

Citizens Alliance's specious declarations that gay and lesbian Oregonians were asking for 'special rights,' not equal rights, had to cringe when Bonnie adopted their rhetoric. Some may think that is a clever spin, but I think it detracts from efforts to get a majority of Oregonians to understand and sympathize with the real needs of GLBT Oregonians to have marriage equality and basic civil rights."

The clash between Tinker and other activists bottomed out during BRO's "Speak Now" bus tour meeting when it returned to Portland.

"It was the most demoralizing experience of my career, and that's a position that has a lot of competition," said Thorpe. "I expect criticism, but the kind of personal attack that was waged was not anything I've ever experienced."

Two weeks after Oregon voters passed the same-sex marriage ban, BRO held a bus tour, traveling to 13 cities to reach supporters statewide and discuss the positive outcomes of the failed campaign.

The last stop of the tour was Portland, at First Congregational United Church of Christ, where organizers were met with sharp criticism

got up there and was just flinging arrows," said Wilkins.

She described Tinker's barbs that day as "abusive" and "slandrous" attacks on BRO, Thorpe and the No on 36 campaign participants.

"From a pastoral perspective, I want to sympathize with someone who has a lot of pain, but this was meant to be a public slanderous act," said Wilkins.

Thorpe said she was not surprised to arrive at the meeting greeted by Tinker and "some other people who I suspected might be hostile."

"I was aware that Bonnie had been organizing people to disrupt the meeting," said Thorpe.

ruptive behavior. According to Tinker, hostility came not from her but from a member of the Equality Coalition who attended the meeting independently.

"There were other people there who were highly critical of Basic Rights Oregon. I was not in touch with them ahead of time, and they do not represent Love Makes a Family," Tinker said.

Tinker has voiced discontent with both the message and methods BRO used during the No on 36 campaign.

"If you invite the community in to give you feedback, some of it's going to be negative. If

ing civil unions won't work and we need full marriage equality."

BRO has endorsed Gov. Ted Kulongoski's Senate Bill 1000, combining an anti-discrimination bill with civil unions, which Thorpe has called a stepping stone in the long-term vision for full marriage equality.

"They [BRO] have a very different job than we do. Their job is to win ballot measures. Our job is to build a grassroots progressive movement that supports all families, including LGBT families," said Tinker. "I would be the first to say I hope they win every court case they file, but we now have a constitutional amendment limiting marriage to one man and one woman."

In the media, Tinker has recently been depicted as a wedge in the queer activist community. In a *Willamette Week* article titled "Tough Love," gay columnist Byron Beck called for unity within the community, which is inundated with opponents from the outside. Tinker says she has heeded Beck's lesson to play nice with the other activists.

"Whatever past history was, we need to get on the same page to overturn that constitutional amendment and work together in formulating strategies and actions," Tinker said. "We live in a culture of dominance where one country is trying to dominate the whole globe right now. We need to unlearn a culture of dominance; not re-create it within our community."

The Oregon Supreme Court may have fanned Tinker's fiery criticism against BRO's message and methods when it ruled to nullify the 3,000 same-sex marriages of last year. Tinker continues to firmly stand against civil unions, as she indicated in a statement responding to the decision April 14: "Love Makes a Family Inc. does not support civil union legislation as an alternative to marriage. We do not gain equality by settling for a separate system that is defined by sexual orientation...and we will continue to advocate for full equality."

While Tinker's stance speaks for many who were hurt by the Supreme Court ruling, she has not yet revealed her tactics for achieving full marriage equality. Tinker's resistance to the governor's proposal, created at the request of BRO, continues the contrary paths for queer civil rights.

"She clearly marches to her own drummer," said Carson, "but I don't get a sense that many follow her lead." J

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**"In the years I've known Bonnie Tinker, I've observed her to be an aggressive advocate with a clear idea of her goals and messages. She also has shown herself to be an aggressive critic of her political allies as well as her adversaries."**

—Jann Carson



As a result, the meeting was facilitated by Kathleen Sadaat, a prominent local activist.

The meeting deteriorated into tears, a shouting match, threats and the calling for Thorpe's resignation.

At one point, BRO board member Alisa Simmons

maneuvered herself between a shouting audience member and the pulpit, attempting to mitigate his aggression, according to several event attendees.

"Emotions were running really high," said Thorpe.

Tinker agreed that the meeting became emotional but says she was not behind the dis-

ruptive behavior. According to Tinker, hostility came not from her but from a member of the Equality Coalition who attended the meeting independently.

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from Tinker. At that meeting, witnesses say her behavior shifted from zany to mean-spirited. Community leaders were brought to tears, many volunteers left the meeting, and witnesses say the threat of violence was in the air.

"I thought the Portland meeting was going to be filled with mostly our volunteers. They were frankly a little shell-shocked when Bonnie

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