

Stick a fork in it

Federal Marriage Amendment dies, but without the help of Kerry and Edwards

The Federal Marriage Amendment is dead. By a vote of 48-50 the U.S. Senate defeated a procedural vote and ended the debate. Only two senators failed to vote. These were Sens. John Kerry, D-Mass., and John Edwards, D-N.C. Both senators have stated repeatedly that they are against the amendment, but at the same time neither supports same-sex marriage. It's another bounce-back to states' rights. But is it also a cop-out? Why didn't they vote? Is this as good as it's going to get for us this presidential election? Is this good enough? How do you feel about Kerry and Edwards skipping the vote on the amendment? Were they running scared from an important civil rights issue, or were they playing it safe to ensure victory in November? Does this work for you?

Perhaps the knowledge that the amendment was going to fail sent the Bush administration into uncharted territory for overstepping authority. The prez and his cohort, Tom Ridge (always sounds like a porn star name to me) are now concerned that potential terrorist attacks will occur on or about Election Day and, gasp, possibly force delay of the presidential election. My guess is they'd like to delay it for about four more years. Failing to create national turmoil over the threat of same-sex marriage brings the administration to the quickly getting-old-now terrorist threat scenario. Facing his own personal crisis in job security, the president and Ridge once again trot out their ludicrous color-coded warning system. Will they add a new color level to the chart? What exactly is the color of fear?

Even as the federal amendment seemingly fails, Republicans in Congress swear they'll continue to fight on. The new goal will be to initiate legislation limiting the power of federal courts. The Marriage Protection Act would block or limit the ability of courts to interpret the application of the federal Defense of Marriage Act. In viewing what appears to be the beginning of a long and competitive pissing contest, it should be noted that in these events it not always the biggest dicks that win. (And we know who the big dicks are.) As every size queen has to eventually realize, stamina and performance are ultimately the tools of real winners. We have the will, we have the wherewithal. We will prevail.

Back here at home, readers of the July 13 *Oregonian* found a full-page ad from the Human Rights Campaign urging U.S. Sen. Gordon Smith, R-Ore., not to vote for the Federal Marriage Amendment. Sadly, he did not receive his copy of the paper in time to change his vote in favor of the amendment. HRC urged this "champion of gay rights" not to aid such a political prank. Maybe at the next HRC dinner in Portland they'll ask for their damn award back. Giving it to him in the first place was the real political prank.

Victory was proclaimed in the Multnomah County vs. state of Ore-

gon battle when it was ruled that the state has to register the initial 3,000-plus same-sex marriages that occurred in Multnomah County. The Oregon Court of Appeals denied the state's request for a stay of the portion of the circuit court decision that required the state to register those marriages. The court had previously granted the state a temporary stay while it considered the merits of the state's request for a stay pending appeal. The temporary stay is no longer in effect. The announcement was accompanied by much grumbling and threats of yet more appeals from the state. The state says that it will do this but that it's still not going to validate the licenses. Pout, whine, piss. (See earlier remarks about who wins pissing contests).

Salem hath no fury like an ally scorned.

Moving on to something other than gay marriage, I'd like to initiate a ruling of my own. No more dogs at Gay Pride. Sorry, folks, it's just getting out of hand. Animals are not wardrobe accessories, animals are not toys. They are not meant to make you look cool. They're not meant to make you look hip, whatever the hell that means. Animals are not to be worn in packs, bags or purses.

No more dogs at Gay Pride. Sorry, folks, it's just getting out of hand. Animals are not wardrobe accessories, animals are not toys. They are not meant to make you look cool.

They're not to be drug about on hot pavement, denied water and shade nor forced to fend for themselves in a sea of trampling legs and feet. And please don't try and tell me that your dog, cat, ferret, lizard, bird or whatever likes it. It just ain't so. And even if your animal is one of the behemoths that might actually possess the appropriate survival skills to make it through Gay Pride, please consider that they still pose a threat to other dogs and other people. Big, hot, tired, thirsty, territorial dogs lunge and snarl at each other all day long. ALL DAY LONG. These dogs are snapping and aiming for prey at the

same physical level as many small children. How long before some child has the misfortune of being directly in the path of two 150-pound dogs whose anxiety level has them eager to rip out the other's throat? How cool are you going to feel when that happens?

And while I'm on the topic, what is humane about the Oregon Humane Society dragging those dogs the length of the parade route each year. Good grief. "Here, puppy, you've been lost, abandoned, abused, beaten, frightened and confused, but hey, good news, you're going to a parade, yeah!" I absolutely know and believe in the heartfelt good intentions of the Humane Society, but please, put the dogs in wagons, wheelbarrows, pickups, convertibles, anything—please don't drag them through the streets again in the heat.

And now, about bringing all those kids to Pride—ah, just kidding. Down, parents, down!

Just Out is on vacation next week. We'll be back Aug. 6 with complete details on what the newly named Equality in Oregon campaign will be needing from you. ☐

just out

The IN publication for the OUT population

FOUNDED 1983 • JAY BROWN AND RENÉE LACHANCE

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Subscriptions are \$22.50 for 12 issues. First Class (in an envelope) is \$40 for 12 issues.

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REFLECTIONS

5 years ago in ...



- Even weeks before it was slated to air, *It's Elementary* was evoking reactions. "We probably heard from a couple hundred people who opposed the airing of the documentary," assesses Susan Thomas, director of corporate communications for Oregon Public Broadcasting. The 60-minute documentary shows various classroom discussions about gay and lesbian diversity in four elementary and middle schools around the country.

- Cascade AIDS Project's popular Neighborhood MenTalk program, which had grown to 14 groups, has been sliced big time. It is being scaled back to six groups.

- In June, the Portland Area Business Association held annual elections for officers and board of directors positions. PABA's new president is Mark Miller, president of Advanced Impressions. Joining him in the task of rejuvenation will be vice president Linda Duchek and secretary Larry Folz. Nancy Williams signed on to take over responsibilities as treasurer. Rounding out the board are Louis Santiago, Matthew Ellis,

Barry Dowsett, Richard Matthews, Eric Brown and Elizabeth Adels.

- The first issue of *Northwest Native* recently hit the stands. Publisher and editor Dennis Cimalki describes it as "the publication for men and by men—from the male point of view."

- Galloway and Luckett, Connie Cohen, Pam and Maggie, Vivian's Keeper, Kathryn Cunningham and others perform July 24 at a benefit concert to raise money for an accessibility ramp at It's My Pleasure.

- Love Makes a Family hosts a community meeting July 25 to discuss "Talking About Same-Sex Marriage." Learn how to organize now against House Joint Resolution 4, which defines marriage as between one man and one woman, and create a long-term strategy to educate voters on same-sex marriage.

- Ashland's gay and lesbian center settles into a new home. The idea for a Portland center is on the back burner.

- Missouri is the first state to enact a hate crimes law this year, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force reports. Gov. Mel Carnahan signed the bill into law July 1.

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