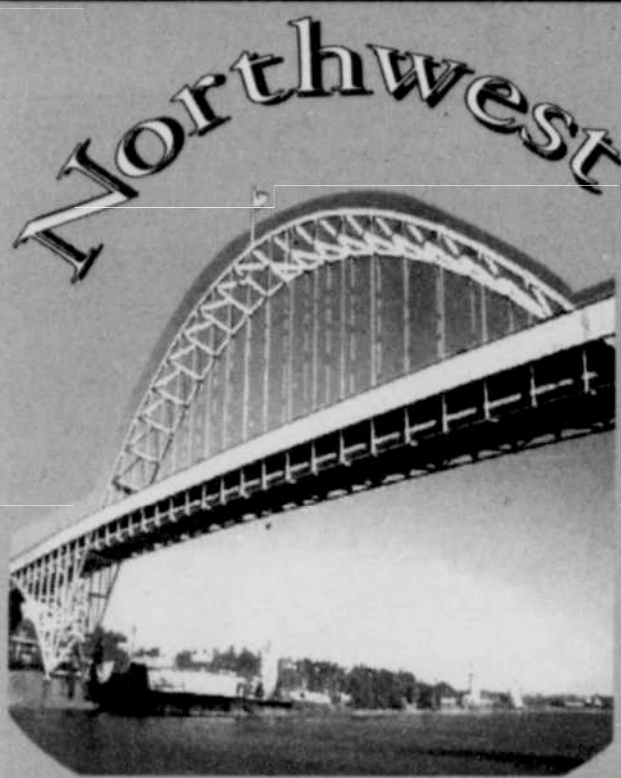


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NORTHWEST news

HATS OFF!

Pride Northwest salutes outstanding achievements

by Jim Radosta

This year's Spirit of Pride Awards mark some momentous occasions for Portland's queer community.

Pride Northwest created a special Champions of Pride Award to honor the Multnomah County commissioners whose efforts led to the end of discrimination against same-sex couples in the issuance of marriage licenses. Basic Rights Oregon also has been recognized for spearheading the history-making decision.

While 2004 saw the beginning of marriage equality in Portland, it also will mark the end of an era when Spirit of Pride Award winner Peacock in the Park bids farewell June 27 after 18 years of fun in the sun. In addition, Rose Empress XXXIII Patti O'Dora is being honored for her years of community service.

Diane Linn, Maria Rojo de Steffey, Serena Cruz and Lisa Naito



From left, Maria Rojo de Steffey, Diane Linn, Serena Cruz and Lisa Naito are this year's Champions of Pride for legalizing same-sex marriage in Multnomah County

Multnomah County Chair Diane Linn and Commissioners Maria Rojo de Steffey, Serena Cruz and Lisa Naito put their political careers on the line in order to uphold the Oregon Constitution and allow same-sex couples to obtain marriage licenses. Despite mounting political pressure and a nasty recall effort, they have stood by their decision.

"It is inspiring to know that these elected officials understand the importance of protecting the rights of all members of the community," Pride Northwest said. "This was a historic event, and if not for [these leaders], it would not have been possible."

Basic Rights Oregon

Basic Rights Oregon helped make marriage equality possible for more than

3,000 couples this year. In addition, its work with the Trans Advisory Group, the Youth Action Caucus and the Day of Silence/Night of Noise has educated hundreds of people about the importance of recognizing gender diversity.

"It has been a banner year for BRO," Pride Northwest said, "and the hard work of executive director Roey Thorpe and the BRO staff has helped this organization soar in the role it plays in our community."

Peacock in the Park

Since 1987, this yearly extravaganza has served as both a tribute to the late Lady Elaine Peacock and the largest fund-raiser for the Audria M. Edwards Scholarship Fund, which has awarded more than \$118,000 to students who are queer or who have a gay, lesbian, bi or trans parent. Because expenses have grown too much through the years to make the event profitable, Peacock in the Park will hang up its boa June 27 at Washington Park Amphitheater.

"This event brings our community together in a way that no other event does," Pride Northwest said. "It's a pep rally, party and a statement all in one!"



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