

DIVERSIONS

Out With It!

by Lisa Bradshaw

It's a mad, mad, mad, mad dog

Every time you pee at the Egyptian Club, you have Jae Larsen to thank. Well, and probably some dyke plumber, but it was Jae Larsen who started the Mad Dogs, and it was the Mad Dogs who organized the ceramic tile fund-raiser a few years back.

Would-be artists showed up in droves to paint their own ceramic tile, which Larsen's company, Mad Dog Construction, glazed, fired and plastered to the restroom walls.

It was one of the Rose City Softball Association team's "8 million and 12" fund-raisers, laughs Larsen, who, along with the rest of the reigning champs of the Women's Alternative Division, has retired the Mad Dog name this year.

"I could have never dreamed 10 years ago when it started that it would have been such an incredibly wonderful part of my life," says Larsen, who started the team during the softball association's inaugural season in 1995. The Mad Dogs are the only women's team left from that first year and have been the women's division champions six times.

The team has also gone to the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance's World Series every year and, wouldn't you know it, won the coveted Sue Mahron Spirit of Excellence Award this year.

"They gave a very nice speech about the history of the Mad Dogs and what an integral part of the World Series we've been over the last decade," Larsen says. "That, to me, was a really awesome recognition for something we've tried over the years—to not only be a competitive softball team, but to be the kind of team that really reveres sportsmanship...playing at your best and encouraging other women to succeed."

And to Larsen, that success isn't just about playing a game, it's about becoming an integral part of their community—whether it's working on a phone bank during some anti-gay ballot measure campaign or for Friends of Trees or Esther's Pantry or Habitat for Humanity. "We created an amazing legacy of women becoming empowered not only on the softball field but off...and a spirit of family and just an incredible network of women who over the years have come together in extraordinary ways."

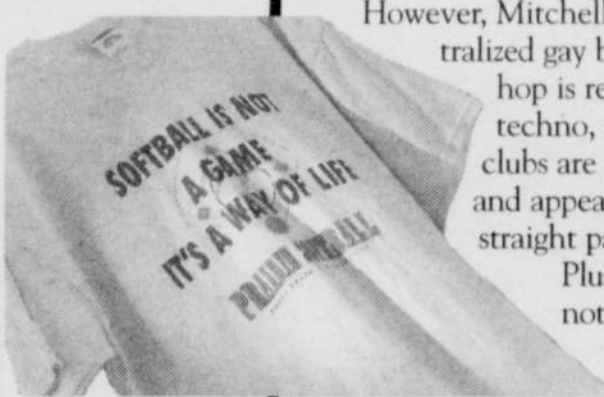
So why give all that up? Because Larsen is ready to move on to other things. Organizing and coaching the team (she's also a pitcher) takes an "enormous" amount of energy, she says.

And, incredibly, the rest of the team refused to go on without her. "They basically said that if I wasn't going to be a part of it that it wasn't going to be the Mad Dogs."

But Larsen contends the team is going out on top and that nothing makes her happier than passing the torch to other women and other teams.

"It was a vision I had, and I worked very hard to play it out.... I look forward to seeing what this group of women that continues to play comes up with. It will be their own thing that they get to put their own thumbprint on. That's really an important part of the process—that you get to create your own vision." **J**

PHOTO BY MARTY DAVIS



Panorama, we hardly knew ye

It's like 2001 all over again.

That cavernous home of gay male booty-shaking Panorama has closed. Again. This time it will stay shut.

Or at least so says Ron Mitchell, who manages a string of downtown Stark Street clubs and restaurants, including Boxxes, Red Cap Garage, Aura and the Fez Ballroom.

Mitchell says clientele was dwindling at Panorama, which was sold to new owners in July 2001. After a brief closing, club managers were asked back again to their original home to continue as a fixture in the gay night life mecca that is the Burnside Triangle.

However, Mitchell says, "The day of centralized gay bars is changing." Hip-

hop is replacing house and techno, and many smaller clubs are playing a mix of music and appealing to both queer and straight patrons.

Plus, says Mitchell, "there's not as much expendable income" in the gay community as there

was 10 years ago. Panorama found itself treading water rather than evolving with the times.

Mitchell says he will focus more on his other projects like Aura, a relatively new space at 1022 W. Burnside St. that houses a restaurant and dance floor and draws both queers and straights.

There's women in them thar woods!

A gaggle of dykes gathered at Breitenbush Hot Springs once again Aug. 26 to 29 for the annual Women in the Woods weekend.

The event originated in 1984 and has been re-enacted off and on for the past two decades. Lesbians from numerous states converge at the popular retreat southeast of Salem to hike, soak in the hot springs, eat gourmet vegetarian meals, do yoga and connect with their sisters.

