapp to found the Portland chapter of Parents of Gays, which later affiliated with the national PFLAG. “Because of the solidarity we have in our own family, we can be good representatives to both the parents and their children,” she said.

Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, and Ben & Jerry’s co-founder Ben Cohen, who launched the Move Our Money campaign to raise awareness about the U.S. government’s neglect of educational and social programs and wasteful military spending. She also has offered her American Sign Language interpreting skills to many speakers, including Green Party candidate Ralph Nader and President Clinton.

Hall’s final fund-raiser for BRO is the “Bites for Rights” campaign June 19, when more than 100 restaurants throughout the state will donate 15 percent of their gross proceeds from breakfast, lunch, dinner and dessert to the organization. Immediately afterward she’s hitting the road for Iowa, where she’ll serve as constituency director with the John Kerry for President campaign.

Carol Gabrielli

Carol Gabrielli is being recognized for her work with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps: Northwest, an organization sponsored by the Jesuits, a Catholic order of priests and brothers. She spent a year ministering to folks in the Portland metropolitan area, hoping to transform thinking and ways of acting. She reached out to young gay men and lesbians who walked the tenuous tightrope of wanting to serve but not wanting to out themselves if it meant risking their jobs or connections with other volunteers, the community or the organization.

Gabrielli worked to challenge the norms of the Catholic Church and the community in which the 128 volunteers would live. She also supported past members in their efforts to lead authentic lives and tell their stories.

Upon the JVC’s denying membership to a

Grand Marshal

This year’s grand marshal is the Sexual Minority Youth Recreation Center, a non-profit agency that provides a drop-in center for gay, lesbian, bi, trans, questioning and allied people 23 and younger.

People come to play pool, use computers, access resources, use the library, meet people, make art and just have fun. SMYRC provides leadership opportunities through the Youth Steering Committee, plays host to support groups such as Personal Deity Proxy and Trans Youth Group and offers an American Sign Language class in partnership with Deaf & Hearing Out Reach.

committed lesbian couple, Gabrielli began the arduous task of challenging, pushing and fighting the hypocrisy and discrimination of an organization she had defended and loved. She left last July and took supporters, funders, friends and the heart of the organization with her. They lost the most dedicated employee and their strongest, loudest spokesperson.

Sophia Lanza-Weil



Sophia Lanza-Weil

Sophia Lanza-Weil’s activism on gay, lesbian, bi, trans, queer and ally concerns at both the local and national level make her an honored member of our community.

The teen-ager started a Gay Straight Alliance at Franklin High School and kept it active and played a leadership role throughout her time as a student there. Earlier this year she served as Western regional student organizer for the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network’s Day of Silence Project and was instrumental in connecting students across nine states.

“It is incredibly important to be constantly pushing the message that harassment still exists for queer youth and their allies,” Lanza-Weil said. “Many people don’t realize that it still happens or that we face verbal and physical harassment every day because of our real/perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.”

“DOSP is also a unique project in that it reclaims silence. Everyone has been silent in the face of some sort of harassment. It’s very powerful for students to use that same oppressive silence to change their situations to get to a point that their silence is not necessary.”

“My own experience with being silent for a full nine hours is that it really makes a person think about what they do say. Because you can’t talk, you listen more closely. For me, it not only made the normal barrage of ‘that’s so gay’ stand out more, but it also made me wonder if I sounded like that to anyone. There are all kinds of closets we put people in, and my own silence gave me a chance to think about what I might be perpetuating through my actions/words in other areas.”

The SPIRIT OF PRIDE AWARDS will be presented 2:25 p.m. June 15 at the Unity Stage.

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Portico

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