

Out With It!



by Lisa Bradshaw

Straining the notion of "team player"

As news of Gay Games VII has filtered through during the past few months, I've gotten more and more pissed off at Montreal.

Some background: Every four years, a city is chosen from several applicants to host the weeklong Gay Games, which bring in about 14,000 athletes, artists and plain old enthusiasts. There are more than 30 competitive events and a huge arts and culture festival. Parties, parades, performances, circus acts, pageantry. It's like the Olympics but with ballroom dancing queens and figure skaters who can actually be out.

Gay Games VI in 2002 was held in Sydney, Australia, and, by all reports, was a well-run, amazingly successful week. For Gay Games VII in July 2006, beautiful Montreal, Canada, was chosen back in 2001. Late last year, two years into the planning process, Montreal's organizing team, according to Federation of Gay Games officials, "walked away from the negotiating table" because of a refusal to scale the event (which regularly runs in the red) down. The Montreal committee argued it has budgeted for a larger number of participants.

Rather than adhere to the Gay Games' consistent policy to keep the event at 12,000 active participants, Montreal not only bailed but is going ahead with its own queer sports and cultural festival, now dubbed OutGames, scheduled for August 2006. The federation moved the Gay Games to Chicago.

How dare Montreal be honored with hosting the only international queer event of such magnitude and blow it off. How dare they win such a rigorous application process only to not live up to the bargain. They threw a wrench into the staging of an event that queers around the world plan for and work toward for years—and spend thousands of dollars attending.

I decided to talk to a few members of Team Oregon. (Unlike me, they actually go to the Gay Games.) And all three I spoke to are whistling a different tune. Something like "O Canada."

"The last three or four Gay Games have ended in the red; they've lost millions of dollars," says Lorna Wolvin of Rogue River, a volleyball player who has been to three Gay Games. "If the federation is so hotshot, what the hell are they doing wrong? ... They should let Montreal see if they can do it better."

This is an especially interesting perspective considering it's been bantered about that Montreal was chosen to host Gay Games VII because its organizing team waved a big check, literally, at the federation during its annual meeting in 2001 before the vote on which city would host in 2006.

So then when Montreal tried to spend all that money, including resources from the city government, which was 100 percent behind the Games, the federation got nervous and balked.

"I feel the Federation of Gay Games was wrong—that they should have worked harder with Montreal to work out their differences," says Team Oregon treasurer and Portland swimmer Chris Gaarder. Montreal paid a lot of licensing fees up front and had procured sponsorships very early, Gaarder adds. "Montreal really wanted to try some new things to have the Games make some money for a change."

Whether that would have been the case is difficult to say, particularly as they wanted to increase attendance. Still, many Team Oregon members are breaking from the Gay Games to visit our neighbors to the north, particularly as so much excitement has been worked up around it. "I'm leaning toward Montreal," notes Gaarder. "I've been looking forward to it for two years."

It's difficult, after hearing from so many who have a grudge against the somewhat insular federation (doesn't that sound like *Star Trek*?) to know whom to side with. But Montreal's OutGames is planning to run again in 2009 and then every four years after that. Maybe a little competition will make the Federation of Gay Games take a bit more notice of its critics. **J**



Relive the glory July 19 on Channel 23

Relive Pride again and again and again

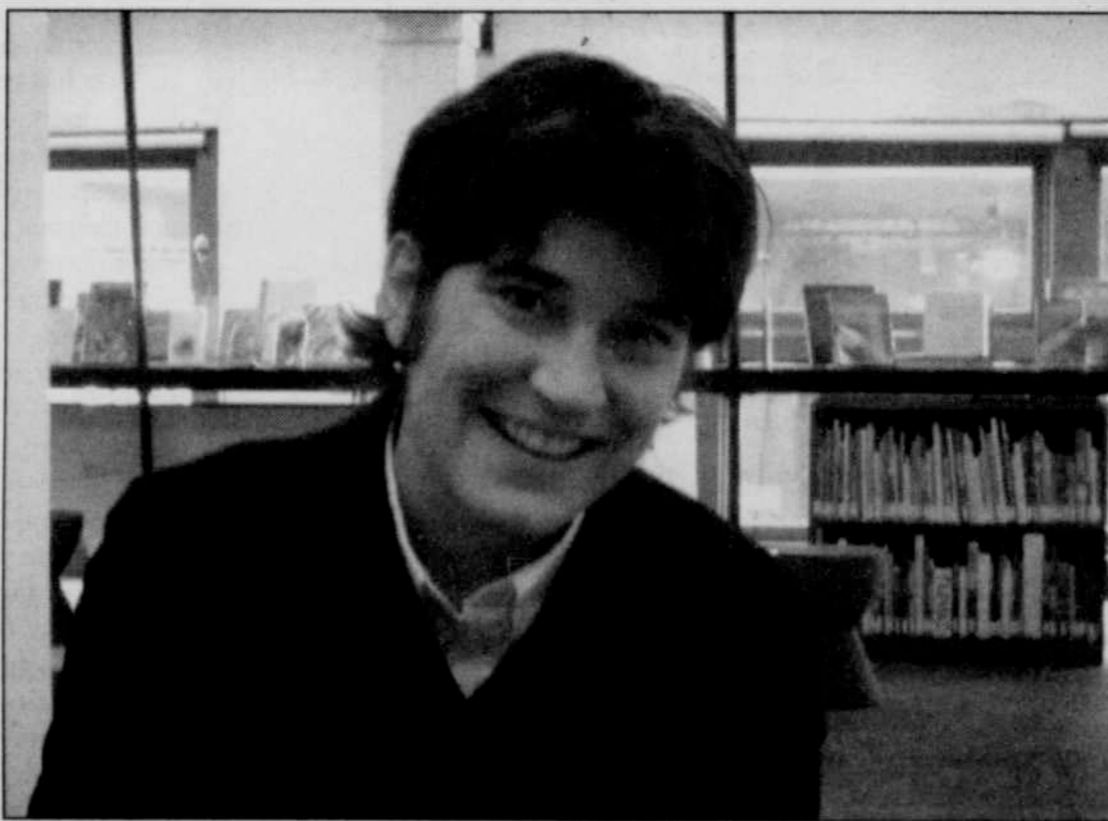
For the past month, a video of *Portland Pride 2004* has aired on cable access Channel 23. The last planned airing is 11 p.m. July 19. If you miss it, you can purchase a copy of the video, which contains two hours of coverage of the June 20 parade and includes interviews with attendees and parade participants. Call 503-288-1515.

