

northwest

The Face of Family

The Bailey-Gilliams want to be the picture of a 'normal' gay household

by Jaymee R. Cuti

Kevin Bailey-Gilliam looks forward to movie night in the family's home theater. His partner, Alex, wishes their daughter would put on a coat before joining her friends for scooter riding in the front yard. Planning the Thanksgiving feast is heavily on Alex's mind while Kevin busies himself fighting local politics in their West Linn community.

"I'm an activist here at home," says Kevin, a medical professional on hiatus while raising their three children. "Until recently, I've only been raising hell to the city of West Linn."

As an interracial family led by two dads, the Bailey-Gilliams are fighting a stereotype of what a "normal" family looks like.

"I think we need to change the public view of what gay is," says Alex, who works a demanding job in the environmental technology field. "When you say 'gay,' I don't want them to think of us running down the street in feathers and G-strings. I want them to have a different picture."

The normally private couple, who have been together for nearly 10 years, are coming out to repaint the picture of a gay family. Their activist work began after their \$60 check for a marriage license was returned by Multnomah County.

"I'm not a flag waver. We've never been marching-in-the-street activist types. We've tried to live

our lives under the radar, but now we feel like, if there's anything we need to do, we need to be helping," says Alex.

The Bailey-Gilliams helped sexual minority causes in a visible way by donating matching funds to the \$210,000 raised at Basic Rights Oregon's annual fund-raising gala Oct. 7. They have thrown many political parties at their famous Mapleton House and volunteered the services of their former marketing firm for phone banking and other campaign activities.

After making the BRO contribution, they were invited to Gov. Ted Kulongoski's table at the City Club gubernatorial debate.

Heading into a new political era, they say their involvement will only increase.

"We're going to be at the disposal of BRO in every way they need us, for public talks, donating time and money," says Alex. The couple are already helping plan BRO's 2007 fund-raising gala.

"They have made an obviously very generous offer to BRO in terms of their time and resources, and any opportunity we have to collaborate in outreach and events, we're very grateful for," says Jeana Frazzini, development director of BRO. "This is a family that has children and some real concerns about the ways in which they are and are not protected by Oregon law. In our legislative campaign to change the law to include protections for LGBT

families and individuals, as with many people in the community, they're going to want to have a role in advocating for passage of the legislation."

As a personal cause, the Bailey-Gilliams care about marriage. They say they've spent a fortune to safeguard their assets in a way that legally protects their family and are furious that other queer families do not have the same protection as married couples.

"The word 'marriage' just adds so much validity to our relationship. Civil unions may be a step in the right direction, but it's definitely not equity," says Alex. "[Marriage is] important to our kids, too. They were really excited, and they were completely wrecked when it fell apart."

According to the couple, their household revolves around their kids, 14-year-old Christian, 10-year-old Ethan and 9-year-old Madilyn.

"Our whole goal is in life is to make sure they grow into successful adults," says Kevin. "White males, especially when they're straight, they're a little misguided. To grow up with a black gay father's perspective, they're exposed to so much, from drag queens to governors. I think they're going to be extremely well-rounded."



The Bailey-Gilliams (clockwise from left, Kevin, Madilyn, Christian, Alex and Ethan) have increased their visibility in the gay community.

The family hosts an annual holiday party that Kevin describes as "Christmas threw up in here" with five decorated trees and 300 people packing their home on the Willamette River. Their guest list includes gas station attendants and Supreme Court justices, suburbanites and Portland's elite.

"The cool thing about our parties is they're very, very, very diverse," says Alex. "It's funny to see who's talking with who, and it's always really unique mixes." 10

Our Family Realtor Since 1990!

OUT AND PROUD SINCE 1970

When you buy or sell a home with me, you'll know your dollars are helping support a greater cause. I contribute at least 10% of my earnings to community and environmental organizations.

RE/MAX
equity group, inc.

Mercy Corps
Our House
National Gay & Lesbian Taskforce
Southern Poverty Law Center
Portland Lesbian Choir
Habitat for Humanity
Sierra Club
ACLU

RE/MAX
MAKE YOUR MOVE WITH MILLYNN!

MILLYNN JAMES

Broker, Graduate Realtor Institute
ABR: Accredited Buyer's Representative

503.330.HOME (4663) • 1.800.825.9948

www.millynn.com • millynn@aol.com

A&G Automotive

Official DEQ Repair Site
Repairs of All Makes & Models
American • European • Imports
Cars • Trucks • RVs

We Fix It Right the First Time
From Oil Changes to Overhaul,
Fred's Auto Works Does It All
Close to Downtown • Free Local Rides

503 238-1159
926 SE Morrison, Portland

Is your vehicle ready for winter?
**\$19.99 OIL CHANGE
& WINTER INSPECTION**
expires 12/31/06



Services Include:
• Maintenance • DEQ
• Tune-ups • Poor Engine
Performance
• Brakes • Clutch
• All Electrical Problems
• Carburetors & Fuel Injection
• Pre Purchase Inspection
• Alternators & Starters
(Repaired, Rebuilt
or Exchanged)



MORGAN FINANCIAL, INC

MORTGAGE LENDING & INVESTMENTS



Custom Financing that fits your Needs!

It is my goal to fit every borrower with the mortgage that best suits their interests and goals. It is of the utmost importance that you understand all of the potential options you have, and make the right decision.

It is important to me that you are comfortable with the financing from the minute you fill out an application to the day you move into your new home.

Pauline Hines Branch Manager

pauline@morfi.com
1920 NW Lovejoy • Portland, Oregon 97209

503-542-7894 Office
503-515-8761 Mobile
503-542-7895 Fax

