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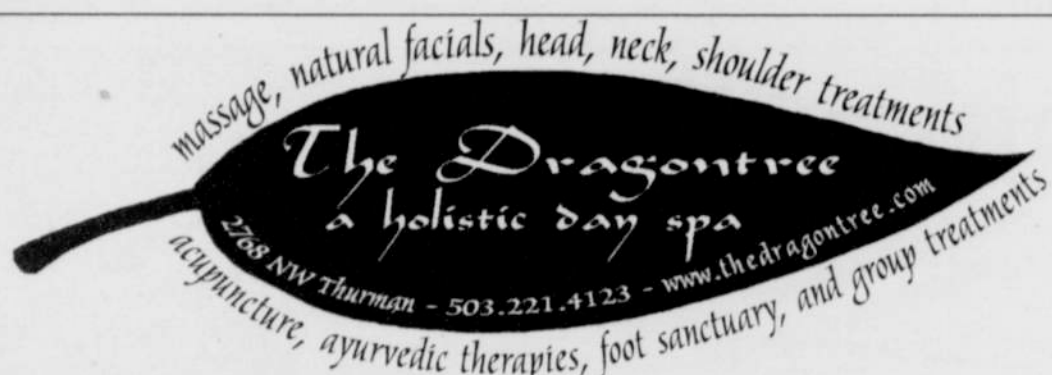
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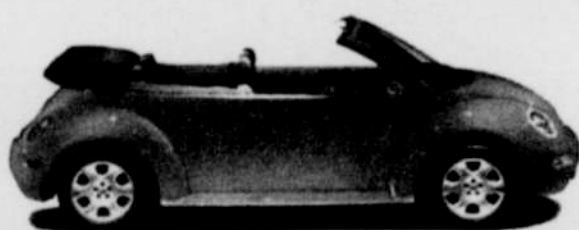


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NORTHWEST newsbriefs

RICHARDSON STUNS CITY CLUB WITH HOMOPHOBIA

A collective gasp was heard from the Portland City Club after House Speaker Pro Tempore Dennis Richardson made a case for discrimination against same-sex couples May 13.

Richardson, a Republican from Central Point, made a "life isn't fair" argument in response to City Club board member Tamsen Wassell's question about discrimination she experienced.

Wassell directed her question about auto insurance discrimination to Richardson, an insurance lawyer, after being quoted a higher rate because her spouse is a woman. She asked him whether this was a fair practice and, if not, what recourse she should take.

"I wish I were taller, I wish I were better looking. It's not fair," was Richardson's immediate response.

Wassell said she felt that Richardson's answer was dismissive and that he perceived her marriage as abnormal.

"Honestly, I knew Rep. Richardson's position on gay and lesbian rights so was not surprised at his remarks," she said. "I thought he might rise above and answer from a professional point of view, but clearly he can not separate his political views from his professional ones."

the center. The event starts at 7 p.m. and includes a possible excursion to Tabu.

• **June 9:** All Day Gay Film Festival at Meese Auditorium on the Southern Oregon University campus. The films will be split into two genres, with one afternoon and one evening showing.

• **June 11:** A dance for everyone in the community, gay and straight.

• **June 12:** Pride March. Come show your pride and meet 11:30 a.m. at Evo's. The march will continue at 12:45 p.m. to Lithia Park, where the community will gather for the annual Picnic in the Park. There will be speakers and entertainment. The day will end with a Native American closing ceremony.

To reach the Abdill-Ellis Community Center, call 541-488-6990 or look online at www.abdellis.org.

ASHLAND MARRIAGE CEREMONY IN THE PARK

Ernest Caswell, a bishop in Christ Catholic Church in Ashland, is volunteering to bless the commitments of same-sex couples during Southern Oregon Pride. Christ Catholic is a small, independent church that split from Rome in 1720.

In his 32 years as bishop, Caswell has performed many weddings and many gay union ceremonies. His offer stands to Southern Oregonians who wish to make a commitment to their loved one or publicly renew their vows. The ceremony need not be religious, but Caswell can certainly perform one with religious blessings, with either a Certificate of Union or of vow renewal.

If you would like to have a ceremony June 12 during Picnic in the Park, Caswell will be in attendance between 3 and 5 p.m. To have a ceremony with the bishop at Pride, interested people must call him at

541-535-8463 and discuss details by June 5.



House Speaker Pro Tempore Dennis Richardson did not impress the City Club with his platitudes on the unfairness of life.

David Pool, editor of the online news source News4Neighbors, was in the audience covering the meeting. "The most disturbing part is he didn't realize what he was saying," he said.

Richardson, who has a history of conservative politics in Southern Oregon, continued to say that enforcing fairness is not the government's job.

"The government can't make everything fair," he said. "You're making a decision to not be in a normal marriage....It's not about fairness. It's about decisions society makes and this one doesn't cut in your favor and I think that's just the way it is."

In the News4Neighbors report on the meeting, Pool posed the natural follow-up question: "Isn't fairness and justice exactly the government's job?"

—Jaymee R. Cuti

SOUTHERN OREGON PRIDE ANNOUNCES EVENT SCHEDULE

Sponsored by the Abdill-Ellis Community Center, Southern Oregon Pride will have many events to celebrate June 3 to 12. The following is a list of confirmed events; further information will be published in the June 3 issue of *Just Out*:

- **June 3:** Art Walk at the center, 6 to 9 p.m.
- **June 4:** Stonewall Panel at Ashland Public Library, 2 to 4 p.m. Also, a golf tournament will take place at Bear Creek Golf Course. To register, leave a message at 541-734-7221. Price is \$20, and tee time is 6 p.m.
- **June 5:** A Day at the Theater featuring "Ma Rainey." Tickets are \$22. Contact the center if you would like to attend.
- **June 8:** A blowout for the Women's Night at

WITHAM & DICKEY WINS BUSINESS AWARD

For anyone who was at this year's Basic Rights Oregon luncheon, you may remember Gov. Ted Kulongoski talking about going to Embers back around 1980. The man who took him was Bill Dickey, longtime Portland gay activist and businessman.

Dickey and Matt Witham specialize in commercial printing, direct mail and promotional products. After starting out with a small duplicator press in 1996, they now have seven presses in their 7,500-square-foot facility. Employment grew by six people to 15 in 2004, with a 225 percent increase in gross revenue/sales. Witham & Dickey's Homestead Greeting Cards division sells hundreds of thousands of custom greeting cards created locally and sold nationwide.

Witham & Dickey has earned one of the Portland Business Alliance's Top Ten Growth Awards in the Small Business Category. Witham & Dickey has been named as the region's fastest-growing businesses in its size category.

"We created the Top Ten Growth Awards 20 years ago as a way to spotlight companies that are making major contributions to the economic growth of the region," said Sandra McDonough, Portland Business Alliance president and CEO. "This year's winners demonstrate that businesses of every size and in a broad range of industries are growing and prospering in Portland and the region."

Winners were honored at the alliance's Annual Meeting, one of the largest gatherings