Queer eye for the arts world

All things just keep getting better for Portland queer artist and curator Kristy Edmunds. On Sept. 30 she will receive the prestigious *Bonnie Bronson Fellowship Award*, which is given annually to an artist who has made important contributions to Northwest arts. The fellowship was founded in 1991 in honor of a Portland sculptor who died in a 1990 climbing accident.

Perhaps best known as the mastermind behind the internationally respected *Portland Institute for Contemporary Art*, Edmunds is a talented artist in her own right. Originally trained in filmmaking and theater, her work has evolved to include site-based installations, choreography and printmaking. She is represented by Elizabeth Leach Gallery in Portland.

Next year, Edmunds will do a stint as artistic director for the *Melbourne International Arts Festival* in Australia. "This is a wonderful match between an artist at the forefront of the international arts arena and our own outstanding international arts festival," says Australia's Victorian minister for the arts, Mary Delahunty.



PICA director Kristy Edmunds will be awarded the Bonnie Bronson Fellowship at a reception in September

Edmunds has special ties to the land Down Under; her partner, choreographer and dancer *Roz Warby*, is an Aussie. Having spent the summer in Australia, the couple will return to Portland in September—with their new baby.

Edmunds will attend a public presentation of the *Bronson Fellowship* on Sept. 30 at Reed College's Kaul Auditorium. Details to be announced.

Nothin' but JUNK

Devon Devine is bringing *JUNK: An Evening of Queer Underground Cinema* to Portland's Disjecta Aug. 4.

The San Francisco media artist is one of those kind of guys with his hand into everything: makes little movies, stars in little movies, organizes sex and gender conferences, performs in drag (as "Slutty Kinney," which I can't believe no one ever thought of before).

The festival is made up of a bunch of rather cutting-edge queer shorts from all over the country with titles such as "Ghost Boobs," "A Nightmare on Castro Street," "A Tale of Two Plushies" (starring Devine

himself), "Hip Hop Homos" and "Carve," which explores body cutting as an artistic practice.

Touring all over the United States with stops in Canada and Europe, too, the films are made up of "no-budget, campy, underground, independent, fagalicious, genderfuck, pro-fattie, furry and freaky images," says Devine. "We want to give representation...to radical subcultures. This includes people of color, trans, working class, fatties and anyone else who doesn't fit into a box."

Screenings begin at 8 p.m., and \$6 gets you into the multi-use space at 120 N.E. Russell St.

Two queers run for American Candidate

All stoked for the fall election? Showtime is counting on that for the success of its new reality show *American Candidate*.

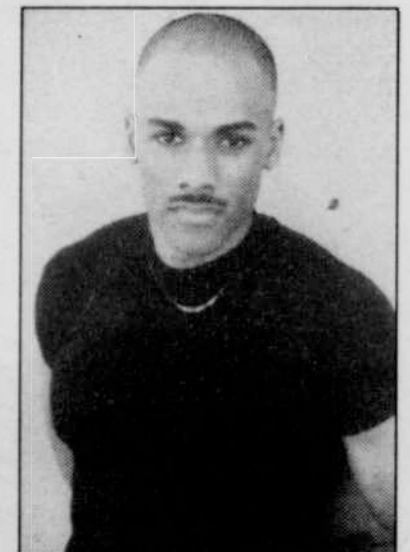
This summer 12 contestants "from all walks of life," including two queers, are competing to be the "people's choice" of a presidential nominee. The show premieres in September, and the winner will receive \$200,000, but Showtime notes whether the winner actually runs for president is up to him or her.

Keith Boykin, who worked in the Clinton White House as director of special media, is one of the 12 finalists chosen from hundreds of entries. His partner, Nathan Williams, will serve as his campaign manager, making them the first gay black couple on a reality series.

The other gay candidate is **Chrissy Gephardt**, daughter of Congressman Dick Gephardt (who, as you might recall, failed in his recent presidential bid). The younger Gephardt was a mental health social worker in Washington, D.C., before joining her dad's campaign last year.

Both candidates are running as Democrats, and both have a focus on supporting the welfare program, avoiding privatizing Social Security and providing health care for all Americans.

Just Out wishes them both the best of luck because there's nothing more fun than watching an even more transparent campaign than either of the real presidential candidates. **J**



Former Clinton staffer Keith Boykin is featured in Showtime's *American Candidate*

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