

Holocene: The Spirit of Portland's Pride

by Malka Geffen

Scott McLean and Jarkko Cain, owners of Holocene, are the recipients of Pride Northwest's 2006 Spirit of Pride Award. "Holocene has provided a fresh space that has played host to numerous queer and queer-friendly events," said Pride Northwest president Nicole Browning.

Holocene, located at 1001 S.E. Morrison St., hosts Gaycation with DJs Saffronica, Harmony and Beyonda on the first Wednesday of the month. This is followed by Tart, a "swank soiree where the queer girls come to play," on the second Sunday of the month. Double Down, the "queer party where the player always wins," is hosted every last Saturday. The fourth Sunday of each month, Holocene presents Cupcake, a mixed-gender, mixed-sexuality dance party for fat folks and allies.

When asked about the award, Cain said he was delighted and surprised. "Obviously, something like this has everything to do with the 30 people who throw wonderful queer events at Holocene. But if this award is saying Holocene is helping make awesome things possible in Portland, then we're totally flattered."

Cain likes to think of Holocene as more than "just a nightclub." "We love to work with people we like a lot, and we like to host events that add something special to the city. And so many of the cool kids and the nice kids just seem to be gay, too. Go figure."

Just Out readers are encouraged to come check out the monthly and special events at Holocene. "We're having a good time over here and have lots of small and big plans for doing more and better," said Cain, who welcomes feedback. "If you have ideas for an event, let us know." **jo**



Jarkko Cain (left) and Scott McLean play ball with Franny. The Holocene owners are the winners of the 2006 Spirit of Pride Award.

Meet the Grand Marshall

by Malka Geffen

Col. Grethe Cammermeyer of Seattle will be leading the Portland Pride Parade this year as grand marshal. "As a veteran, and grand marshal, I hope my presence will be a reminder of the more than 65,000 gay and lesbian service members currently serving their country. I am representing them since they have to serve in silence under the 'don't ask, don't tell' law of 1993."

Cammermeyer first joined the military as a nurse in 1963. "My father was a physician and mother a nurse. Going into the health care profession was most natural for me."

Cammermeyer was born in 1942 in Oslo, Norway, during Nazi occupation. She and her parents moved to the United States when she was 9. "I joined the military to repay my adopted country, America, for the opportunity to immigrate and also to make nursing more meaningful."

In 1988, Cammermeyer accepted the position of chief nurse for the Washington National Guard. She was asked about her sexual orientation during a security clearance interview in 1989 and told the military she was a lesbian. Despite her long-standing, exemplary record, Cammermeyer was dismissed.

"I was shocked, hurt, humiliated and then angry at being discarded despite my service to America for more than 25 years. Then it seemed as though I had a responsibility to try to change the existing policy; it was my turn to stand up and be counted."

In 1992, Cammermeyer challenged the military's existing ban on homosexuals in the military and requested her reinstatement. After 25 months of legal battles, the policy was ruled unconstitutional and based on prejudice. In 1994, Cammermeyer was reinstated.

That same year she published her autobiography, *Serving in Silence*, and a film of the same name starring Glenn Close became one of the first made-for-television movies to center around a gay character.

"The tragedy is the continued disregard, disrespect and dishonor focused at gay and lesbian service members even today in the military as a result of the 'don't ask, don't tell' law. Many of us continue to speak out on every occasion to raise awareness to the plight of gay and lesbian service members. They cannot call home or talk to colleagues about concerns at home and with family when deployed."

These days, Cammermeyer is still busy advocating for our rights. "I am still involved with the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network in their efforts to overturn the ban. Locally I speak out regarding job discrimination."

Cammermeyer will sign copies of her book during a reception 6:30 p.m. June 16 at Hotel Vintage Plaza, 422 S.W. Broadway. Tickets are \$10. **jo**



Col. Grethe Cammermeyer will show her pride as Portland Pride 2006's grand marshal.

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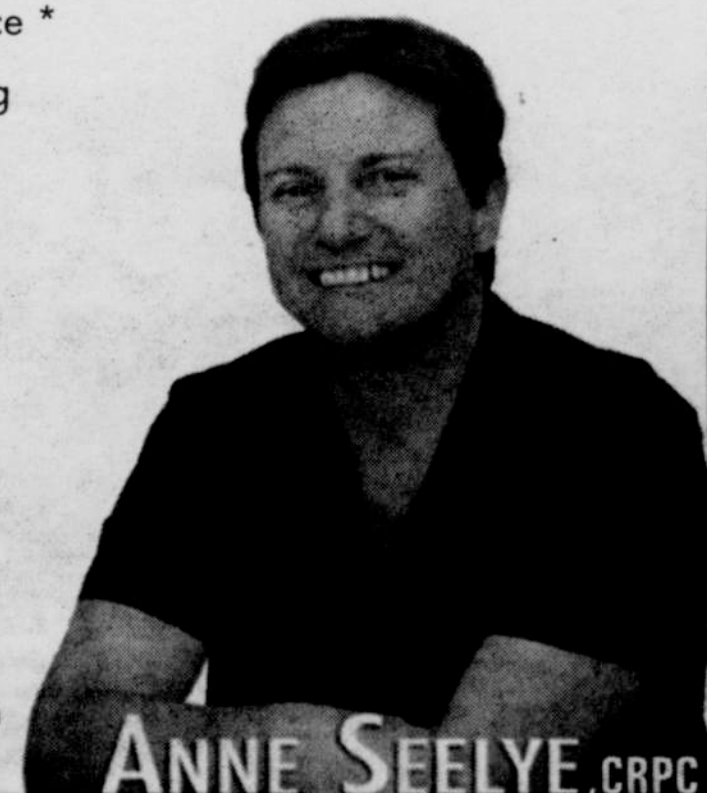


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anneseelye@wradvisors.com



ANNE SEELYE, CRPC
FINANCIAL ADVISOR

503.238.6036 ext 119

700 Northeast Multnomah Street • Suite 1150 • Portland, OR 97232
503-238-7056 FAX • Toll Free 888-892-9049 • www.anneseelye.com

