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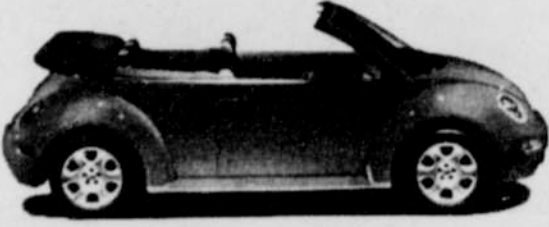


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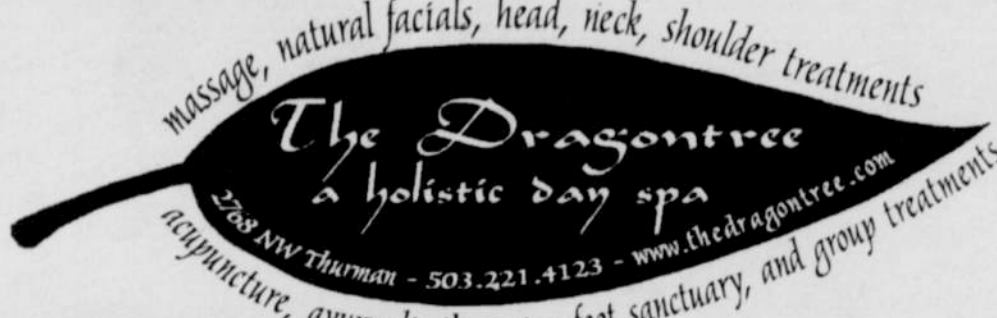


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## NORTHWEST newsbriefs

### DRAMA IN BEAVERTON

The Southridge High School drama department may be more prepared than before to stage *The Laramie Project*, which was canceled and then reconsidered by principal Amy Gordon.

*The Laramie Project* is a documentary-style story about how the brutal murder of gay student Matthew Shepard affected the town of Laramie, Wyo.

"In a way, this whole event has become our own version of *The Laramie Project*, where a community struggles with an event, the cancellation of the play, and now, just like *The Laramie Project*, many voices will be heard," said Kevin Bennett, a Southridge teacher concerned about the original cancellation of the play.

*The Laramie Project* is back on the table after meetings between school administrators and theater arts director Wade Willis. The group resolved to create a committee to review the play and decide its future at Southridge.

But Willis is uninterested in rehashing the past after Gordon appointed him chairman of the committee, which he says will include queer members of the community as well as teaching staff and students.

"There were so many mistakes made in the process. Being an educational institution and trying to model what needs to happen in a situation like this, we can all learn from how it exploded last week and are starting fresh and moving on from there," said Willis.

A frustrated community fumed about the cancellation, questioning whether prejudice or fear of controversy fueled the original decision. Gordon and the Beaverton School District did not return calls requesting comment.

The committee's role will be to review the content of the play, decide whether it is appropriate to be staged at Southridge and create educational material to provide context.

Willis fought for *The Laramie Project* because of its capacity as a teaching tool, he said.

"The theater is an incredible vehicle to explore humanity to such a depth as to create a compassionate, empathetic, loving individual. Studying *The Laramie Project* is one of the best vehicles I have ever seen that could accomplish this goal," he said.

Willis aims to assemble the committee immediately and begin meeting this month. Southridge could potentially show *The Laramie Project* as early as the spring.

—Jaymee R. Cui

### PIZZA PARTY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN BEND

The Human Dignity Coalition of Bend invites Central Oregonians to help change the face of human rights locally and statewide with other progressively minded people. The group works to end racism and homophobia, advocates for people with disabilities and assists all underserved communities in Central Oregon.

The next meeting will be held 6:30 p.m. Oct. 4 at the Central Oregon Environmental Center, 16 N.W. Kansas Ave. in Bend. If you

have questions, contact Amy Davidson at 541-385-3320 or amy@humandignitycoalition.org.

### CITY CLUB TO DISCUSS METH USE

At its weekly Friday Forum luncheon Sept. 23, City Club of Portland presents "Methademic: A Reasoned Look at Public Crisis," with guest speakers Mark McDonnell, senior deputy district attorney for Multnomah County; Rita Sullivan, executive director of OnTrack, a rehabilitation center in Medford; and Steve Suo, a journalist for *The Oregonian* who has covered the meth beat extensively.

City Club's Friday Forum, which is open to the public, will be held in the Governor Hotel, 614 S.W. 11th Ave. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. The program begins at 12:15 p.m. and concludes at 1:15.

Luncheon reservations must be made by calling 503-228-7231, ext. 103 or 102, or visiting [www.pdxcityclub.org](http://www.pdxcityclub.org) by 2 p.m. Sept. 21. Members only may call 503-241-9242.

Luncheon tickets are \$20 for nonmembers, \$16 for members. Coffee/tea table tickets are \$5 at the door. General seating, available at the door, is \$5 for nonmembers, free for members.

Use of methamphetamines, a drug that's cheap, easy to make and particularly widespread in the Northwest, has far-reaching effects on communities and has affected gay men disproportionately. Obvious consequences for users and manufacturers include illness, injury and death.

From 2001 to 2004, meth ranked as the state's second-deadliest illicit drug, with the number of meth-related deaths increasing from 50 to 78 in that period.

Police estimate 85 percent of property crimes and crimes involving identity theft are directly tied to meth use. There are also increased costs to the public for medical services and emergency room use for meth users and producers.

Meth use also contributes to domestic violence, child abuse, motor vehicle accidents and the spread of infectious diseases through shared needles and high-risk sexual behavior. And its manufacture degrades environmental quality when hazardous components and byproducts find their way into soil, water and air.

### WELCOME TO THE ORDER OF BENEVOLENT BLISS

The Order of Benevolent Bliss has been founded in Portland, according to Sister Mona Little-Moore, mistress of novices. The organization is a missionary order of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. The organization was founded to help serve the sexual minorities community through fund raising for other charitable/nonprofit organizations, safer-sex education and community outreach.

The Sisters formed in San Francisco more than 25 years ago and have raised and distributed more than \$500,000 to other charitable organizations. They were the first to create and



The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence used this image in one of the first safer-sex guides created for gay men.