

Greetings from
Gay Old

PORTLAND

The Rose City celebrates Pride 2005

by Jaymee R. Cuti and Jim Radosta

Pride Northwest will celebrate the diversity and strength of the sexual minorities community during Portland Pride 2005 on June 18 and 19. This year's theme is "Everyday People." Here are highlights from the festival schedule.

Ruppert Represents

Winston native **Benjamin Ruppert** (2:25 p.m. June 18) is thrilled to play for the first time at Portland Pride.

At 18, he represents the many talented young people who he feels are often written off because of their tender years.

"I want people to realize that young people can have talent, because there's a lot of age discrimination in the industry," says Ruppert, who recorded his first album at 17. "Someone my age can have talent and make it."

Ruppert, who is gay, describes his style as progressive cabaret, meaning there's a definite rock tinge in his classically trained voice and piano pounding.

"It always ends up sounding like something from a Broadway production," he says. "Expect a lot of whaling and banging on the piano."

To Ruppert, Pride means "being confident enough about my sexuality that I could flaunt it, but not having to flaunt it because I am confident."

Wake Up

The eclectic female-led trio **Demimonde Slumber Party** (3:40 p.m. June 18) blends pop, punk and '60s garage rock interspersed with haunting ballads.

DSP comes out of the 1990s San Francisco scene but is now based in Eugene. Singer/guitarist Melissa Lubofsky, drummer Kim Lindquist and bassist Tim Romain combine powerful vocals and harmonies, earning them comparisons to the Pretenders, X and Television.

For more information visit www.dspband.com.

Decked Out in Pride

The Retros (6 p.m. June 18) are coming out for Pride to entertain the audience with up-tempo dance beats from the '80s MTV era.

This hetero band considers itself an ally to queers and open minds, revering Pride as a time to celebrate.

"We all are behind it 100 percent. It's a very

great tribute to open-mindedness and unrestricted beliefs, and it's a fun event," singer Kevin Linderman says.

This is the Seattle band's first Pride gig, though it has played frequently in Portland for the past five years.

The Retros are expecting to get the crowd dancing. They raise energy not only through their popular '80s covers but also with their costumes.

"We don't wear T-shirts and jeans," says Linderman. "We're decked out in matching outfits that are pretty elaborate with bright colors."

Don't be shy about participating in the show. Linderman promises you already know the words.

"We always get the crowd singing because so many people know the songs," he says.

For more information visit www.theretros.com.

Musical Duality

Molli Paige's personality is split. She sees

herself as Judy Garland by day and Melissa Etheridge by night.

For Paige's day job, she performs late, great hits at retirement homes.

"I think I have two personalities going on," she says of her range from Doris Day to Bonnie Raitt. "That's a whole different atmosphere when you're singing to 70- to 90-year-olds, and then I come out at Pride fest and do a rockin' show."

The **Molli Paige Band** (7:30 p.m. June 18) will perform sounds reminiscent of Sarah McLachlan and Rob Thomas.

"That's who we've been compared to, and I think it's accurate. When I listen to their writing style, I think there are similarities and there's power behind the vocals, but I can tone it down as well," says Paige, who sings and writes songs.

The band will debut a song at Pride that Paige was inspired to write during the passage of Measure 36.

As a lesbian, Paige says she is grateful that her straight bandmates are open and accepting of the queer community. "They're all very open and open to my relationship that I'm in. It's an