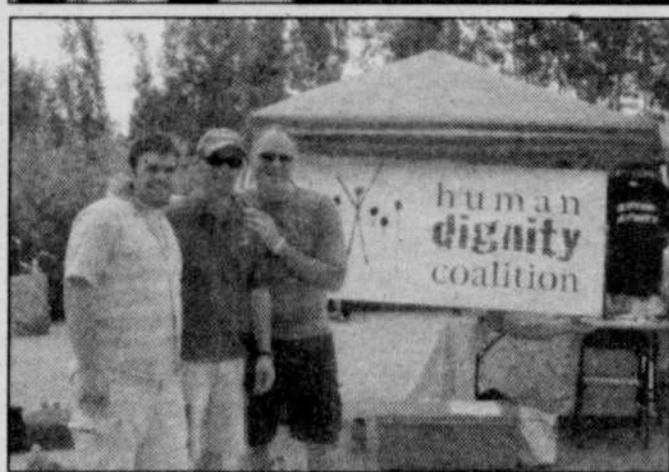
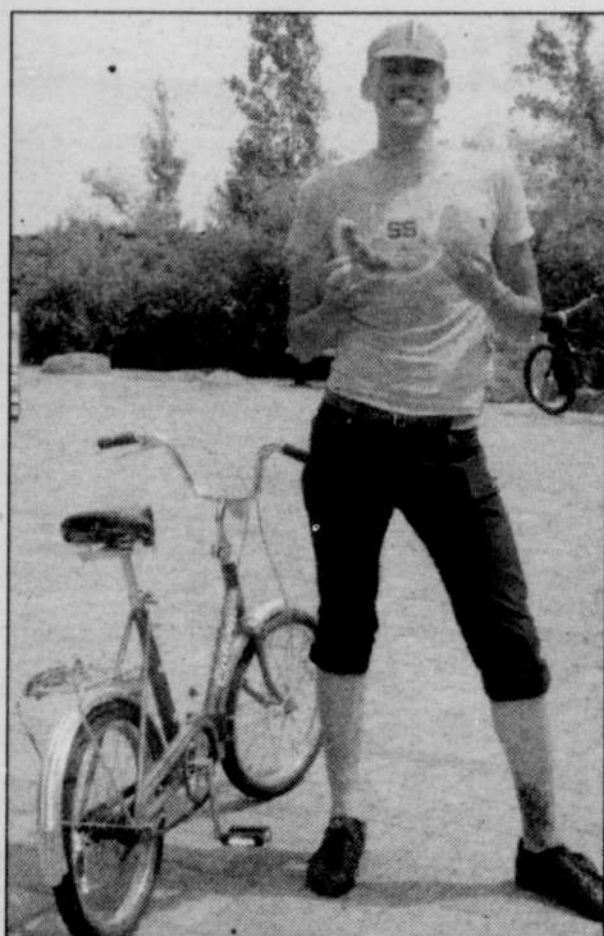


00623067904857 YEAR IN REVIEW



Central Oregonians took the impressive step of celebrating Pride publicly in June.

Statewide Pride

Debuts and struggles

by Sarah Dougher

Throughout the state, queer Oregonians and their allies celebrated Pride in the months of June and July. This year, positive developments in community building came from neighbors to the east in Bend, when close to 100 Central Oregonians celebrated Gay Pride Month at Bend's first-ever public Pride event June 19. Representatives from the Human Dignity Coalition and Basic Rights Oregon were on hand distributing materials while friends and families from the community enjoyed a potluck, games, music and even a traditional float down the Deschutes River. The event was covered by local media, including the local television station, where it made the top story during the 6 o'clock news.

Queer activism in Bend is alive and well; check up on the Web sites www.glbtbend.com and www.humandignitycoalition.org for more information.

Another newcomer to the state's Pride celebrations was the first-ever North Portland Pride BBQ and Festival, held June 12. About 50 people from throughout Portland came to University Park United Methodist Church, the primary sponsor for the event, to kick off Pride Week with food, music and good company. Vendors included North Portland resources, neighbors, real estate agents, mortgage brokers and housing developers.

The next weekend, the sun shone on queer revelers and allies at Portland Pride '05. Despite changes and forces of resistance, approximately 50,000 people from Portland and far beyond wound their way from the parade to the festival to the Pride Warehouse Party and Taking Pride in Stark Street Block Party.

The crowd exploded into applause for former Mayor Vera Katz, who rode in a stylish classic car and waved majestically to the crowd. Many other public servants and dignitaries were also in attendance.

"Most of the feedback I've gotten has been positive, and the volunteers had a good time," said Tobin Britton, former president of Pride Northwest. "I chalk that up as a success."

Nevertheless, the board planning Pride is perennially understaffed and seeking new volunteers to help put next year's event together. For more information visit www.pridenw.org. 10



MARTY DAVIS

Vigils and protests were for naught as House Speaker Karen Minnis prevented civil rights legislation from being considered in the Oregon House.

A Year in Civil Rights

Queers get the short end of the stick

by Jaymee R. Cuti

Civil rights for sexual minorities suffered a stream of defeats in 2005, beginning with the nullification of 3,000 same-sex marriages in Multnomah County.

One month after the celebration of first anniversaries, Oregon's highest court slapped Multnomah County queers back down to second-class citizens with the announcement that marriages between same-sex couples were not legally recognized.

Portland Mayor Tom Potter, whose daughter Katie's marriage to her same-sex partner was nullified, issued this statement: "To deny two people the basic legal rights that every American in a loving, committed relationship enjoys simply because of their gender is a slap at the core moral values that shaped our country, and a denial of our collective humanity."

This decision came on the heels of governor-backed legislation combining civil unions and a ban on discrimination.

Senate Bill 1000, which would have created civil unions and added sexual minorities to the list of groups protected by the state's anti-bias law, was introduced April 13 by Gov. Ted Kulongoski. The bill was debated for two hours on the Senate floor July 8 before 17 Democrats and two Republicans passed the bill.

"Who are we to deny an individual the legitimacy

of their humanity," said a passionate state Sen. Ben Westlund of Tumalo, Republican co-sponsor of the legislation.

The bill met defeat in the form of House Speaker Karen Minnis, R-Wood Village, when she refused to bring it to a vote in her chamber.

More bad news came in November when the Marion County Circuit Court decided to uphold Measure 36, the ban on same-sex marriage, citing precedent set by the Oregon Supreme Court and Appellate Court.

Basic Rights Oregon, the organization filing the lawsuit, vows this fight is far from over and plans to take the case to the Oregon Court of Appeals and ultimately the Oregon Supreme Court.

BRO spokeswoman Rebekah Kassell gave queer rights supporters a glimpse into the future.

"In '06, we will make strategic advancements on legislative seats, defend Senate seats we need to defend and work to win seats in the House, which includes the coalition effort to unseat the speaker," she said. "We hope that we continue to make advancements in Oregon court with our lawsuit challenging Measure 36. We will also soon proceed with additional litigation over fundamental questions of whether a state can deny same-sex couples the benefits and protections of marriage." 10

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