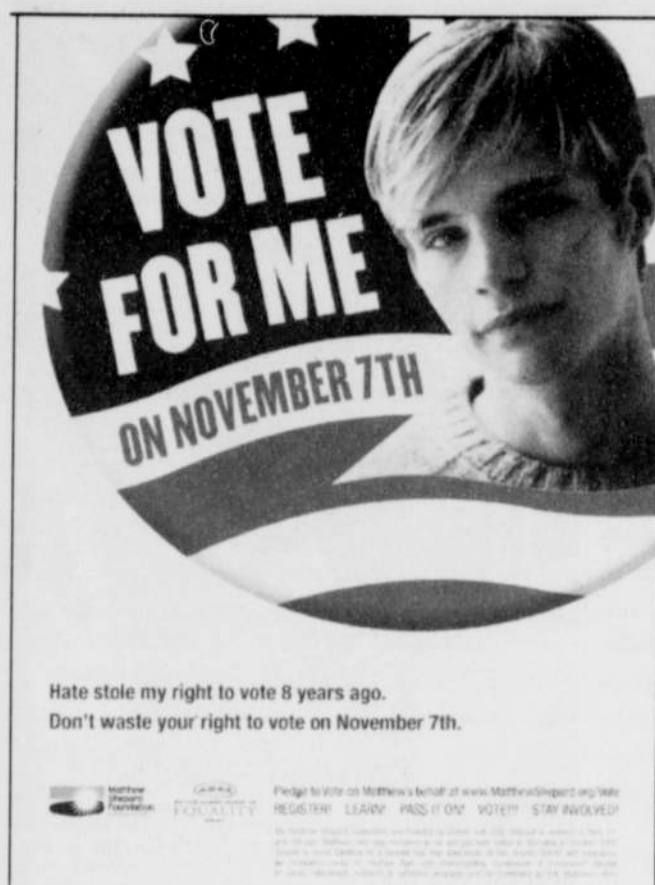




VOTE FOR ME
ON NOVEMBER 7TH

Hate stole my right to vote 8 years ago.
Don't waste your right to vote on November 7th.

Matthew Shepard Foundation
REGISTER LEARN PASS IT ON VOTE! STAY INVOLVED!

The Matthew Shepard Foundation has launched a campaign to encourage responsible voting.

and Missouri—states with hotly contested races and gay-related ballot measures. Since 2000, most of that top 10 have passed laws and constitutional amendments that bar the door to marriage, and sometimes other forms of recognition, for same-sex couples.

This study can be accessed at www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute.

ILLINOIS Discrimination Lawsuit Filed Against School Board

In a letter sent Oct. 2 to lawyers for the Bremen Community School Board, Lambda Legal announced its intent to file a sexual orientation discrimination charge with the Illinois Department of Human Rights against the Bremen Community High School District and its president, Evelyn Gleason.

"Ms. Gleason didn't want [Richard] Mitchell to be hired, and now that she is president of the board, she's doing everything in her power to get him fired because he is gay," said James P. Madigan, staff attorney in Lambda Legal's Midwest regional office.

Mitchell is the superintendent for the Bremen Community High School District. In 2004, he interviewed for the position of superintendent with members of the school board. After his interview, then board member Gleason reportedly encouraged other members of the board not to hire him because he is gay. The board chose to hire Mitchell through the end of the 2007 school year and, after an assessment of his work in 2005, the school board extended his contract through June 2009. Shortly

after Mitchell's contract was extended, Gleason became president of the board and subsequently fired the board's counsel, hiring the law firm where her son was partner. The new lawyer to the board promptly circulated a memo finding that Mitchell's extended contract was invalid.

Lambda Legal is arguing that the actions taken against Mitchell are illegal under the Illinois Human Rights Act, which protects employees from being fired for their sexual orientation or gender identity and from being retaliated against when they exercise their rights under the act.

MASSACHUSETTS First Gay Congressman Dies

Gerry Studds, the first openly gay member of Congress, died Oct. 14 at Boston Medical Center. He fell unconscious Oct. 3 because of a blood clot in his lung. Studds, 69, remained in the hospital and was scheduled to be transferred to a rehabilitation center before his condition worsened.

Until he retired in 1997, Studds represented a district from Provincetown on Cape Cod in Massachusetts to the Rhode Island border. Some remember him for going public with a sexual relationship with a 17-year-old male congressional page in 1983. He was censured by the House for sexual misconduct but was re-elected five more times.

Studds fought for the rights of gays to serve in the military and was one of the first to advocate for AIDS legislation and funding. In 1996, he spoke out against the Defense of Marriage Act.

He is survived by his long-term partner, Dean Hara, whom he married in Massachusetts in 2004.

