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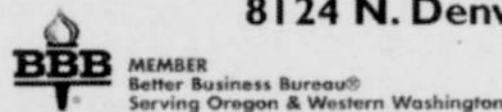
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excellent job of moving queer rights forward. More recently, he has become impressed with the way HRC has expanded its role beyond a political organization.

"They're not just involved with what's happening on Capitol Hill," Canon says. "They're involved with corporations, religious movements and family law."

Canon says gay rights are not just tied to how our elected representatives vote. "When we change the minds of corporations, people we work with and our families, that leads to changing the minds of elected officials."

Canon encourages anyone who is interested in working for the equal rights of sexual minorities to attend the monthly HRC Portland Emerging Community meetings. More information can be found at www.hrc.org/portland.

Share an Evening

"Sharing an Evening for SHARE," a fund-raiser for Senior Housing and Retirement Enterprises, offers dancing to the big band sounds of Rose City Swing, with amazing performances by Out Dancing and a silent auction, from 8 to 11 p.m. May 6 at Ambridge Event Center, 300 N.E. Multnomah St. Poison Waters is the mistress of ceremonies.

State's First Openly Gay Judge Retires

David Gernant, the first openly gay male judge in Oregon, left 13 years of experience behind when his retirement from the Multnomah County Circuit Court went into effect April 1. He will now pursue other interests, although he will remain a senior judge until November.

For Gernant, one of the benefits of his job was performing weddings. "It's one of the perks of being a judge—some don't see it as such, but I do more than most," he said. Gernant himself performed approximately 150 weddings each year, about half of which were conducted in Spanish.

Gernant graduated from Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo and thereafter attended

Harvard Law School, then one of only two students to do so from WMU. Since then he has worked in the Virgin Islands, central Alaska and Washington, D.C., before becoming the legal counsel to the Oregon Supreme Court in the early 1980s.

An unusually high number of lawyers initially vied for his vacancy—try nine—but several have since dropped out, leaving Cheryl Albrecht, Julia Philbrook, Lane Borg, Kathleen Payne and openly gay candidate Trung Tu. Albrecht attributes this unprecedented number to the low count of judicial appointments in the past several years.

There are several other openly gay judges in Multnomah County, including Janice Wilson, who was the first out lesbian judge in Oregon, even before Gernant.

"He was a pioneer and a thinker," said Multnomah County pro tem judge and circuit court judge contestant Albrecht. "For him to come out 13 years ago—that took a lot of courage."

Albrecht, who has worked with and appeared in front of Gernant, knows him both as a colleague and judge. "On the bench he exhibited a strong independence from public opinion and pressure. He did what he truly felt was right under the law," she said. "He will be hard to replace."

ROP Holds Annual Gathering

The Rural Caucus & Strategy Session became a mobile event last year with the Walk for Truth, Justice & Community.

This year, the Rural Organizing Project's annual gathering is May 6 and 7 in Woodburn. Join rural Oregon's progressive movement to advance strategies that push back against the war in Iraq and the war at home while developing skills for confronting the anti-immigrant movement and other wedge issues such as civil liberties, marriage and taxes.

For reservations and more information, call 503-543-8417 or e-mail car@rop.org.

Timeless Treasures Event Announced

From old books and artwork to collectable china and furniture that has been in the family for generations, Timeless Treasures is the chance to find out if you have a rarity or refuse in your possession.

Have your heirlooms appraised by professionals at Elders in Action's sixth annual Timeless Treasures event. Proceeds will benefit the nonprofit organization's Ombudsman program, a volunteer service that provides one-on-one assistance to local elders in need.

Attendees will enjoy a buffet dinner, a silent auction and raffles prizes. The recipient of the 2006 Timeless Treasure award will be announced at the event.

Timeless Treasures is from 3 to 7 p.m. April 27 at the Oregon Zoo's Cascade Crest Banquet Center, 4001 S.W. Canyon Road. Tickets are \$35 for seniors and \$50 for the general public from 503-823-5269.

Equal Benefits Ordinance Passes City Council

The Portland City Council unanimously passed the Equal Benefits Ordinance on April 19. The ordinance ensures that contractors doing work on behalf of the city



Todd Canon (top row, third from left) is the winner of an HRC award for federal club co-chairman of the year.