

Rainbows will be blazing at Portland Pride 2003 as the Rose City Gay Freedom Band kicks off the parade under the direction of a new color guard and conductor.

"It's one of the first times in history, as far as I know," says color guard leader Robert Gorman of their participation in the parade. "We're only using tall flags, so we'll be pretty noticeable from anywhere."

For those of you who are lost, the color guard is that group of people with flags or batons who accompany a marching band. According to Gorman, the color guard, which has 10 members for its debut performance June 15, is focusing on creating a festive mood and getting the party started.

"Fun is the biggest key ingredient for us," he says. "We want to keep it going, even after Pride, so hopefully we'll inspire some people along the way."

The man in charge got involved with the band after spotting a blurb about it in an April edition of *Just Out*. "Having been involved in color guard—teaching it at a high school competitive level—it was right up my alley," says Gorman. "I'm excited to experience Portland's Pride."

And the color guard is only one new dimension of the band to take to the streets this year. The Pride parade also will be led by a new conductor.

A Cornell University graduate with a degree in music, Rice Majors is a true connoisseur of the art. In addition to having conducted a wide range of bands, choruses and orchestras during the past 12 years, he's always been an avid performer, having played with such groups as the Syracuse Opera, Syracuse Gay & Lesbian Chorus and Pink Swingers of London. "Music was always my best friend growing up,"

Renewing the music

Gay band introduces new color guard and (nearly) new conductor at Pride

BY COURTNEY PERKINS



Conductor Rice Majors leads the Rose City Gay Freedom Band in the Pride parade June 15

Majors says. "The piano was my best and loudest toy, and music has remained a primary way for me to connect with my emotions in a way that is both cathartic and aesthetically beautiful."

Originally from Oregon, Majors returned in 2001 to Portland, where he began playing tuba with the gay band. He finally tried his hand at conducting in the spring of 2002.

"I wanted to join the band as a member until I could see what kind of time commitment was

involved in conducting the band and how the personality dynamics of the band worked," he says. "The thing that I like most about being part of the band is that [it] is a confluence of two of the biggest parts of my life: being gay and loving music. I think the ability to come together with people you have two things in common with is really a marvelous thing."

The decade-old Rose City Gay Freedom Band is a nonprofit organization consisting of a marching, concert and swing band. It is open to all queers and supportive friends, and proceeds from performances go toward the management of the band or are donated to other designated

queer organizations.

Majors' short time as conductor has not been short-lived, and his influence on the band is apparent. In addition to jump-starting the idea for a color guard, he has pushed the band to make themselves heard.

"He's really been ambitious in exposing us to Portland and getting our name out there," says saxophon-

ist Mark Gano. "As a group we want to be both musically active in the community and active in bringing events to people."

Majors' commitment and pride are clear in his Web site statement: "Being involved in an organization like Rose City offers us a unique chance to reach out to our community. We are able to provide opportunities for musical as well as personal growth, both for people who play in the band as well as for the members of the audience. The positive effect we can have on the community is immense."

But for right now, the band is looking toward the more immediate future. "My favorite time is probably during Pride when we're playing and people are dancing in the streets," smiles Gano. "Seeing the joy that we bring—it's really rewarding." □

To learn more about the ROSE CITY GAY FREEDOM BAND call 503-790-2170 or visit www.rcgfb.org.

COURTNEY PERKINS is a Portland free-lance writer.

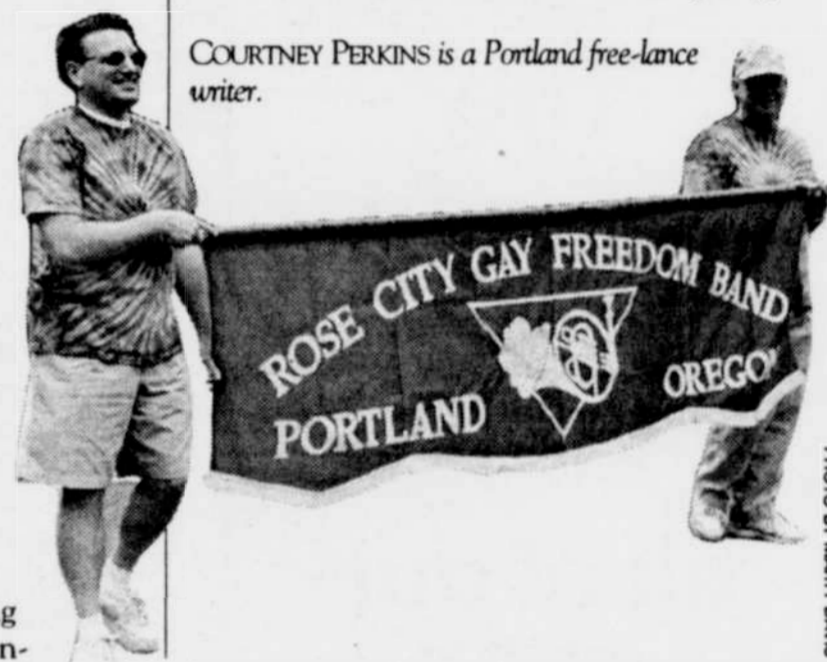


PHOTO BY MARTY DAVIS

WENTWORTH SUBARU

2003 SUBARU WRX

1@ \$4000 OFF MSRP



MSRP \$25,788 Stock # 35296

ENJOY GAY PRIDE

SUBARU

The Beauty of All-Wheel Drive®

WENTWORTH SUBARU

www.wentworthsubaru.com

*on approved credit • photo for illustration purposes only

107 SE Grand • 4 Blocks South of the Convention Center • 503-232-2000

Lesbian Gay Bisexual Queer
Questioning Transgender

2003
Out
with it!



What do YOU have to say?

What are our community's needs and strengths?

What are ways we can come together?



Now is the time to express your views!
Look for the survey in this issue of *Just Out*, fill it out and mail it in. Or fill it out online at:

www.outwithit2003.com

We want to hear from you!
A project of the LGBTQ Community Center Fund