WYOMING Shepard Foundation Launches Campaign

In recognition of the eighth anniversary of Matthew Shepard's death Oct. 12, the Matthew Shepard Foundation launched an aggressive and provocative multimedia campaign Oct. 10 to encourage responsible voting in the upcoming midterm elections. The campaign includes a national advertising buy in the queer print media and an online campaign providing resources for queers to educate themselves and urge their families and friends to vote.

The "Vote for Me" ad—which will appear in more than 30 sexual minority publications across the country during the next month—uses simple, compelling language urging queers and their allies to vote. The graphic features a mock political button with Matthew's instantly recognizable face and a gripping request from him: "Vote for Me." The Matthew Shepard Foundation will also distribute identical actual buttons and other resources to queer college organizations via the foundation's Web site and in relationship with partnering organizations.

"Matthew believed in the possibility of a better world—a world free from oppression and discrimination," said his mother, Judy, executive director of the foundation.

To learn more about the campaign visit www.matthewshepard.org/vote. 10



Congress' first openly gay member, Gerry Studds, has died at 69.

Compiled by JAYMEE R. CUTI

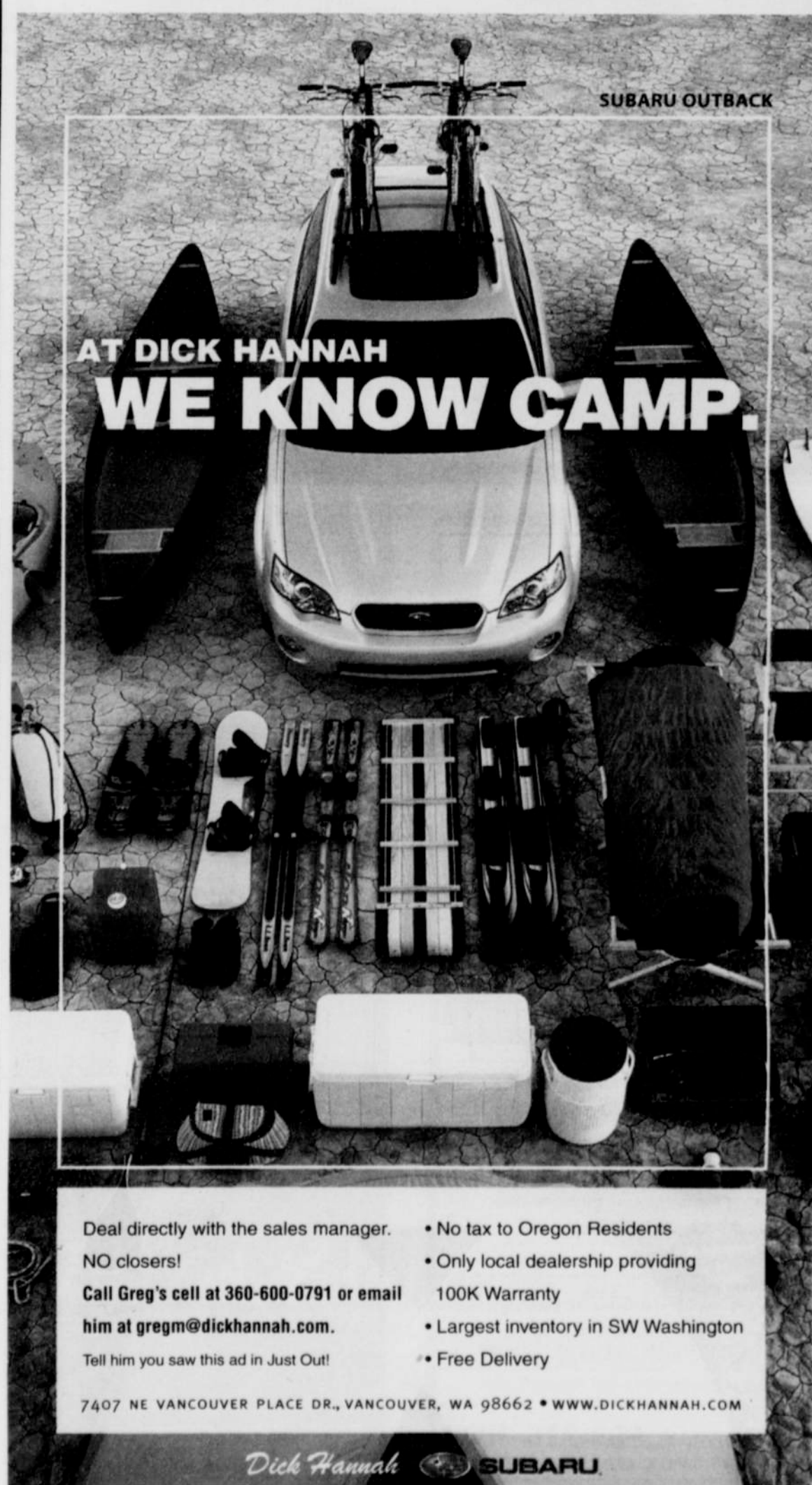


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