



LOOKING BACK AT 2003 QUEER-VIEW MIRROR

WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

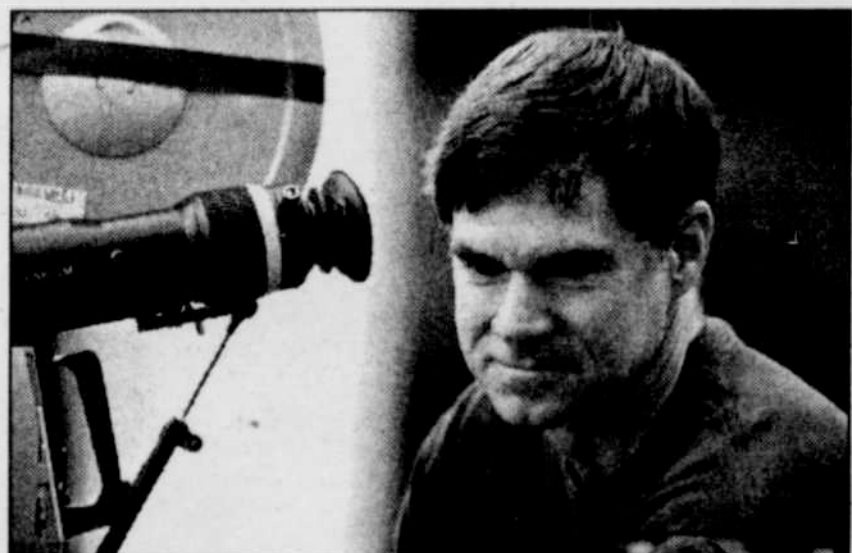
PORTLAND QUEERS
HAD THEIR SHARE
OF NOTABLE AFFAIRS
COMPILED BY TIMOTHY KRAUSE

The year began on a sad note with Portlanders mourning the loss of Ann Shepherd, who died of heart disease Jan. 4 at the age of 84. For more than a quarter-century, she served as mother figure to countless young people desperately seeking support during their coming-out process. She and husband Bill founded Portland's chapter of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

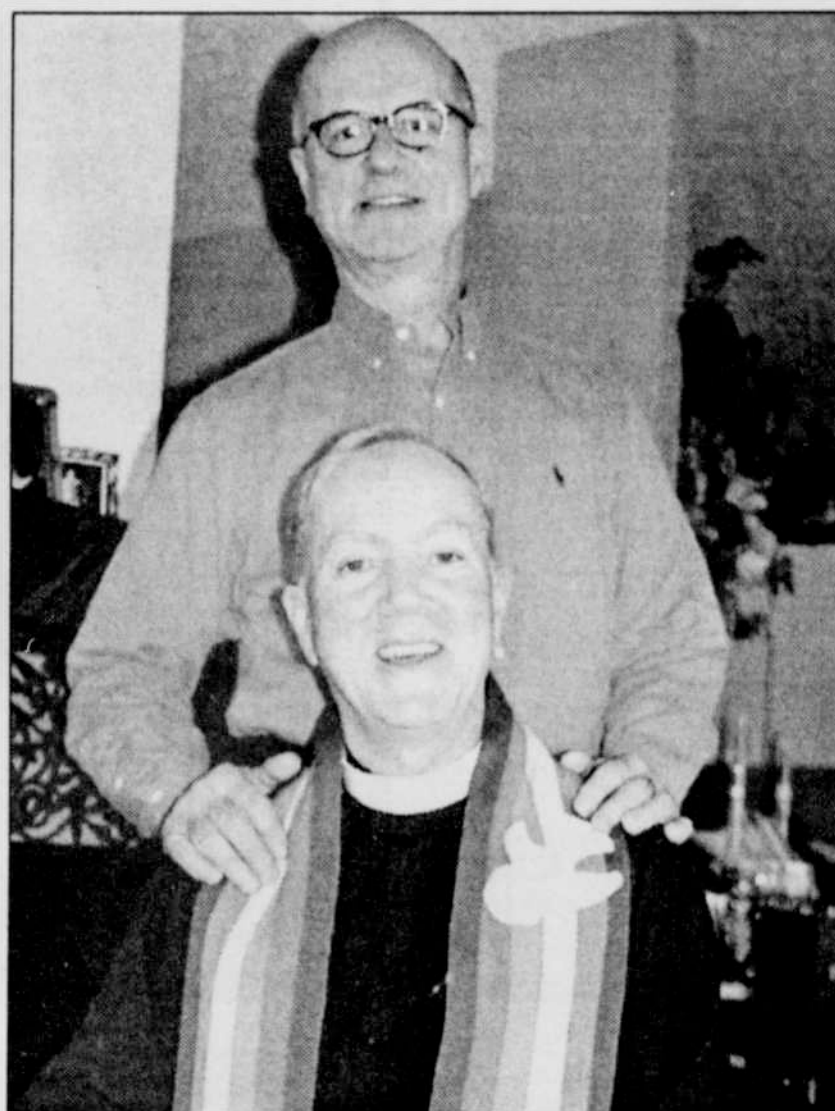
Health officials monitoring sexually transmitted disease rates have been worried that barebacking is contributing to a rise in syphilis among men who have sex with men, a stat seen as a predictor of HIV rates. In 2002, Multnomah County syphilis rates quadrupled compared to the preceding year and continued to rise in 2003, causing the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in June to send representatives to meet with health officials and collaborative partners such as Cascade AIDS Project.

