



Gender benders



PHOTO BY CHELSEA FINE

PFLAG parents



The Rev. Glenna Shepherd of Metropolitan Community Church of Portland and her partner, the Rev. Kermie Wohlenhaus

# Our Big Fat Queer Celebration

Revelers chime in on what floated their boat this year

by Meg Daly • Photos by Marty Davis

**Q**ueers have arrived! At the mainstream table, that is. And our Portland Pride 2004 celebration showed it, with a toned-down air of community first, raunchy sex second...or, rather, barely there.

Or was it?

For some, the lighthearted, upstanding-citizen feel of Pride was a welcome development.

"It seemed more light this year, more like a true celebration...like we were really celebrating the accomplishments of 2004 and all the people who have done all this work," said Richard Colombo, a musician and gay member of Portland Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

*Confessions of a Mormon Boy* star Stephen Fales went even further, saying: "Having been to Pride events around the country where it seems to be more about the parties and seeing the porn stars as the marshals of the parade—got to have RentBoy.com!—it was refreshing to see the spiritual and political community outshine all the sex."

Not everyone was so pious, however. Stacy Bias, creator of Fat-GirlSpeaks and owner of TechnoDyke.com, was all too happy to recount: "Fetish diva Midori walked past my booth in the most amazing getup...a skin-tight, fire-red latex gown with black flames licking up from toes to nose. God damn! I lost track of what I was saying to my customer and had to recount change!"

Speaking of Midori, *Just Out* Arts and Culture Editor Lisa Bradshaw commented,

"Midori's generalized 10-minute speech was a huge disappointment! Whereas Drago's was interesting and informative, and he had the guts to take shots at the Human Rights Campaign and

the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force for their lack of effort around interpreters."

Trans activist Llewyn Máire McCobb also appreciated the more radical elements in the air. "The most extraordinary aspect of Pride this year was the presence of genderqueers and Pink Bloc activists sharing their views on the politics of exclusivist capitalism that now directly affects Pride," said McCobb.

Back in the more mainstream limelight, Pride celebrated various champions of queers in city and county government. Writer and editor Kathy Belge's boundless enthusiasm for Multnomah County Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey earned her a full-on kiss. "[Rojo] came by in the cute convertible with Serena Cruz and Lisa Naito," said Belge. "After cheering as loudly as I could for these three amazing women, I snapped a photo and then Maria grabbed my arm, pulled me to her and planted one big smack on my lips!"

Indeed, giddiness was in the air. Gwenn A. Baldwin, co-chairperson of the LGBTQ Community Center Fund, noticed it, too. She said: "People were so enthusiastic about everything—the parade, the weather, the victories in marriage and the defeat of the recalls. It was as if we couldn't wipe the grins off our faces all weekend."

Baldwin's community center co-hort David Martinez, also a staff member with Rojo (you know how that six degrees of queer separation works), said that marching with Poder Latino de Oregon was his favorite part of Pride. "¡Había música increíble, colores brillantes, y bailables! We had incredible

Who loves ya, baby?



Dykes on bikes

On the cover, clockwise from left: Meesha Peru, the original Ms. Gay Latina; keynote speakers Drago and Midori; a wedding kiss; Aaron Hornstein and Tim Bias on a bronco ride