Event organizer Pam Monette says the weekend was a great success. "Baby boomer lesbians" were in great attendance, but more than 130 women of various ages, occupations, ethnic backgrounds and physical abilities were present.

The weekend featured a dance with DJ Lauren and a "Talent/No Talent Show" with a belly dancer, burlesque, a "Family Feud" episode, poetry readings, drumming and "silly songs," says Monette.

One special component this year was the "crowning" ceremony, during which five women in their 50s were inducted as crones by the elders in the group. The eldest attendee was an 80-year-old who traveled from Florida with her daughters.

Monette and other organizers are already planning their next gathering, which will take place Aug. 25 to 28, 2005. "What I believe is that we are hungry and anxious for community and for gathering of like people," she says.

triangle productions! selling theater

The ever-inventive, Drammy Award-winning queer theater company triangle productions! will present its 15th anniversary season beginning this month—and then it will bid adieu to Theater! Theatre! on Southeast Belmont Street and go back to its indie roots.

Instead of producing a full season of plays, triangle is selling the building and will put on a few shows a year at different venues after a



Don Horn of triangle productions! with Myra Donnelly, who co-founded the Theater! Theatre! building

one-year hiatus. Managing artistic director Don Horn says that the company did not receive any funding past this year and that the decision to stop producing a full season was the best way to adjust to current economic challenges.

"You realize after 15 years...that if you don't have the money, you have to change with the times," says Horn. "We're not needed as much anymore."

When Horn founded triangle in 1990, he says there was more of a need for gay-themed theater as well as for a venue where queer audiences would feel right at home. As more mainstream theater companies like Portland Center Stage and Artists Repertory Theatre have produced plays with queer characters, triangle lost its niche. Also, Horn says not as many queer playwrights are concentrating solely on queer themes.

But Horn is neither bitter nor sad. "We wanted that," he says of the acceptance of queers into the fabric of American life, which he notes is what the gay rights struggle since Stonewall has been about. He questions whether assimilation is really "so bad."

He also knows how to adapt to the revolution, noting one of his life's mottoes is: "Don't stand against the trunk. Go out to the leaf because that is where the fruit is."

"I am very proud of Portland for letting us do what we've done for the past 15 years," says Horn. The journey, he adds, has been personally rewarding. "My life has counted for something."

Queering the beat

The Beats were essentially proto-hippies. They were interested in truth—in nakedness, sincerity, spontaneity," says

queer San Francisco writer and editor Regina Marler, who reads from her new book, *Queer Beats: How the Beats Turned America on to Sex*, 7:30 p.m. Sept. 13 at Powell's on Hawthorne, 3723 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd.

And the Beats (those American writers from the 1940 and '50s who flouted artistic and social conventions to usher in the '60s sexual revolution—William S. Burroughs, Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, etc.) were awfully darn gay.

"The Beats were openly queer," notes Marler, "except Kerouac, who kept his bisexual encounters under wraps." Marler examines how the Beats opened up space for the liberation of future generations and yet are not celebrated queer icons.

Angels leads Emmy nominations

Angels in America, HBO's miniseries of Tony Kushner's internationally celebrated play about AIDS in the 1980s, garnered 21 Emmy Award nominations, more than any other single television show this year.

The six-hour epic, which comes out on DVD Sept. 14, garnered nominations for Outstanding Miniseries, casting and costumes as well as for director Mike Nichols

and writer Tony Kushner. All the major actors also received nominations: Mary-Louise Parker for Outstanding Supporting Actress, Al Pacino for Outstanding Lead Actor and both Emma Thompson and Meryl Streep for Outstanding Lead Actress.

Four out of the five nominations in the Outstanding Supporting Actor category went to *Angels*, too: Patrick Wilson, who played Joe Pitt; Justin Kirk, who played Prior Walter; Ben Shenkman, who

played Louis Ironson; and Jeffrey Wright, who played Belize, will compete against each other.

Meanwhile, on the comedy side, Ellen DeGeneres earned two nominations for her HBO special *Here and Now*, and *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* earned three, including Outstanding Reality Program. *Will & Grace* came in with a respectable nine nominations, including Outstanding Comedy Series, and Sean Hayes and Megan Mullally were nominated in the supporting actor categories.

The 56th annual Primetime Emmy Awards air at 8 p.m. Sept. 19 on ABC. **J**

Compiled by LISA BRADSHAW and MEG DALY



San Francisco author Regina Marler reads from her book *Queer Beats* Sept. 13



Angels in America received an astonishing 21 Emmy nominations, including Outstanding Special Visual Effects