

In support of Dan Ryan's school board candidacy

TO THE EDITOR:

We support Dan Ryan's candidacy for the Zone 4 position for the Portland Public School Board. He cares about all of our children and the future of our city. He is both highly committed and highly qualified for this position.

Dan grew up in Portland and graduated from Roosevelt High School. Our city and its public schools have helped shape his entire life. He believes today's students deserve at least the strong start in life that he received from attending Portland schools. He has shown his commitment to Portland's students by volunteering in our local schools for the past eight years. This

experience has given him firsthand knowledge of the challenges that face our schools both at the classroom and the district level. Dan has both the skills and demonstrated commitment to help meet those challenges.

As the director of development for Portland State University, he has helped lead efforts to raise millions of dollars to support students. He also has 18 years of management experience working in community organizations, building the kind of trust and accountability that taxpayers rightly expect from the school district. He will work to ensure that every dollar we invest in our schools contributes to raising the achievement levels of all students.

Dan also offers us the opportunity to elect an openly gay man who will serve as a role model

for many in our community. He has worked for social justice throughout his life, most recently as a member of Equity Foundation. He has proven he will speak out for the basic rights of all people.

We encourage all voters in Portland to vote for Dan Ryan for the Portland Public School Board.

HOLLY PRUETT, KATHLEEN SADAAT,
 DON POWELL, BARBARA WILLER
 Portland

Log Cabin Republican weighs in on pope, Ronald Reagan

TO THE EDITOR:

On the Sunday morning following the death of Pope John Paul II, I was watching the regular call-in show broadcast internationally by C-SPAN. Many people called in from around the world to praise the life and accomplishments of the pope. Judging from the comments, the pope apparently left a positive, value-oriented legacy for people of all political stripes.

Then suddenly a man called and identified himself as a "gay person." He spoke in a hideously hateful, effeminate tone, stating that the pope opposed gay marriage and that "he should burn in hell."

I was immediately repulsed and sickened by the gay man's diatribe, yet these sort of vile statements are not uncommon among many left-wing gay activists.

When I think further of the C-SPAN caller, I am amazed at how reckless his contempt was. While the pope did not support gay marriage, he was nothing but compassionate toward gay people, particularly those living with HIV and AIDS. In fact, if there is one area where John

Paul is criticized, it is in his barely audible criticism of priests who sexually molested children and cost the Catholic Church billions in lawsuits.

This hatred for the pope reminds me of many left-wing gay activists who blamed Ronald Reagan for AIDS. Reagan did nothing and said nothing about AIDS, so go the charges. But that is a malicious lie told by a generation of gay activists.

In the early 1980s health officials from the National Institutes of Health fanned out across the nation to visit gay community centers. They gently warned about the transmission of HIV. Yet the gay community did not want to listen to a right-wing government tell them that their lifestyle was killing them. Consequently, most gays stayed in denial a few more years until enough gay people died, creating a large national gay movement to mobilize to extend people's lives.

In fact, the Reagan administration sent out the most sexually explicit, taxpayer-funded manual to more than 100 million households to educate Americans about safe sex.

Reagan never hated gays; he was a compassionate man. But so many gays were, and still are, so blinded by hate that they took all the credit for America turning toward safe-sex practices and deceitfully blamed Reagan for the death of hundreds of thousands of gay people.

Such vitriol is totally counterproductive for the gay movement. Rather than gather inspiration from John Paul and Reagan for liberating much of the world, which would certainly include millions of gay people, these bitter anti-social gays choose hate to define themselves and their community.

MATTHEW VERITAS TSIEH
 Florida Gold Coast Log Cabin Republicans

transitions

Dennis Bigelow, 1953-2005

Dennis Bigelow—widely acclaimed as one of Portland's best theater directors ever—was found dead in his downtown apartment March 29. He was 52.

Bigelow was born in Altoona, Pa. He attended Franklin and Marshall College and Pennsylvania State University.

He came to Ashland as an Oregon Shakespeare Festival stage manager in 1975. He served as artistic director of the Sacramento Theatre Company from 1983 to 1988, as the first producer of Portland Center Stage from 1988 to 1992 and later as artistic director of Portland Repertory Theatre.

After that company's demise in 1998, he worked as a Commodore Hotel bartender while

concentrating on smaller shows such as Triangle Productions' *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. He was slated to direct Artists Repertory Theatre's *Take Me Out* in May and Triangle's *The Rocky Horror Show* in June.

"He was fearless and totally unpredictable as a director," actress Kathy Morison told *The Sacramento Bee*. "He would throw a cross-dressing production of *What the Butler Saw* interspersed with the sweet and sappy *Gift of the Magi*. He woke...audiences up and then made them feel comfortable and at home in the same breath."

He is survived by his mother, Marie, of Altoona.

A memorial will be held 7 p.m. April 18 at Artists Rep, 1516 S.W. Alder St. Bigelow's ashes will be scattered in Altoona, New York City and Portland, where a public celebration of his life will be held in August.

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