

NEW HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN PRESENCE

Portland designated as an "Emerging Community"

by Sarah Dougher

Despite the fact that one of the founders of the Human Rights Campaign, Terry Bean, makes his home in Portland, and that the first HRC-endorsed candidate was from Eugene, the organization has kept a pretty low profile in the Beaver State.

Beginning in late 2004, HRC began holding an every-second-Tuesday event called Salon Q that draws queers—primarily men—from a fairly homogenous strata together for drinks and flirting at Portland watering hole Aura.

This summer, HRC had a strong presence at Portland Pride and recruited volunteers to help with what it is calling its "Emerging Community" model in Portland. HRC's Portland Emerging Community works, as the Web site reports, "to support the missions and goals of HRC and to provide local leadership and advocacy for HRC objectives."

Under the direction of local board leadership, the HRC Portland Emerging Community is responsible for the presence and local activities of HRC.

HRC works primarily on queer issues on the national level; for instance, candidates for federal office will get the thumbs up or down, and various initiatives in the House and Senate will be undertaken. So what, then, is the role of HRC in local politics?

HRC has had an active base in Oregon for a long time, and the activism of this group has ebbed and flowed. In revitalizing the HRC members of Oregon, of which there are thousands, Emerging Community co-chairwoman CM Hall notes, "People want a way to opt in and make a difference, and it is another chance for them to work for their own equality."

The connections between Basic Rights Oregon and HRC are strong. During the No on 36 campaign, HRC sent three staffers to work with

The Emerging Community Committee has several volunteer-led programs: Federal Club, for donors who give at least \$100 each month; general membership; diversity; and politics. The subcommittees meet every third Monday and are always looking for new volunteers to help out with planning and events.

Volunteering with HRC involves educating the public, mobilizing community activism, expanding the voice and visibility of the sexual



Josh Wagner is one of the Emerging Community co-chairs in Portland.

minorities community and working with others nationwide to bolster the efforts to end hate and discrimination.

BACKGROUND

HRC is the nation's largest national gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender advocacy organization. It envisions an America where queers are ensured of their basic equal rights and can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community. HRC has close to 600,000 members, according to its Web site.

Founded in 1980, HRC lobbies Congress, provides campaign support to fair-minded candidates and works to educate the public on a wide array of topics affecting queer U.S. citizens, including workplace, family, discrimination and health issues. The HRC Foundation, an HRC-affiliated organization, engages in extensive research and provides education and programming.

More than 500,000 people participate in HRC's Online Action Center, through which they receive updates and stay informed about upcoming votes in Congress and in state legislatures across the country. Participants have used the center to send more than 1 million e-mails and faxes to their state and federal elected officials to hold them accountable and demonstrate constituent support for queer equality. HRC also identifies, organizes and mobilizes political volunteers and congressional district coordinators to meet face to face with elected officials, organize voter registration drives, turn out the vote on Election Day and organize rallies, news conferences and town hall meetings. 

The HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN Portland Federal Club Garden Party, hosted by Paul Cofer, Scott Cooley and Kevin Reedy, will take place from 4 to 8 p.m. Aug. 27 at 10719 S.W. 11th Drive. RSVP by Aug. 20 at pdxfedclub@comcast.net. For more information about involvement with the HRC in Portland, contact Todd Canon at 503-228-4489.



A few of the thousands of Oregonians who are active with HRC celebrate Portland Pride 2005.

BRO in its organizing efforts. Additionally, during the fight for Senate Bill 1000, HRC supported BRO by sending out staffers three different times to support the lobbying efforts.

In addition to supporting the mission and goals of HRC, the Portland Emerging Community hopes to provide funding for HRC programmatic goals and provide local leadership and advocacy for HRC objectives. The Emerging Community's goals include supporting the political and financial goals of HRC, creating a strong HRC presence in the Portland community, expanding the number of volunteers doing HRC activities and improving communication and building relationships among the area's gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and straight community leaders and organizations.

ACT NOW!

While Supplies Last



Buy one for \$19.99
get up to 3
additional phones

FREE!

