

outstanding Building Community

In the glow of his computer, one young man operates a virtual community. Queers in Salem can visit www.myspace.com/gayinsalem for news and event information to keep them connected.

My name is Jonathan Reitan.

I am known as a freelance writer and production assistant at the *Woodburn Independent* newspaper.

My cause, through the MySpace page, is connecting Salem-area gay and lesbian people—bringing word about upcoming events and news to people who wouldn't normally be aware of such things.

I am 22 years old. I feel older than other 22-year-olds because I bought a house a couple years ago, and there are not too many younger adults in the Salem area who take up leadership roles.

Right now, I'm in Woodburn at my parents'. I grew up here, and it's a small town.

I came out at 16. A group of friends and I all came out in high school and started a [Gay Straight Alliance]. We were the gay pioneers in Woodburn.

My childhood ambition was to be a nonfiction writer.

My first same-sex crush was on my baby sitter's son when I was in first grade.

I like to spend my down time writing. I'm the founder and moderator of Gay Horror Professionals, a private networking group for gay writers, editors, artists and publishers that specialize in horror. I'm also a member of the Rose City Gay Freedom Band. I play the trumpet—have since I was in kindergarten.

My proudest moment was in high school when a group of my friends and I stood up in front of the school board and changed the anti-discrimination policy to add sexual orientation. It became the topic of controversy in Woodburn. Some members didn't want it to happen, people wrote letters to the editor—they were afraid we were taking over the school. But we had a very supportive principal.

My biggest challenge is trying to get people involved in things. No matter how many times I put something up, it doesn't mean they'll show up. It's hard to make people realize that we have a community in Salem and it needs to be supported.



Jonathan Reitan keeps the Salem gay community informed.


A perfect day in Salem would be spent at the Southside Speakeasy with friends. It's a little bar where everyone knows everyone. I like going there and feeling like I'm at home, especially after a hard day's work.

My first job was as a janitor for my dad's office building when I was 11.

My vice is my unhealthy crush on Justin Timberlake.

My inspirations are gay rights pioneers Mel White and Harvey Milk.

The last queer event I participated in was a fund-raiser at the Speakeasy for a Sweet Spirit Metropolitan Community Church building. They've been meeting at the American Legion Building. The charity drag show raised about \$1,000.

My highest hope is that the MySpace page becomes a bigger voice for the Salem community and for everyone—not just in Salem but in Portland, too—to recognize it and realize Salem has a very active gay community. 

—Malka Geffen

just asking

Just Out dropped by the Worst Day of the Year Ride, an annual 18-mile bike ride benefiting Community Cycling Center, to ask cyclists, "What brings you out today?"



DIVYA ZA
Hot Lips Pizza Chef

"I ride by myself every day, but I did this to ride with the community and be colorful in the city."



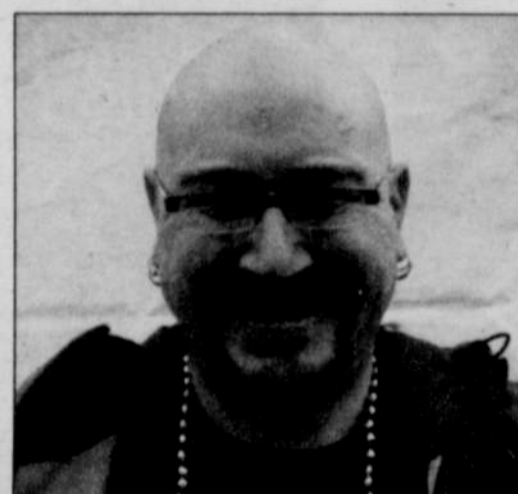
GREGG LAVENDER
Zero Attention Span Man

"It's a chance to have a big party with a bunch of cyclists."



MARISA LEONE
A Royal Mess

"My Hot Lips crew was doing it, so I said: 'You guys rock. I want to roll with you today.'"



BEAR WILNER-NUGENT
Public Defender

"It's my birthday!"

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