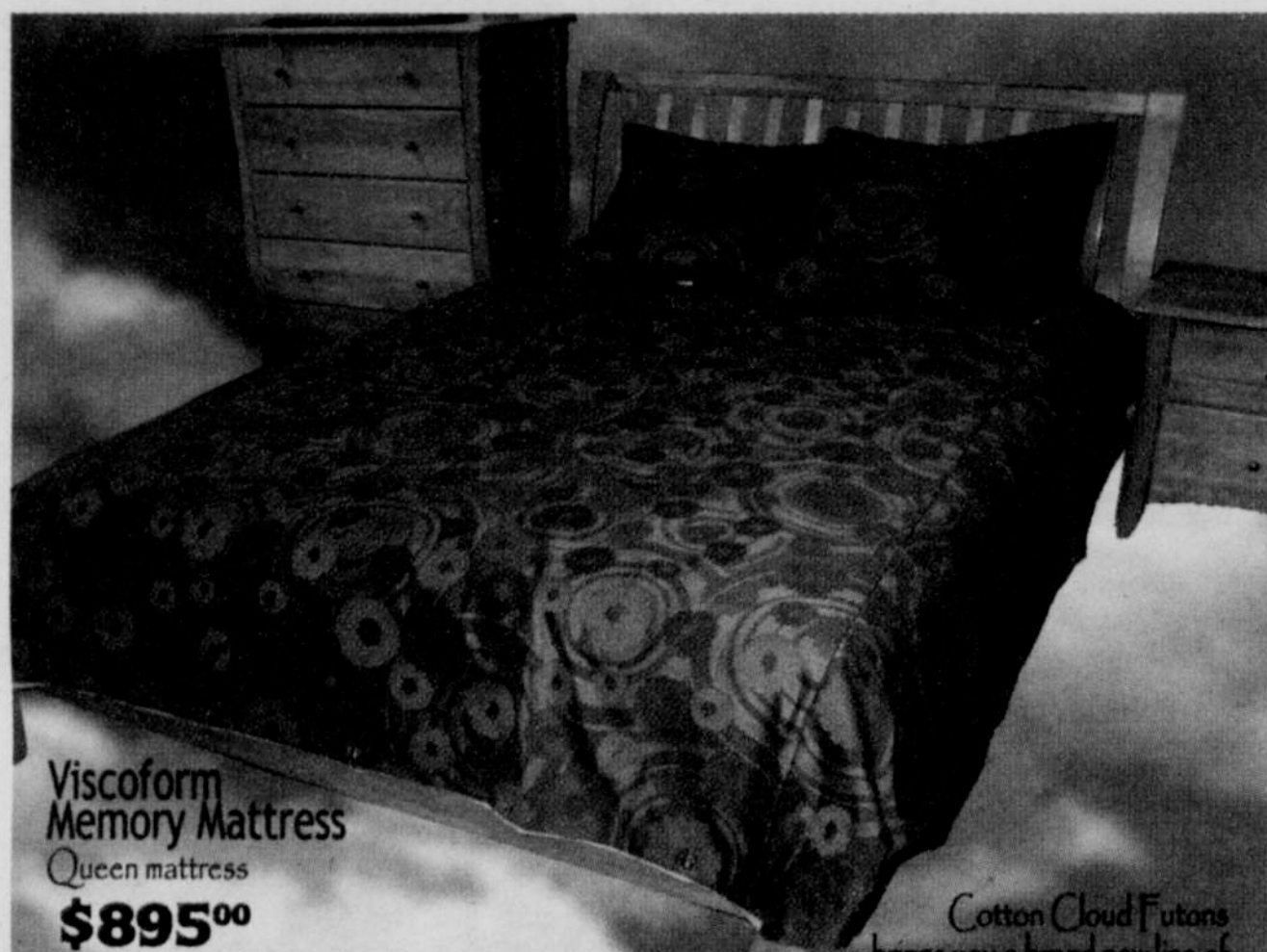




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This One Time at Band Camp...

Rock will continue as director passes the mike

by Jaymee R. Cuti

Just as the legendary rock band Queen persevered after losing Freddy Mercury to AIDS, a board and volunteers from the Rock 'n' Roll Camp for Girls say the nonprofit will keep on rockin' despite the resignation of founder and executive director Misty McElroy.

"Sometimes the best founders don't have the necessary skill set to take it to the next level," said board member Stacy Chamberlain.

McElroy resigned from the camp Nov. 8 amid a tangle of controversy: allegations of mismanagement, failure to produce financial documents and reports of an on-site stalker.

"I wanted the hostile, bullying e-mails [from the board] to stop. I reached my threshold," McElroy explained as the reason for her resignation.

McElroy and the board attended a training at Technical Assistance for Community Services (TACS), which spurred the board to request an annual budget and tax forms from her. She failed to provide those documents and resigned that same week.

