

Ultra Naté performs June 18 during Boxxes Pride Weekend.

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This is a 21-and-older event. Tickets are \$12 for June 17 and \$5 for June 18. Or get the superduper deal of both days for, um, \$17. No, really, \$17 for both. Man, I crack myself up.

Boxxes Pride Weekend

Last year Boxxes was asked, by none other than gay Portland City Commissioner Sam Adams, to help raise money for the then-unopened Q Center. So Ron Mitchell and the team at Boxxes and Red Cap Garage threw caution to the wind and held a huge warehouse party. More than 700 attended in 2005—and more than 1,200 eager partygoers are expected for the second annual event. But everyone knows Boxxes does it big, so it is now throwing a three-day party June 16 to 18. Get out your highlighter—here we go!

• **June 16:** Join Boxxes and the Sweethearts of Portland for their Underwear Party beginning at 9 p.m. Hooray for briefs, booty shorts, thongs and boxers! Yippy yahoo! Cover is \$5, plus bring an article of clothing, as this event benefits Portland Rescue Mission. Note: This is an underwear-mandatory event, so all of you who don't want to prance around in your skivvies, get over yourselves and get on down—trust me, it'll be fun (or you can enjoy cocktails and dancing next door at Red Cap with your clothes on).

• **June 17:** Check out the second annual warehouse party at Northeast Ninth Avenue and Flanders Street. Or park at Boxxes and take its 40-foot Ford Excursion Stretch Limousine over to the warehouse for free from 8:30 p.m. to 3 a.m.

The event is sponsored in part by Red Dress PDX—you know, the guys who put on the super-fab Red Dress Party! These boys know how to party, and the proceeds benefit Red Dress PDX and Q Center.

Superb aerialist performers from Pendulum Productions will also descend onto the party, and Gay Pride is just the excuse to see hot naked men hanging from the ceiling. I mean, they sure beat a ceiling fan, right? And ladies: Boxxes doesn't want to leave you out, so they have sexy female dancers as well, so there is plenty of eye candy for every taste!

The warehouse party will kick off at 8:30 p.m. with an hourlong silent auction hosted by Poison Waters. Admission is free, but if you want to stay for the rest of the party, get out your purse and cough up the admission (\$15 in advance or \$20 at the door).

About 11 p.m., get ready for Crystal Waters, who is foxy and fine and brings with her some hot, hot, hot backup dancers. Best known for her megahits "Gypsy Woman" and "100% Pure Love," the three-time American Music Award nominee will help you shake it on the dance floor.

"Last year when Q Center needed funds, I wanted to do something," says Mitchell. "So we put together an event in a few weeks and raised some money. This year we want to raise even more money, and by partnering with Red Dress PDX, Pendulum and the others, we believe we can."

• **June 18:** New York City's DJ Keoki will spin some great music in the late afternoon outside Boxxes and Red Cap on Stark Street between 10th and 11th avenues.

The opening act is Anthony Antoine, an emerging recording artist from Flameboy Records. With a label like that, he's gotta be hot.

The headliner is the awesome Ultra Naté, best known for her chart-topping blockbusters "Free" and "If You Could Read My Mind," which appeared in the film 54. Ultra Naté is ultra cool, so come check her out. Expect her to be on stage late afternoon/early evening.

All of the Boxxes events are 21-and-older except the block party, which has limited all-ages space on an outdoor patio. You can purchase June 17 tickets for \$15 in advance or \$20 at the door. Be extra-gay and pony up \$60 for the special VIP package, which includes tickets to all three events, drink tickets and VIP seating at the warehouse party, access to above-crowd seating, two tickets for a bloody mary party June 18 and more. Tickets for June 16 and 18 are \$5 a person.

So, the story ends on the message that giving back, making a difference and having fun in the process is the bond that unifies many of the Portland Pride festivities. Our history of quibbling and infighting has been temporarily (and officially) suspended, and each nightclub, organization, nonprofit, business and individual has more options than ever before to participate. (Just remember that the day after Pride—for those who are so inclined—bitching and complaining may resume.)

