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queer person who has been hurt by PGE's high rates, like so many citizens have. It hurts the queer community to stay with private power.

The employees also claimed they were loyal to PGE and not Enron. While I'm sure this is a sincere sentiment, Enron owns 100 percent of PGE stock, so they are being loyal to President Bush's dishonest criminal cronies whether they want to be or not—until we vote yes and they start working for the PUD instead, of course. About 14 percent of PGE income now goes to shareholders, so we'll have another 14 percent savings right there when there aren't any.

I don't know why these employees are being so loyal to a company that probably paid less than any of them in taxes for 2002. (PGE paid \$10.)

Contrary to the ad's claim, putting the utility in the hands of a locally elected board will not result in the loss of "family" wage jobs." In fact, who can deny that public employers treat their employees better than private employers these days? And there won't be huge executive salaries (like Ken Lay's) with public power, which will save us money. The propaganda-spewing Peggy Fowler had a salary of \$979,000 last year. The public utility board will also support queer rights, but for a lot less money. Unlike Fowler, they will also care about the rights of us queer people who don't happen to have high incomes.

PGE employee Suni Miani says, "We want our company back." But power belongs to all of us, so the power source should belong to our community, including Miani, not Enron or any other huge, right-wing corporation. Rates were lower before Enron took over PGE with a false promise to lower rates, and I, like so many queer and nonqueer citizens of this region, want my utility back.

TOM SOPPE
Portland

United we stand

TO THE EDITOR:

Congratulations to Timothy Krause on the excellent coverage of "Beyond the Veil" ["Lifting the Veil," Oct. 17]. The article, although succinct, stated the event in a concise, direct manner.

As a white male I like to believe I would have fought for the right of all citizens to vote. I like to think I would have stood side by side with Dorothy Day in 1917 as the 40 women protested outside the White House demanding their basic civil right to vote.

In 1963 I was in Washington, D.C., partic-

ipating in the tremendously stirring address by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as he insisted on equal, not separate, rights for the entire black community. I was moved, along with the 200,000 people attending, to truly believe we are indeed brothers and sisters in the inclusive unity of God's people. Yes, this white male, by the chances of birth, was called to a life of privilege. Nevertheless, I must believe, as a moral person, that I stand with my brothers and sisters and demand all civil justices on an equal basis for all people whether or not I personally benefit.

I continually grow in my admiration and profound respect for pastor Glenna Shepherd of Metropolitan Community Church of Portland as she courageously voices the demand for civil rights in all marriages. Her excellent speaking ability, coupled with her native intelligence and seemingly inexhaustible energy, allows her leadership to champion the demand for equal civil rights in marriage.

Listening to the well-prepared message by the Rev. Tara Wilkins of Ainsworth United Church of Christ on discrimination and the true calling of the church inspired all of us.

Krause indeed caught the main messages of this symposium. Thank you for the accurate and fine coverage.

GARY J. SPARKS
Metropolitan Community Church of Portland

Believe it or not

TO THE EDITOR:

As a skeptic, I read with interest your article on psychics Don Clarkson and Suzanne Deakins in the Oct. 17 issue of *Just Out* ["Color Me Read"].

Skeptics are by definition open to all sorts of ideas, provided they can move from the realm of what we want to be true to something that is true. Conversely, nonskeptics accept some things as true and others as false no matter what the evidence might show.

Right now the U.S. economy is in a slump, and I'm sure like most of us Clarkson and Deakins could use a bit of spare change. Fortunately for them, the James Randi Foundation is willing to give them \$1 million if they can demonstrate, even once, their psychic powers (www.randi.org/research). Any and all paranormal, spiritual or miraculous claims are candidates for the prize. Every issue of *Just Out* has page after page of potential winners, from the orthodox to the alternative religions to the spiritual advisers to the natural healers to the psychic consultants, etc. The applicants for the prize are the ones who define the test, so Randi won't be able to pull a fast one at the end if the

just asking

As *Sensory Perceptions* wraps up another memorable queer film festival, what do you feel were the best and worst of this year's selections? Why?



Tipping the Velvet is definitely the best of the best, and it rocks in every way that it can! (Wink.) Too bad that there wasn't any closed-captioning available for the film. Wouldn't mind to rent this film on DVD if it

was closed-captioned! Maybe closed-captioning for next year?

ELIZABETH "BOOTS" DAVIS
Portland

next issue

Do you feel the recent violent attacks on queers indicate the start of a violent backlash to our escalating fight for equality, or are these just examples of everyday prejudice? (Please see related items on Page 19.) Respond at www.justout.com. (Don't forget to include your name, city and daytime telephone number.)

supernatural event occurs.

One million dollars isn't chicken feed. One could invest it, donate it to charity or throw a fine party. Surely if billions of people will spend trillions of dollars around the world on religion and superstition, there must be something to it. So I invite any believer in the miraculous or supernatural to benefit from this remarkable opportunity.

TREVOR BLAKE
Portland

Step by step

TO THE EDITOR:

I am writing in response to the *Just Out* article of Oct. 17 titled "The Monster Among Us" about meth use in "Portland's gay community." As a queer, former longtime junkie and street prostitute, I have two issues to comment on.

First is the cover picture of someone's hands holding a lighter under a spoon. When I first saw it I said, "Oh, an article about heroin," because heroin and pills are the only drugs I

know of that are heated before injection. I have never heard of heating meth (or powder cocaine, which was my drug of choice), which should dissolve fully in the spoon when mixed with cold water. The stuff that doesn't dissolve is cut.

Second is the strong emphasis throughout the article on 12-step treatment programs as the only possible solution to drug addiction. I support anyone's right to be a part of 12-step and am happy for those who are helped, but I do not agree that it is the only way.

I used cocaine off and on for 20 years, including many long periods of daily use. During that time I experienced police brutality and was jailed and court-ordered into 12-step treatment programs many times. It never worked. In fact, I was harmed. For example, one drug treatment counselor drove me to a lake and had sex with me, and another threatened to "take me over his knee" during a "support group."

There were many requirements I didn't agree with in 12-step—for example, giving up my

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