Because of Oregon's fiscal woes, the Sexual Minority Youth Resource Center has been on the financial rocks, but fund raising throughout the year demonstrated the community's commitment in preserving an organization that provides a place for queer and questioning kids. Though hours were cut by half temporarily, SMYRC now has in place its first-ever advisory board and annual fund development plan.

In March, the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group presented the Portland City Council findings from a volunteer-organized survey to identify community priorities for future redevelopment of the historic downtown neighborhood that is home to many gay bars and businesses. No further action has been taken.



Springtime brought director Gus Van Sant (above) an unusual bouquet of prizes in 2003—a pair of Cannes Film Festival awards for best director and best film for *Elephant*, while fellow Portland filmmaker Todd Haynes (inset) garnered Oscar and Golden Globe nominations among the awards for his screenplay of *Far from Heaven*.



On Jan. 11, the Rev. Dennis J. Parker (pictured here with partner Michael Sagun) became the first openly gay man to be ordained by the Oregon Diocese of the Episcopal Church. Since then, he has been serving as an uncompensated "assisting priest" at Lake Oswego's Christ Church while coordinating the HIV/AIDS Resource Program within Legacy Healthcare System. He continues to search for full-time parish ministry work, trying to balance his calling with the challenges of that call. Parker believes, for example, that his openness about his sexuality may be causing others, especially those strongly opposed to queer clergy, to exclude him from the church's larger dialogue that directly affects him.

Earlier this year, Portland State University folks began producing *S/He Shows*, a documentary featuring longtime drag diva Darcelle (aka Walter Cole). In honor of her community service, Darcelle received the "Spirit of Portland" award from Mayor Vera Katz in December.

The United Way of the Columbia-Willamette board unanimously endorsed a new policy in April requiring funded partners to have a comprehensive nondiscrimination policy or certification of nondiscrimination practices in place to receive financial support. The revised rule bans bias based on sexual orientation, among other things, which means the Boy Scouts of America's Cascade-Pacific Council risks losing its funding.

A group of trans activists conducted a symposium on gender identity for Salem legislators in May, making news for Basic Rights Oregon's Trans Advisory Group and kicking off other trans-related outreach around the state. BRO executive director Roey Thorpe said that thanks to a grant from the Pride Foundation, a half-dozen more "Trans 101" presentations are planned for next year, and a "Trans 201" version is in the works.

A cross section of sexual minority leaders led a new grassroots effort to test the waters for a queer community center. A nonprofit organization was created, several public forums were held, and an extensive survey was conducted over the course of the summer. Data supported the cause, but the organization has yet to deliver a planned feasibility study to confirm logistical and financial support.

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HAVING A SAY

JUST OUT PUTS IN WRITING
SOME OF THE YEAR'S
MOST MEMORABLE QUOTES

COMPILED BY REX WOCKNER

"War sucks big time. Don't let yourself ever be talked into having one waged in the name of your freedom. Somehow when the bombs start dropping or you hear the sound of machine guns at the end of your street you don't think about your 'imminent liberation' anymore."

—Gay Iraqi blogger Salam Pax in his post-war commentaries at dearraed.blogspot.com.

"You look like a fag. You dress like a fag. You are a fag."

—Leona Helmsley to former Park Lane Hotel manager Charles Bell before she fired him in February 2001, according to testimony in his gay discrimination case, Jan. 14. A jury ordered the hotel queen, who denied making the statements, to pay him \$11 million.



Tab Hunter and Anthony Perkins on a "double date"

"I didn't flaunt things. I know when Tony and I went to the movies, he would say, 'Let's go in disguise.' We always wore baseball caps. Or he'd say: 'You go at a certain time. I'll go later.' I knew people were talking. I didn't like that."

—1950s screen idol Tab Hunter on his years-long gay relationship with actor Anthony Perkins, to *The New York Times*, Sept. 9.



"Actors have a certain obligation to their public. For instance, playing leading men, well, don't mess with that image. A lot of people thought they were in love with me, you know, women all over the place. They were really in love with an image, and I didn't want to mess with that image."

—Newly out actor Richard Chamberlain (*Dr. Kildare*), 69, to AP Radio, June 5.

"Don't bother me with that crap. Just mind your own fucking business!"

—Actor Kevin Spacey when asked during an interview, "How do you feel about those stories about you being gay?", according to *The Toronto Star*, Feb. 11.

"Some people said, 'It's brave of you to play a gay man.' And I think that's very dated. Don't you?"

—Actor Hugh Jackman on playing gay songsmith Peter Allen in the Broadway musical *The Boy from Oz*, to *The Advocate*, Sept. 16.



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