But for the weekend, think happy thoughts, review the parties, and find a way to celebrate. Celebrate with family, friends and those you haven't seen in a long time. Most of all, remember that Gay Pride is a movement that encourages each of us to be proud of who and what we are and that our sexual diversity as a community is a gift. So toss on a frock, slide into those chaps, delight in your flannel shirts and Birkenstocks, show off that hairy chest, or create your own personal way of celebrating. Now, go on, do it! ☺

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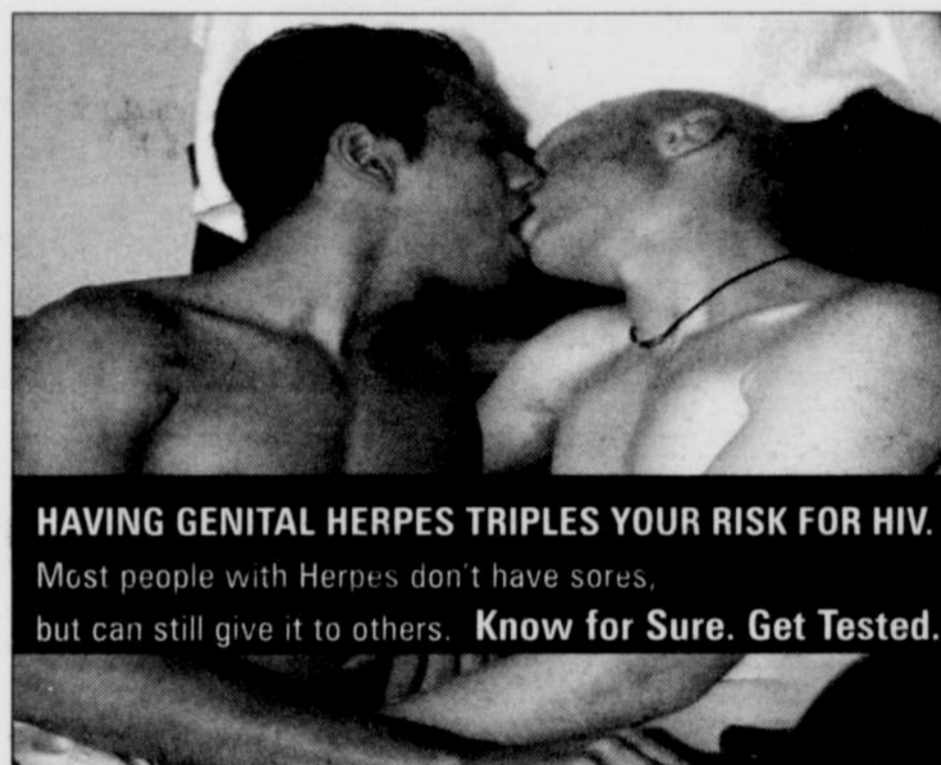
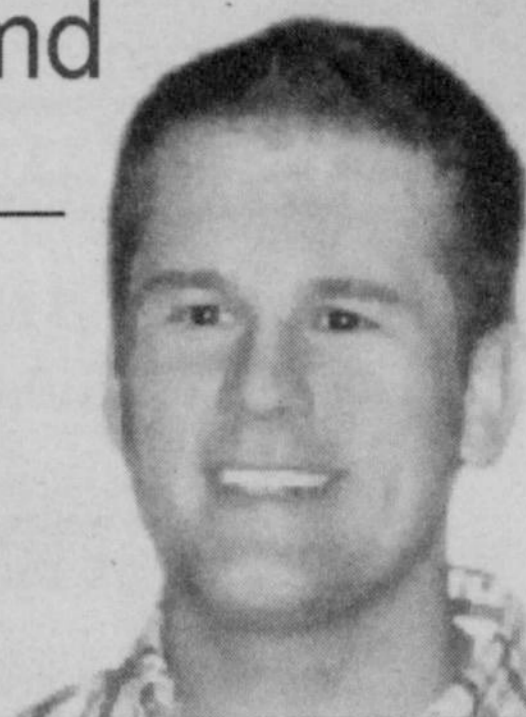
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