Audiovox 8910
\$19.99*

Add Additional
Lines for

\$9.99

GO WIRELESS

Introducing FREE -Network
Calling Between 47 Million
Verizon Wireless Customers
From The National -Network Coverage Area

Hollywood Store
3004 NE Broadway
Portland, OR 97232
503-280-4448
by Fred Meyer

The nation's largest calling area! Check out our Super Value Pack: Leather case, a car charger, lifetime repair, lifetime battery exchange, lifetime replacement on accessories, 25% off all accessory purchases, and lifetime data transfer!!! Ask store for details!

www.gowireless.net

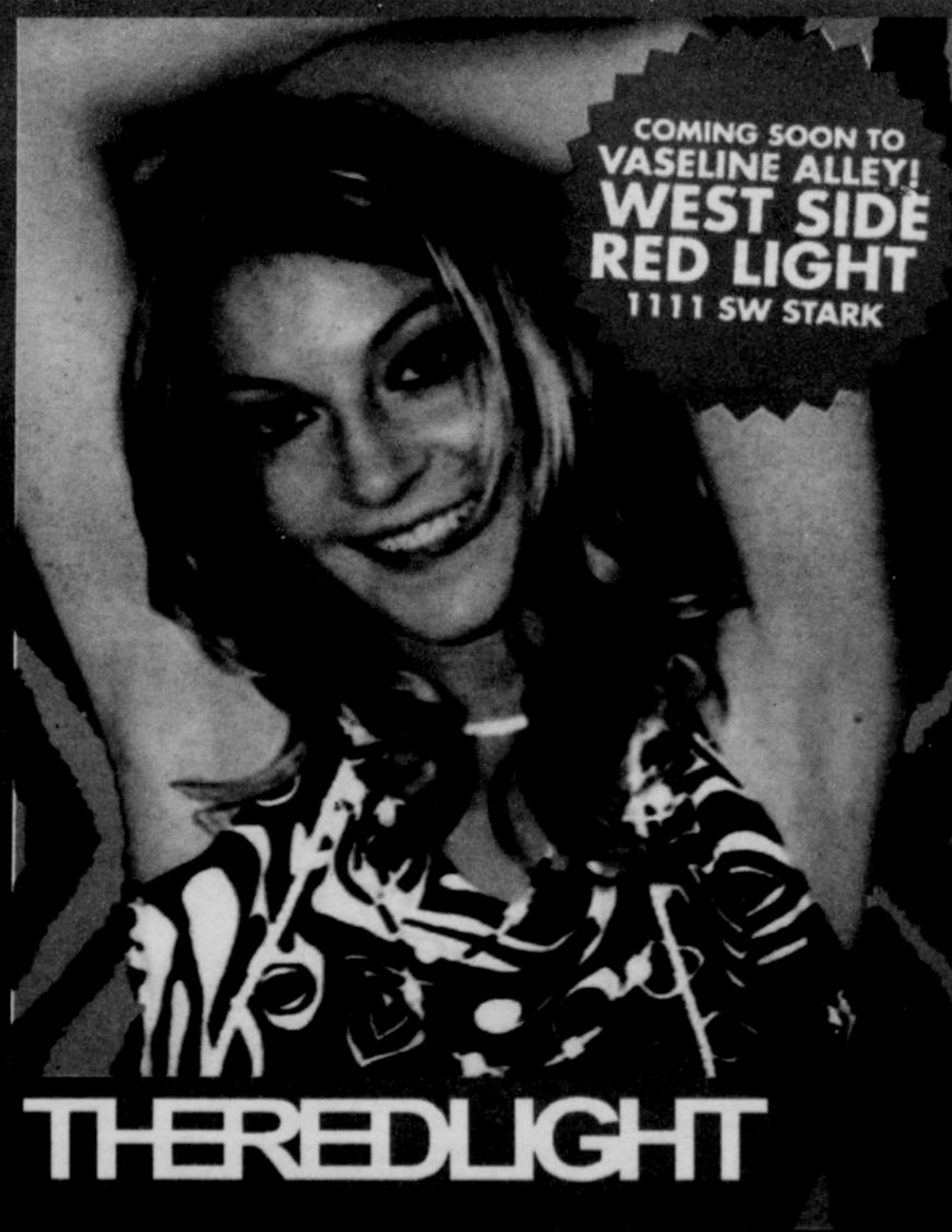
 **verizon**wireless
Authorized Agent

Friendly, Knowledgeable, Convenient.

* Limited to stock on hand. No rain checks. Restrictions apply.
See store for details.

• CASH FOR COOL CLOTHES • RED LIGHT • CASH FOR COOL CLOTHES •

• CASH FOR COOL CLOTHES • RED LIGHT • CASH FOR COOL CLOTHES •



COMING SOON TO
VASELINE ALLEY!
**WEST SIDE
RED LIGHT**
1111 SW STARK

THE RED LIGHT

3590 SE HAWTHORNE

• CASH FOR COOL CLOTHES • RED LIGHT • CASH FOR COOL CLOTHES •