

Speak out

about whether a state-based or national strategy is most effective. BRO is part of a national federation of statewide organizations (groups like BRO across the country) and also works closely with a number of national organizations. What I can tell you is that there is agreement among statewide and national leaders in our movement that the most important gains of the next several years will be at the state level. This focus on the state level is resulting in some improvements—long overdue, in my opinion—in collaboration between state and national organizations. For example, in our campaign last year, we got help from many national organizations, including the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the Human Rights Campaign, Log Cabin Republicans, the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund and others. That participation is continuing in our legislative session as well. In addition, we work with other progressive organizations, and many of them have been staunch allies for many years.

I don't believe our battles here are merely "localized skirmishes." The struggles that happen in the places closest to our homes and our families are the front lines of this national movement and have the power to most profoundly change the collective consciousness.

Your input, your feedback and this discussion is valuable, not only to BRO, but to our movement. But I hope that your engagement in these

issues doesn't end there and that we will be working side by side in our collective struggle to advance equality in Oregon and beyond.

ROEY THORPE
Basic Rights Oregon

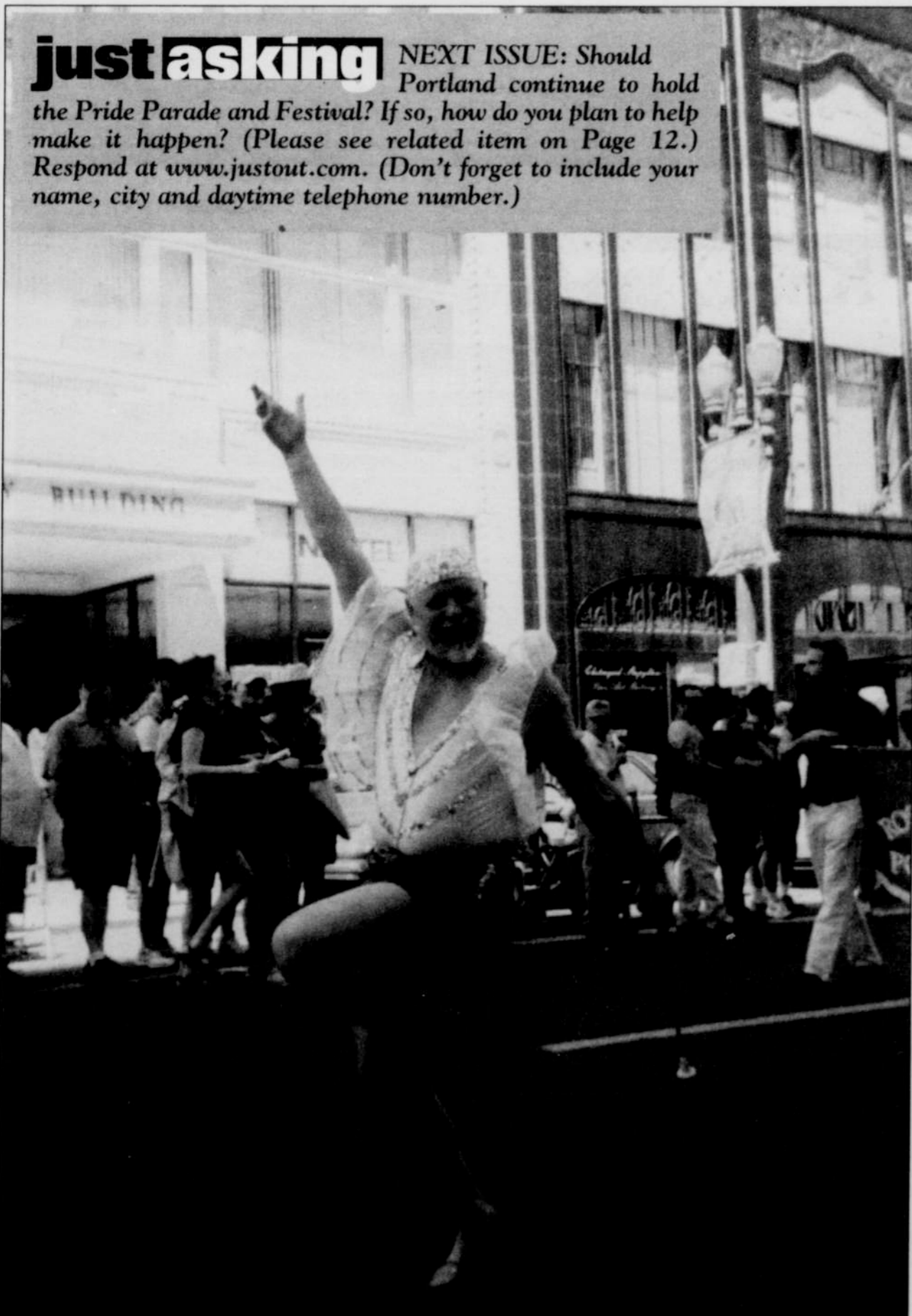
Clearing the air

TO THE EDITOR:

Rebecca Ragain did a delightful story on Balloons on Broadway ["Staying Aloft," July 1]. The only line that raised my eyebrows was the reference to the store selling event tickets "during the past couple of years."

Balloons on Broadway is the only venue that has sold tickets to *A Class Act* every year since we started the annual benefit 11 years ago. Mother and Dad adored Ron and Gary and were ecstatic when they were the first entity in the community to sign up to help what was then a fledgling community effort. The Bill & Ann Shepherd Legal Scholarship Fund of Equity Foundation is very grateful to Gary and Ron for promoting us, and we just wanted to set the record straight, so to speak, on the longevity of their ticket-selling support.

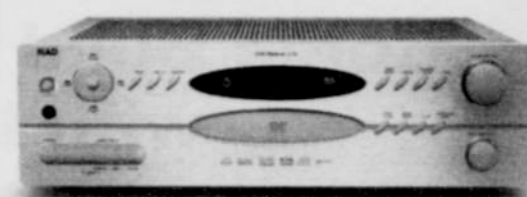
SUSIE SHEPHERD
Portland



just asking NEXT ISSUE: Should Portland continue to hold the Pride Parade and Festival? If so, how do you plan to help make it happen? (Please see related item on Page 12.) Respond at www.justout.com. (Don't forget to include your name, city and daytime telephone number.)

Will fabulous baton twirlers such as this one at Pride '05 become extinct?

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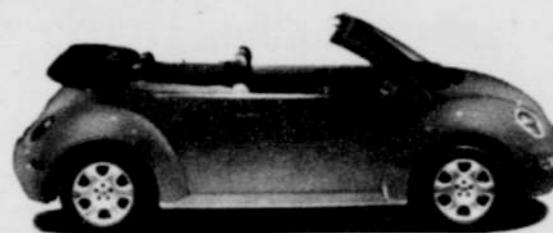


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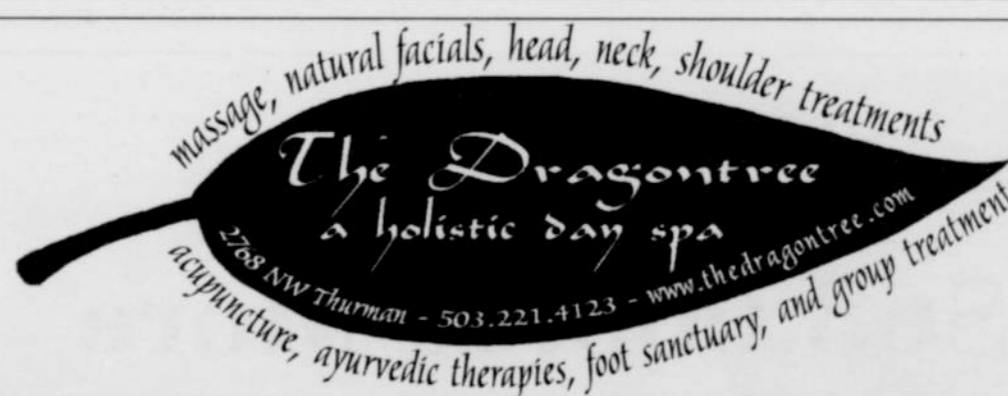
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