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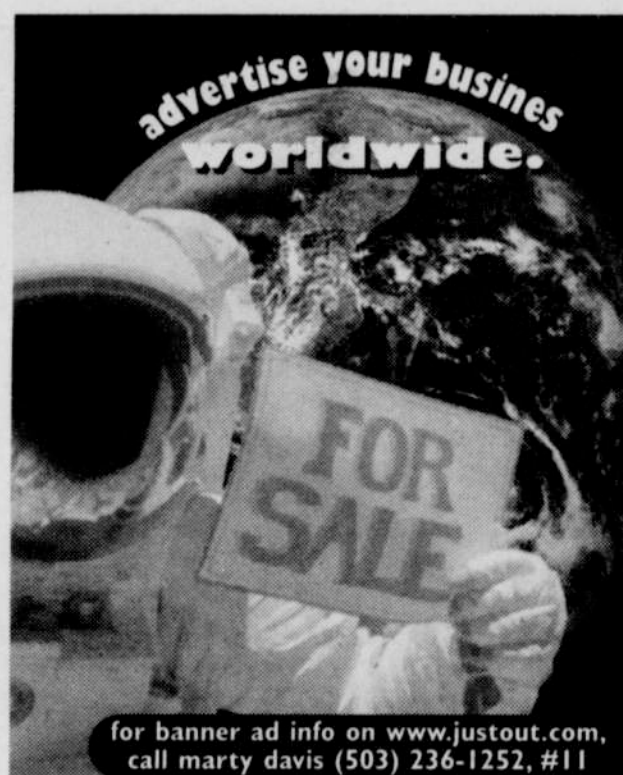
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northwest

Off the List

Portland is off the list of *Girlfriends* magazine's "10 Best Lesbian Places to Live," according to an article in the November issue.

Before hitting "send" on that quickly drafted e-mail in defense of Puddletown, take solace that our rainbow-striped city ranked No. 11.

Drawing from criteria such as whether cities have queer community centers, dyke marches, anti-discrimination laws and low housing prices as well as the concentration of lesbian-oriented businesses, bars and publications, *Girlfriends* ranked Northwest sister cities Olympia at No. 3 and Seattle in the No. 10 spot.

Seattle, which slipped from No. 1 in 1999, pulls rank for its dyke march and extra-large number of gay-friendly businesses and nonprofit organizations.

Corvallis made an unexpected appearance as the city with the ninth-highest concentration of lesbian-headed households.

Provincetown, Mass., took the top spot.

Love Thine Enemy

Love thy nasty neighbor was the prevailing message of a Nov. 6 *Statesman Journal* editorial regarding the Marion County Circuit Court ruling to uphold Measure 36, Oregon's same-sex marriage ban.

"Resolution is not possible until people stop vilifying each other, start talking," the subhead scolded.

But will a heart-to-heart really melt decades of hate and prejudice same-sex couples and their families have faced from fundamentalists such as the Defense of Marriage Coalition?

The Salem newspaper's editorial board backed up Judge Joseph Guimond's ruling, called arguments from Basic Rights Oregon's attorney "weak" and said ousting Speaker Karen Minnis, who blocked the House from debating anti-discrimination legislation, would not bridge the state's social divide.

"Amid the nasty political and legal battles, one reality gets overlooked: Good, ethical, caring and honest people can be found on either side of this issue, and in the uncertain middle," the article stated.

Rebekah Kassell, spokeswoman for BRO, wasn't feeling the lovefest.

"While I think is true that those in the middle and many 'yes' voters are good people who truly don't understand how this measure hurts people in this state, the same cannot be said for those who aggressively work to ensure that discrimination against GLBT people in Oregon in things like jobs and housing remains legal, who spread lies about gay people to advance their cause, who put anti-gay measures on the Oregon ballot year after year and contribute large sums of money to that end and who want to make sure that GLBT people remain second-class citizens in this state with no legal recognition or protection under the law," Kassell said.

Technically, You're Wrong

The Oregonian also ran an editorial in support of Marion County Circuit Court Judge Joseph Guimond's ruling to uphold the same-sex marriage ban.

The editorial board continued to call Measure 36 "sad, mean-spirited and just plain wrong," yet it called Basic Rights Oregon's arguments an attempt to get off on a technicality. "Overturning the voter-approved constitutional amendment on legal technicalities would be a serious setback to the march for equal rights for gay Oregonians," the editorial stated.

While *The Oregonian* cautioned that voter resent-



Girlfriends magazine ranked Portland as the 11th best place for lesbians to live.

media watch

ment would be the outcome, queers questioned the worth of their own resentment after their state nullified their marriages and voted to leave their families vulnerable.

In actuality, Martinez vs. Kulongoski, which was filed on behalf

of BRO, argued that Measure 36 was invalid because of both technical and civil rights-based arguments.

Ideologically, the lawsuit argued that changes to the Oregon Constitution resulting from Measure 36 are so sweeping, they revise, not amend, the document, in essence creating two classes of Oregonians, which violates the spirit of the document.

Repeat After the Right

In a Nov. 8 editorial, Eugene's *Register-Guard* made the suspiciously familiar argument that Basic Rights Oregon's lawsuit was an attempt to overturn Measure 36 on a technicality.

Echoing *The Oregonian*, the newspaper stated, "The organization would do better, however, attempting to prevail in the court of public opinion rather than the courts of law."

Perhaps the *Register-Guard* editorial board should have copied from BRO's cheat sheet when it gave the lesson that, historically, courts have played a significant role in the advancement of civil rights.

"No one method will alone result in full equality," said Rebekah Kassell of BRO. "From equal rights for women to interracial marriage and immigrant rights struggles, it has been the courts—not the consensus of the people—that has led our state and our country forward toward justice and equality for all."

Gay Judge Steps Down Amid Controversy

Multnomah County Judge Sid Galton—aka Sid Vicious, according to a January *Willamette Week* article—stepped down Oct. 31, accepting early medical retirement. Insiders believe he took the option to avoid discipline.

Galton, who is out and proud, is one of the most controversial figures in the county court system. Quirky and active in queer causes, including singing with the Portland Gay Men's Chorus, he racked up his share of critics, several of whom are attorneys refusing to appear before him in court. He has earned a reputation of being petty, vindictive and unprofessional.

Galton has been dodging a disciplinary hearing since the state Commission on Judicial Fitness and Disability filed a complaint against him for bullying a female prosecutor and cursing in court. In December 2004 he left on paid leave, and in April his attorney reportedly asked that his hearing be delayed on grounds of severe depression.

His case was rescheduled for July 18 but delayed 90 days at Galton's request. His last day on the job was just 12 days past the 90-day reschedule, excusing him from the threat of discipline or removal.

Galton would have been eligible for retirement in January 2007. 19

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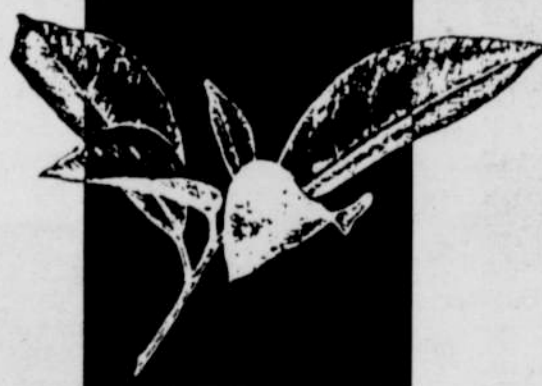
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