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ADOPTION CONFERENCE WELCOMES QUEER PARENTS

The Northwest Adoptive Families Association will present a daylong conference Oct. 30 at the Lloyd Center Doubletree Hotel, 1000 N.E. Multnomah St., for adoptive parents and for people interested in building their awareness and understanding about adoption.

The program features national adoption expert Joyce Maguire Pavao as well as regional sources and local professionals. From the keynote presentation to the 10 workshops offered throughout the day, there are multiple channels for learning, whether one is at the starting point of domestic or international adoption, parenting a toddler or navigating the gauntlet of teen challenges.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to have a nationally known speaker on adoption and a variety of learning tracks all in one program, close to home," says Liza Andrew-Miller, NAFA board member and adoptive parent of a 9-year-old. "Adoptive families are special. We represent the spectrum of what families can be. The very fact that we are created in such a unique way brings delights as well as challenges. Collectively we have vast experience and a wealth of knowledge to benefit each other."

The conference will allow parents and professionals to share information, develop networks and learn about the array of services and support for adoptive families available locally and regionally.

Costs is \$80 for general admission, \$50 for NAFA members. Limited scholarships are available for families who have adopted through the state of Oregon from the Oregon Post Adoption Resource Center. Other scholarships are available through NAFA.

To register call 503-243-1356 or visit www.nafaonline.org. For scholarship information call 503-241-0799 or 800-764-8367.

COUNTY CELEBRATES NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY

The Multnomah County Employee Network Group PRISM (Pride, Respect, Integrity for Sexual Minorities) held a National Coming Out Day celebration Oct. 11 at the Portland Building.

City Commissioner Dan Saltzman praised the audience for their bravery. "It's not easy," he said. "It's always a struggle. You are blazing a trail. You are letting people know...that it is OK."

Jay Harter of the Human Rights Campaign spoke about this year's National Coming Out Day theme: "Come Out. Speak Out. Vote." He noted, "It's very hard for someone to deny us [protections] if they know it will hurt someone they love—a valued co-worker, a son or a daughter."

Ric King detailed the Elder Resource Alliance's efforts to train professional service providers about queer seniors. "We're interested in leaving behind us...the chance to make a change and make it now. We don't have a whole lot of time ahead of us."

Kevin Cook, aka Imperial Sovereign Rose Court Empress XLIV Poison Waters, recalled how his mother confronted him about his sexual orientation shortly before his prepared announcement at Thanksgiving. "She totally

stole my thunder," he said. "So I vowed then and there that nobody was going to steal the spotlight from me!"

Compiled by MEG DALY and JIM RADOSTA



Multnomah County employee Rodney Gibbs celebrates National Coming Out Day with a song Oct. 11

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