

# northwest

discussing a court case regarding same-sex marriage in Washington.

Referendum 65 would add gender identity and sexual orientation to anti-discrimination laws on Washington's books since 1949. Equal Rights Washington also aims to build a network to keep citizens updated and begin a postcard campaign with the message, "I support marriage equality."

For more information or to share your story, visit [www.equalrightswashington.org](http://www.equalrightswashington.org).

## Men's Wellness Center Opens

Cascade AIDS Project will celebrate the opening of its Men's Wellness Center, a place designed to address the unique issues of gay and bisexual men, June 17 and 18.

The center intends to provide gay and bisexual men with information needed to make healthy choices, free HIV testing and screening for sexually transmitted diseases from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Tuesdays starting June 6 at 928 S.W. Stark St.

"The Men's Wellness Center provides a venue for needed discussion around the issues of HIV and STDs and men's wellness in general," says program manager Michael Anderson-Nathe. "We are attempting here a more holistic approach to men's health, one that expands beyond traditional models of disease prevention."

Hours for opening weekend at the Men's Wellness Center are 3 to 9 p.m. June 17 and noon to 9 p.m. June 18. Activities include games with prizes.

Additional hours for the center are tentatively set for 4 to 10 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays. For more information visit [www.cascadeaids.org](http://www.cascadeaids.org).

## Writing Benefits Vulnerable Groups

Write Around Portland (WRAP) runs volunteer-facilitated writing workshops for people affected by HIV/AIDS, prisoners, survivors of domestic violence, seniors in foster care, people in recovery or with physical or mental disabilities, refugees, teenagers living on the street, low-income adults and others who might not have access to the power of writing in community because of income, isolation or other barriers.

WRAP holds community readings to promote the exchange of stories and publishes anthologies to connect writers and readers.

The group is holding a First Thursday benefit with an art opening and reading from 6 to 9 p.m. July 6 at B-Street Gallery, 202 N.W. 13th Ave.

Admission is free, but donations are accepted.

Gay author Tom Spanbauer reads at a benefit for WRAP from 6 to 9 p.m. Aug. 9 at Design Within Reach, 1200 N.W. Everett St.

For ticket information call 503-796-9224 or visit [www.writearound.org](http://www.writearound.org).

## Western States Center Has Family Values

Western States Center celebrates the release of a report from its recent "Family, Community and Sexuality" summit in Boise, Idaho, during a fundraiser from 7 to 9 p.m. June 9 at Billy Reed's Restaurant, 2808 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. There will be a no-host bar and a special appearance by Air America Radio host Laura Flanders.

The project develops cohesive progressive strategy around the issues of marriage, family and sexuality. According to its Web site: "Western States Center will develop new political education tools that help organizations break down stereotypical patriarchal and racist notions of family, gender roles and sexuality. These materials will also help groups develop an understanding of how the right uses wedge strategies based in patriarchy, specifically anti-queer ballot measures and anti-reproductive choice legislation."

The summit report, *Building a Movement from the Ground Up*, tells the story of how 17 organizations in the region conducted grassroots research on challenges and opportunities facing families and communities and then gathered to develop a set of progressive family values. The summit group developed a shared understanding of how race, gender, economics, sexual orientation and identity shape how we define family, who we take care of and how that is reflected in public policy.

The report acknowledges, "In spite of many successes, progressives have been unable to respond to the conservative family values agenda with a coherent proactive strategy." The summit provided organizations in the region the opportunity to have open conversations about potentially divisive issues and create an inclusive response. Among the participants, there was consensus that the current definition of "nuclear family" serves as a basis for government practices and public policy that undermine families throughout our region; there is a critical need for comprehensive public policies

Continued on Page 11



From left, Western States Center staffers Kalpana Krishnamurthy, Scot Nakagawa and Moira Bowman attend the recent "Family, Community and Sexuality" summit.



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