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retirees have set a new record for generosity, raising \$1.2 million in just one month in the annual Employee Giving Campaign.

In addition to the funds raised, PGE employees volunteered more than 67,700 hours at local charities, schools and community service projects.

Of interest to the queer community, PGE and its employees raised money for Basic Rights Oregon, Cascade AIDS Project, Camp Starlight, Equity Foundation, the Portland Gay Men's Chorus and the Sexual Minority Youth Resource Center.

The 2005 PGE Employee Giving Campaign raised \$1,228,992, up almost 30 percent from the previous record of \$950,271 set in 2004. With the theme of "Power On," the 2005 campaign ran from Oct. 10 to Nov. 4. PGE's 2,800 employees and retirees could designate any charitable nonprofit or accredited school to receive their pledges, and PGE matched their contributions by 50 percent. Since the company match program started in 1998, PGE employees and retirees have contributed more than \$6 million to their communities through the Employee Giving Campaign.

Kids Benefit from Toy Drive

The East Portland Community Center played host Dec. 2 to a party for children sponsored by the Friends of People with AIDS Foundation. A visit from Portland Mayor Tom Potter was nice, but what drew the attention of the children in attendance were the toys donated through a partnership with Cascade AIDS Project's Kids Connection program and Partnership Project.

For the past 10 years, the foundation has purchased, wrapped and delivered holiday gifts to children infected or affected by HIV/AIDS in the Portland area. In 2004, the program delivered gifts to 178 children. This year it was decided that a party gathering families together with health care providers and friends would be more effective.

The foundation, a 501(c)3 organization, has been providing services in the Portland community for 15 years.

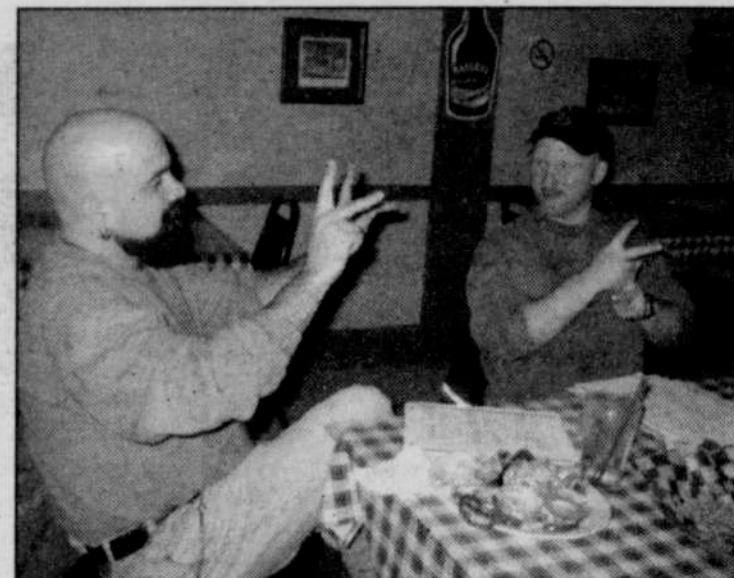
For more information contact Kevin Friends at chair@friendspwa.org or visit www.friendspwa.org.

Bears Gather to Learn American Sign Language

Twice a month since August at Garberos Café, the Oregon Bears and their friends have been meeting for American Sign Language classes.

The brainchild of Johnny Cub, who held the title of Oregon Cub last year, this class is meant to bring hearing and deaf members of the bear community together and to provide basic ASL instruction for hearing bears. The class is nonprogressive, which means anyone can start at any time. The cost is a mere \$2.

Johnny's grandmother was deaf, and he decided to put on the class in her memory after meeting some deaf bears at the National Bear Rendezvous in San



Steve Nail (left) teaches Johnny Cub some action words at the Oregon Bears' ASL class.

Francisco when he was a titleholder.

Interim instructor Steve Nail is a recent transplant from that city as well and has been an interpreter for more than 15 years.

Both men want the atmosphere to be welcoming and not intimidating. "I don't want people to think it is hard and get frustrated and not come. It is a really fun class," notes Nail.

Garbero's is located at 414 S.W. 14th Ave. Classes are held from 7 to 9 p.m. each second and fourth Thursday.

Historic Women's Land in Southern Oregon Robbed

Sometime between Nov. 5 and 19, nearly every object of value was stolen from OWL Farm, located outside Day's Creek in southern Oregon. A generator, mower, chipper, weed eaters, propane tanks and other items were taken from the property after locked doors were broken off their hinges.

Sabrina Damewood, steward of the farm and skilled craftswoman, lost her lifetime collection of tools for her livelihood, including a router, tile-setting tools, a chop saw and plumbing and painting supplies.

OWL Farm is located on 147 acres of forest and has been held by Oregon Women's Land Trust for nearly 30 years.

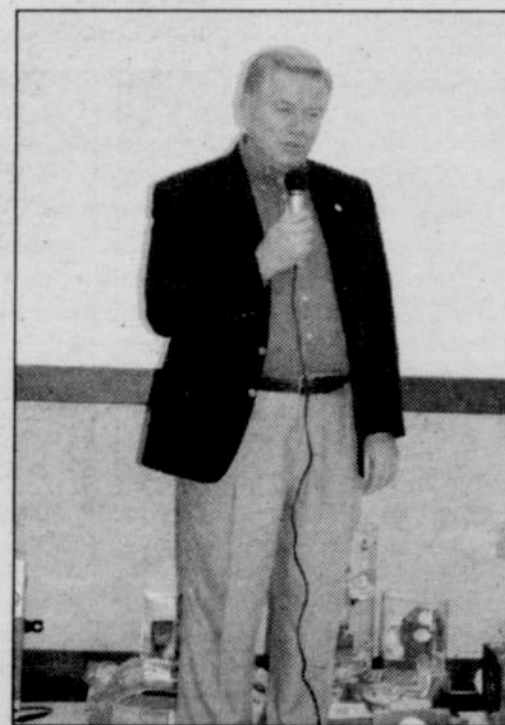
Spokeswoman Bethroot Gwynn describes this time as a "fallow" season for the farm, when there are no full-time residents besides the steward, who was not on the property at the time of the robbery.

The trust was founded in 1975 and has provided hundreds of women the opportunity to live and work on the land regardless of personal resources. The trust also serves as fiscal sponsors for other nonprofit women's lands throughout the region.

The trust is a 501(c)3 organization and has set up a special fund to help replace Damewood's tools and make repairs to the farm. If you have tools you are not using, or could spare some cash, the trust asks you send any help to P.O. Box 1692, Roseburg, OR 97470. For more information call Damewood at 541-677-8182.

Costs of replacing stolen items and making repairs is estimated at more than \$10,000. jo

Compiled by SARAH DOUGHER and JAYMEE R. CUTI



A visit from Portland Mayor Tom Potter was great, but not as great as the toys collected by eager children at the Friends of People with AIDS Foundation holiday party.