

Speak Out

Legalize same-sex marriage

TO THE EDITOR:

In November, we are facing several issues. The state is short in funds. Everything is being cut back or cut out.

Look at the schools. In all my life, I have never seen a student who had to pay for band or sports.

Also, there are thousands of homeless people because they lost their jobs. If the politicians would quit arguing about what party is right, and think about solving the budget problems, we would be better off.

As a minister, I had not registered to vote in years, until this year. As a lesbian, I have a reason to vote.

I want to ask a question of our state politicians. Why don't you go ahead and open the state to same-sex marriage?

Take half of the license fee for the state to be put toward schools, increase jobs and help the disabled and the elderly. Look how much Multnomah County took in before it was forced to stop issuing same-sex marriage licenses.

All we want are the same rights as any married couple. Whatever I can do to help get people to vote no on Measure 36, I will.

Also, we need a new president.

I have been in a relationship for five years. We would like to have the right to be legally married.

They had an article about us in the Newport

paper. I stated that we would like to be the first in line to get a marriage license in Newport. Then I would be there to perform weddings free of charge.

THE REV. BONNIE JAMES
Lincoln City

Love, safe sex are important

TO THE EDITOR:

In a society that seems to focus on the many negative aspects that surround the news, why must satisfying sexual experiences be near the center? There are more important issues to fight against, because we are ignoring what matters most in a world that desperately needs to be reminded of what is truly important. Not money, not war; instead, love and safe sex.

Still, society is so screwed up that we cannot step beyond our comfort zones to recognize what we do not understand. Why should individuals ignore what is inside their heart and their body to conform to what the world believes is the only acceptable way to live?

In the end, love is defined individually, if you dare, and after all, it's about who we fall in love with and what we decide that truly makes us feel alive.

NICOLE ROBBINS
Anchorage, Alaska

An open letter to KOIN-TV

DEAR NEWS MANAGER:

I continue to enjoy KOIN very much, and my loyalty for local news remains with your station, as I watch it every night at 11.

I found it interesting watching the little segment on the bookstore Fat Cobra that was presented early in the newscast. I feel the attempt was made to be fair, by having a protesting neighbor and the owner, and it was mentioned that the store is meeting legal requirements. But there is still a piece missing.

The neighborhood guy stated that it is well-documented that such places of business attract drugs and other undesirable activities. May I suggest that in the future, you ask what the documentation is?

I walk past an adult bookstore on Northeast Sandy Boulevard all the time, and I don't see any of the alleged activities one hears about.

I have attended some 60-plus neighborhood meetings in the Kerns neighborhood, and I can assure you honesty and accuracy are not a priority, nor is fairness. People and neighbors tend to carry their own bias.

My neighbor to the east mentioned just last month the numerous drug dealings going on right on this corner of Northeast 29th and Couch. And we have no adult bookstore in this area.

STEVE A. ENGEL
Portland



transitions

Kaelin Bowers, 1965-2004

Kaelin Bowers, a member of Basic Rights Oregon's Trans Advocacy Group, died of natural causes sometime between Sept. 21 and 23 at home. He was 39.

"Kaelin was a tireless leader on a wide range of progressive issues," said BRO executive director Roey Thorpe. "Not only trans issues, but [he was also] incredibly outspoken on civil liberties and his opposition to the Patriot Act and the war."

Bowers was born in Virginia in 1965. He held a graduate degree in geophysics and was employed most recently at Intel, where he worked full time as a project manager. He planned to attend law school next year.

In addition to his work with BRO, Bowers served on the Lane County Bill of Rights Defense Committee and the board of the LGBTQ Community Center Fund. He delivered Meals on Wheels, volunteered for the Sam Adams and James Posey campaigns, participated in a Buddhist prayer group, organized and coordinated the Oregon delegation of the National Center for Transgender Equality's summer lobby effort and was a member of the Intel queer employee group as well as the Trans Health Collective.

According to friend Christa-Margaret Nelson, Bowers came out as trans and started physically transitioning in the fall of 2001. Previously

he identified as a bi woman and had been involved in the Portland bi community.

"One of the most defining characteristics of Kaelin's transition was his staunch bodily identification with maleness," Nelson said. "For Kaelin, he was not a female-bodied person with a masculine identity, rather he was physically male, maintaining this in the face of all the world that read him physically as female.... Before Kaelin transitioned, he was somewhat of a feminine being, yet he completely grew into and manifested the vision of himself that was always contained within him. This vision was of the magnanimous, ponytailed, self-identified gay man that took me out to lunch for my birthday several weeks ago, someone with the kind of radiant masculine energy that only comes from a man."

Thorpe added: "In the time I knew Kaelin, he went from being a shy, introverted, timid person to being the life of the party—funny, social, smiling and gregarious. His courage should inspire us all, and his journey should remind us of how much human potential can be released when a person's true heart and soul and essential being are allowed to flourish."

Bowers was known not only locally but also nationally as an important activist in the trans community.

Mara Kiesling, executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality, commented, "As a movement, we are greatly diminished that we will no longer have [Bowers'] dedication, drive, intelligence and aggressive advocacy, which have added so much to our movement and would have meant even more in the future."

A community twilight memorial service to honor Bowers' life and work will be held 5 p.m. Oct. 10 at the concert pad in Laurelhurst Park. All are welcome. The service will be led by Reid Vanderburgh and will feature speakers representing the different spheres of Bowers' life, a space for individuals to share personal memories and reflections, a cellist and a group song.

Donations to cover the costs of the memorial service can be made to the Kaelin Bowers Memorial Trust Fund at Washington Mutual Bank. Flowers or other expressions of memorial can be placed on Bowers' porch at 3937 N.E. Sixth Ave. For more information contact Christa-Margaret Nelson at christamargaret@hotmail.com.

Carol Nale, 1952-2004

Carol Marie Nale died Aug. 13 after a seven-year struggle with ovarian cancer. She was 51.

She was born Sept. 30, 1952, in Madison, Wis. She received a full basketball scholarship to University of Wisconsin, graduating with a degree in recreational education in 1979.

Nale taught and coached at a girl's high school in Wisconsin before moving to Portland. She received a master's degree in kinesiology in 1981 from Portland State University and subsequently opened a sports massage business in Northwest Portland.

Nale then returned to school and received a master's degree and license in Oriental medicine in 1983. She later traveled to China twice, to study under Chinese physicians.

An outdoor sports enthusiast, Nale enjoyed kayaking, bicycling, hiking, camping and skiing. She also taught athletics, including kayaking, to people living with disabilities.

She was also an active member of the Forest Group and Lesbians Enjoying Nature and Science. Nale was a member of Women's Circle of First Unitarian Church and donated her time and expertise to the Rose Haven shelter for women and children.

Survivors include her parents, Ernest and Gwen; brother, Larry; and sister, Loretta Kay Thompson.

Remembrances may be sent to Rose Haven in her name.

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