

# out standing

## Out for God

**G**rowing up, the Rev. Wes Mullins imagined his future ministry work would be with a fundamentalist church. "Things took a dramatic turn along the way," says the new assistant pastor at Metropolitan Community Church of Portland.

Mullins is from Clinton, Tenn., where ex-gay groups like "True Hope...For the Best Alternative" take the lead in helping people with their sexual orientation issues. In college, he became involved in a 12-month therapy program where men delved into their most dark and personal places. "I was literally coming apart at that time," he says. "I'd go to sleep afraid I would wake up crazy."

After pulling himself through college and the tumult of his "ex-gay" experience, Mullins went to Abilene, Texas, to attain a master of divinity. "There was still something about the ministry I was supposed to do."

While Mullins was open about being gay, the dean of the school made the rules clear: "I could mess around with guys. I just couldn't do anything ethical like have a holy union." And so upon his holy union with partner Jason O'Neill, Mullins was kicked out of the seminary.

The couple moved to Portland two months ago, and Mullins has since been busy working with Elevation, the queer Christian rock band and the



The Rev. Wes Mullins does good work at MCC.

Sunday evening service where it performs. While the service is for everyone, it is geared toward people 18 to 35 years old.

"I don't pretend to know the answers," says the 25-year-old. "I'm here to journey with people, gay or nongay, to find God. And that may not be the same thing for the person sitting next to you."

Mullins' personal journey has inspired his help for others. "I want to provide a place where gay people can express their spirituality. The powerful religious right is trying to take that away, but I'm determined not to let them do that."

For more information visit [www.mccportland.com/elevation.htm](http://www.mccportland.com/elevation.htm).

—Malka Geffen

# just asking

Are you feeling the impact of rising gas prices? What are you doing about it?



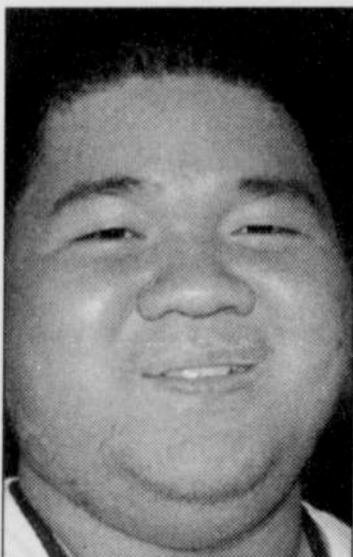
GRACE HAGUE  
Friendly House Senior  
Program Director

"I'm definitely feeling the impact at \$3 per gallon. I'm really trying to reduce my trips and keep them down to less than 100 miles per week."



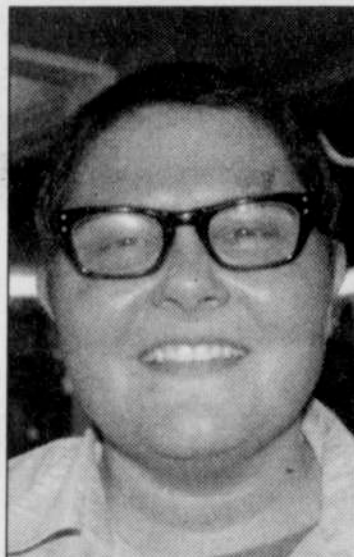
CHRIS LAWRENCE  
Real Estate  
Photographer

"I drive for a living, so it's affecting me harshly. I'm bike commuting when I can."



AN DO  
Student

"Yes, I am. My parents cannot drive me a lot of places anymore. I have to take the bus more often."



ZELDA PITTENGER  
Chamer

"I don't really think about it much because I don't have a car. I think we're getting close to an honest cost of fuel."

"So, the one night stand worked?"

"Maybe it's time to get that bigger place...?"

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*Valentino*

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