On Oct. 9, 2004, McElroy sustained minor injuries from what she calls an attack by a stalker—an uncle who reportedly was imprisoned for sexual abusing her as a teen. "I've had a really rough year, to put it mildly, and I've been asking for help from the board for the last five years and didn't receive any," she said.

Chamberlain says the alleged attack, which occurred at the camp's Northeast Portland location after campers had left for the day, was not a factor in the board's decision not to reinstate McElroy as executive director.

The camp's problems were documented in *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* Sept. 16, 2004. The newspaper article portrays the camp as running lean on its annual budget, with McElroy accepting handouts for instruments, lunches and even toilet paper.

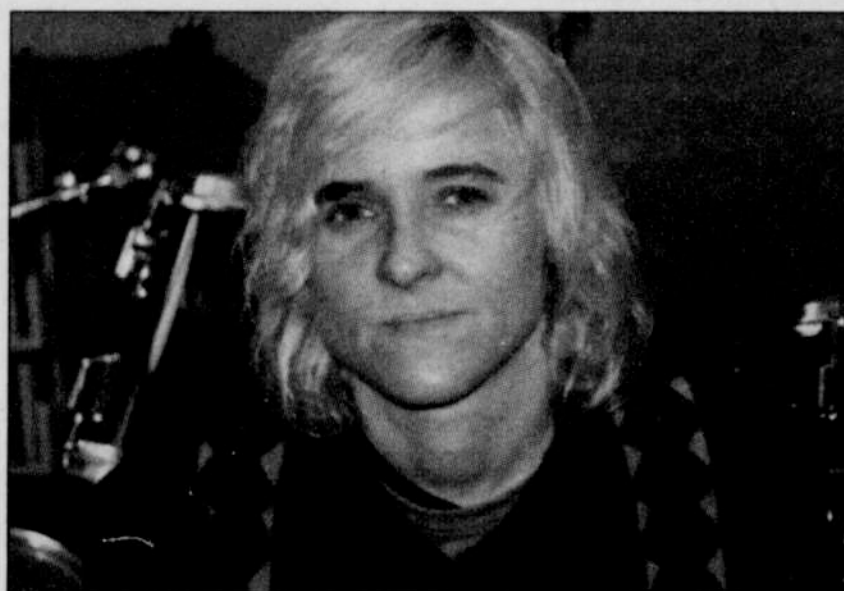
In the article, board chairwoman Pat McGuire stated a need for a development director because of McElroy's inability to effectively raise funds.

According to 2004 tax forms, the camp ran at a deficit with \$101,000 in revenue and \$112,000 in expenses. McElroy says she charged the difference to her credit card.

Though many close to the camp were tight-lipped about the circumstances surrounding McElroy's resignation, one volunteer asks readers to read between the lines.

Portland writer sts, an educator and drum room organizer at the camp since its inception, left the camp in August and returned after McElroy's resignation in November.

"I didn't agree with the direction of the camp at that time, and now that I'm back, I'm really excited about how the camp is going,"



Misty McElroy recently resigned as director of the Rock 'n' Roll Camp for Girls.

McElroy said she had every intention of providing the documents, but not in the 24-hour timeline the board demanded.

Chamberlain said no such ultimatum was in place. "I can assure you the board never demanded a turnaround of 24 hours," she told *Just Out*.

McElroy asked the board to be reinstated Nov. 9, but the board refused.

McElroy's attorney, Joe Mabe, claims his client's resignation is not official.

"It is my position that there has not been a change in leadership in the Rock 'n' Roll Camp at this time," he said, declining to elaborate. There is no arbitration and no lawsuit, though McElroy claims the camp has thousands of dollars of her music equipment, which she says she needs back to start a new organization.

Also in question is a car donated to the camp that McElroy claims she purchased from the camp, and is willing to sell back to the camp, and a \$2,100 paycheck she signed to herself the day after her resignation.

McElroy contends that events in her personal life had a hand in being pushed out of the organization she created for her senior project at Portland State University.

sts said. "The board has been working with current staff and volunteers to continue with the camp's mission to help the rock camp grow."

McElroy has supporters, as well, who say they will follow her to the next enterprise.

"I don't think my daughter would be the confident young woman she is without Misty's curriculum," said Lisa Lawer, whose daughter attended the camp for four years.

McElroy says she will continue to fight for what she calls her "intellectual property," even if that is in the form of her new camp, Rock Power for Girls, which already has a Web site.

McElroy characterizes the recent events as a betrayal. "It's character assassination, and it's disappointing that the dyke community is taking part in it."

TACS is assisting the camp in culling an interim director before 2006. TACS is also helping the camp conduct an internal audit. The board is investigating the stalker allegation to ensure the safety of campers, according to Chamberlain.

"The volunteers made the camp what it is," she said. "We're very confident we'll be able to get through this without the girls noticing too much." **10**