

# NORTHWEST newsbriefs

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say that they feel like we kind of moved it away from the center of town, but it's hard to balance everybody's needs," he says. "We heard more complaints about the length of the parade and the gaps in between. It can always be moved to different places in future years."

In addition, this year's festival will only feature one stage instead of the usual two.

"Mainly that was an economical, financial thing," Dressman told *Just Out*. "To have two stages you have to have two sound systems...more volunteers. We're kind of historically short on volunteers."

In addition, Pride Northwest hopes the single stage will lead to an improvement in the caliber of performers. Dressman predicts this year's headliner, 1970s cover band Hit Explosion, will be a big success. "It's the 35th anniversary of the Stonewall rebellion...so it's like a little retro kind of theme," he says.

The suggested donation is also changing—from \$3 to \$5. However, nobody will be turned away for lack of funds.

The Pride Festival takes place from noon to 11 p.m. June 19 and from noon to 6 p.m. June 20 at Waterfront Park. The Pride Parade steps off at 11:15 a.m. June 20.

For more information call 503-295-9788 or visit [www.pridenw.org](http://www.pridenw.org).

## IDAHO SUPREME COURT HEARS CUSTODY CASE

The Idaho Supreme Court held oral argument May 3 in McGriff vs. McGriff, a case



Portland's Pride Parade no longer will cut through the heart of downtown

in which a father lost joint legal and physical custody of his two children because of his sexual orientation. It is one of the first state supreme court custody lawsuits involving a gay or lesbian parent since the U.S. Supreme Court struck down sodomy statutes with the Lawrence vs. Texas decision last June.

Theron McGriff had been the primary caretaker of the children. After the divorce, which was initiated by his ex-wife, the parties agreed to share custody.

This arrangement continued until McGriff became involved with a male partner, at which point his former wife petitioned for and received sole custody based on her argument that the

children would be harmed by living with a gay father. To add insult to injury, the trial court also held that he can only have visitation with his kids if he does not live with his partner.

"I am encouraged by the court's thorough questioning," said Shannon Minter, legal director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, which is co-counsel in the case. "Idaho courts have a long history of holding that custody decisions cannot be premised on bias. I am confident they will apply that rule in this case as well."

A decision is expected within the next six months. "We are very optimistic that the court will make the right decision for our family," McGriff said.

## COURT: NONBIOLOGICAL MOM CAN SEEK VISITATION

The American Civil Liberties Union praised the Washington Court of Appeals on May 4 for allowing a woman the right to seek visitation with her child after her relationship with the biological mother ended.

"This is wonderful news for gay parents and their children. The court recognized that being a parent is not just about blood ties," attorney Leslie Cooper said. "When two people who have chosen to raise a child together break up, the children involved should not be denied the love and support of a parent simply because that parent doesn't have a biological connection."

Sue Ellen Carvin lived with another woman in a marriagelike relationship for 12 years. During that time they decided to have a child together, with her partner giving birth to their daughter, L.B.

Carvin stayed at home serving as L.B.'s primary caregiver, and their child called her "Mama." Carvin bathed, dressed, fed, disciplined, consoled and provided financial support for her child.

When L.B. was almost 6, the couple separated. Carvin's ex-partner eventually cut off all contact between her and the child.

The court's decision reverses a lower ruling, which held that Carvin could not petition for visitation with her child. The appeals court held that where an adult assumes the obligations of parenthood with the consent of the biological parent and has established a parental relationship with the child, she is a "de facto parent" and may seek visitation. The court sent the case back to the trial court to give Carvin the opportunity to prove she was a de facto parent. **JM**

Compiled by JIM RADOSTA and MEG DALY

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