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Frankie, Frances

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Ho Ho Ho Mos

Making the yuletide gay

Tis the season to be jolly. So, heedless of the wind and weather, I set out to enjoy the most wonderful time of the year.

Robert North and **Will Simonds** decked the halls of their West Hills Victorian for their annual holiday fete, where I sipped hot cider with **Matt Jaffe** and **Kevin Mork**. Kevin recently returned from Thailand and Japan, where he taught English. **Oscar Fernández** introduced me to his cute new boyfriend, **Seth Olson**, who sings in the Portland Gay Men's Chorus. And, of course, it wouldn't be a party without my favorite chorus boy, **Scott Osburne**, who let me kiss him under the mistletoe.

There was no mistletoe at Saucebox, but that didn't stop me from giving the mayor of San Francisco, the Honorable **Gavin Newsom** (in honorary bold type) a big sloppy kiss to thank him for being my hero. You'll recall that Newsom joyfully and triumphantly opened the doors of City Hall for gays and lesbians to marry. The courageous move set off a slew of wedding bells and a political firestorm that follows him to this day.

"When we combine diversity with tolerance, it's something magical," Newsom said in a stirring speech. While raising funds for his re-election campaign, he made spirits bright by galvanizing local supporters including **Devin Russo** as well as **Chris Lehtonen** and **Kelly Sherman**, who reported that, after 10 years as friends, they are finally dating. And political junkie **Bryan Harding** told me about GayRightsWatch.com, his daily blog. After reading a few entries, I plan to follow it regularly, as he had me laughing all the way.

I also chatted with Saucebox owner **Bruce Carey**, who told me his newest restaurant was opening that night. So, Marc and I headed up to Balvo on Northwest 23rd Avenue, where we had a holly jolly time sampling its "New York Italian style cuisine." (Try the luscious calamari appetizer.) Balvo combines Bruce's trademark elegance with a friendly neighborliness. And, of course, it wouldn't be a Bruce Carey restaurant without hot bartenders for when we come a-wassailing.

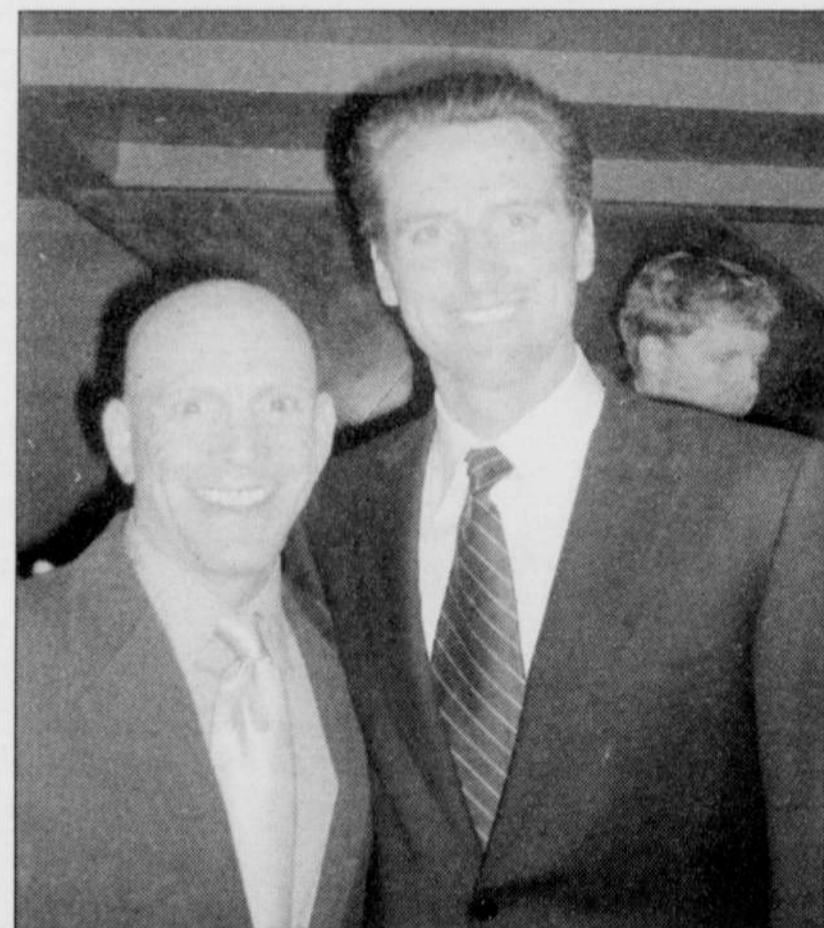
While we're on the subject of food, **Michael Rowe** and **John West** had plenty of it at their lovely townhouse in deepest Beaverton, including scores of phyllo cups with different fillings. (Phyllo cups made more appearances at parties this year than even Scott Osburne.) Mike and John met on Gay.com but had a mixed crowd including **Nate Smith** and **Mike Binks** (still finding their way around after arriving from Utah just five months ago) and my favorite fag hag, Shannon Schutt.

Next, it was over the river and through the hood to the 17th annual holiday party of **Deborah Lewis** and **Karen Sweigert**, just returned from an Olivia Cruise to the Gallapagos. I look forward to Deborah and Karen's event each year for two reasons. First, it's the only chance I get to see faithful friends who are dear to us, such as **Steph Crowell** and **Pat Garner**. But, more importantly, they serve the kind of buffet normally seen on cruise ships.



Out Going
BY FLOYD SKLAVER


Tammy Leibfarth and **Kelly Hoepfner** of Simply Thyme Catering simply outdid themselves with a spread that was anything but simple. Kelly, a former props and costume designer for Portland's Miracle Theatre, displays her theatrical sense with a stylish presentation. Around the buffet table (which included phyllo cups), I met long-term couple **Richard Gerstl** and **Stuart Cox**, who have been together 25 years.



Floyd Sklaver (left) thanks San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom for his courageous heroism.

After all this Christmas cheer, I was longing for God's Chosen People, and so I attended a performance of *Hello Bubbela* at CoHo Theatre. "Certified laughter leader" **Gail Hand** channeled fond memories of growing up in New Jersey with her Jewish grandmother in this one-woman show. Gail's affectionate portrayal of her beloved bubbe played to a near sold-out crowd that included **Tammam El-Khodor**, **Sheila Yates** and the uncommonly named **Basja**.

Finally, lest we forget, the holiday season is also the time of the winter solstice, so **David Krause** threw a party on the shortest day of the year. Handsome acupuncturist **Gary Bondurant** was there, newly single after his boyfriend returned to Pennsylvania to be closer to family, as was **Camron Hamilton**, who calls Portland home again after a hedonistic stint in Los Angeles working for a luxury car dealer.

Well, that's it for 2005, which, like yours truly, is Out Going. 

FLOYD SKLAVER wants to know about your event. E-mail him at floydsklaver@comcast.net.