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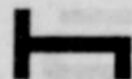
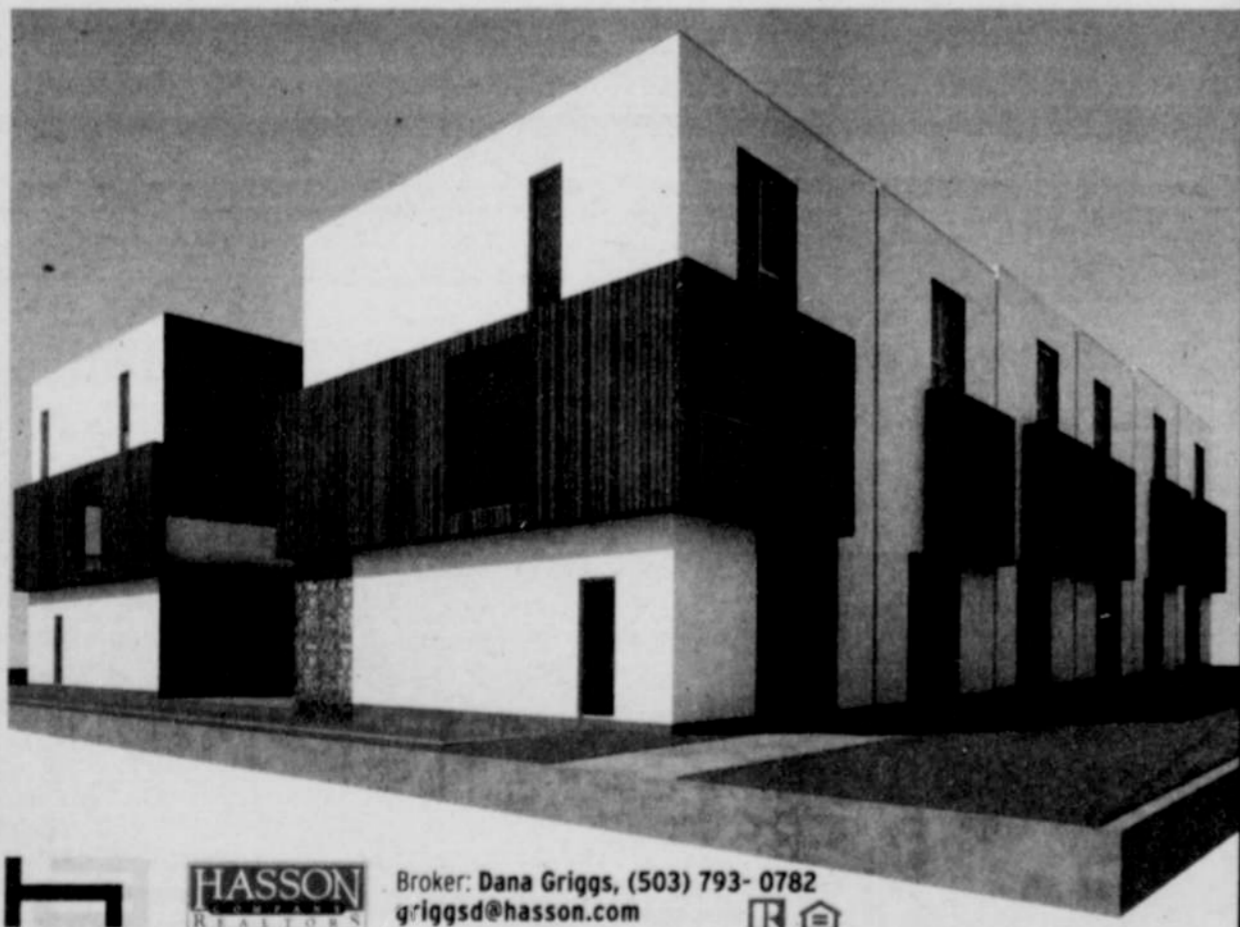
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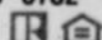
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sex with men through her experience working at the Native American Health Clinic in Milwaukie and the Multnomah County Health Department on various projects, Suhailah-Smith has worked with a variety of high-risk groups including sex workers and intravenous drug users. She has also worked with Our House of Portland to learn more about hospice care.

"I've had to do advocacy most of my life," she said.

With the addition of Suhailah-Smith, Brother to Brother plans to grow its Ujima Eshé community outreach and advocacy component for black people living with AIDS.

Darcelle Breaks Ground

Friendly neighbor and nationally lauded female impersonator Darcelle XV will wield hardware in the name of charity Feb. 20.

Darcelle will break ground on Old Town Portland nonprofit organization Sisters of the Road's remodeling project. Darcelle, who will balance the ambitions of breaking through a wall and not breaking a nail, was the master of ceremonies at one of the organization's first fundraisers more than 10 years ago.

Sisters of the Road is an agency benefiting the homeless through its cafe, where patrons can work off their meal and beverage by volunteering in the kitchen. This remodel, involving the addition of a personalist center, represents the first expansion of the cafe since 1986, when Sisters converted an adjacent storefront into seating for 29.

The new center will create an indoor waiting area, a revamped mail and hygiene product distribution location and an improved barter program. The remodel will necessitate two more volunteers who barter work for a meal.

Approximately 400 homeless people get their mail at Sisters of the Road.

"We've been involved with them for a long, long time," said Darcelle. "We're in the neighborhood and we have friends down the street and they have to eat. [At Sisters of the Road] they don't have to go to a religious service. They don't have to stand in line at the soup kitchen. They can go in there and have a little dignity, cook, clean, if they can't afford the food. They can work for it. It's wonderful."

The expansion project will coincide with Fat



MARTY DAVIS

Chonitia Suhailah-Smith will advocate for black people with AIDS on the Brother to Brother staff.

Tuesday from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Feb. 20 at 137 N.W. Sixth Ave. Sisters' staff will dish up gumbo, music and Mardi Gras paraphernalia at this free event. For more information visit www.sistersoftheroad.org.

Bartlett, Highhouse Receive Silver Awards

Paul Bartlett and Nicole Highhouse have received Metropolitan Church of Portland's Silver Anniversary Award, honoring members who put in "extraordinary work for the church and congregation." The dual awards were presented Jan. 28, on the occasion of MCC Portland's 31st anniversary commemoration.

For Bartlett, operations manager for Jacee Enterprises, the honor recognized his leadership during the recent remodeling process. The old oil furnaces were replaced, and upgrades of the kitchen and bathrooms were accomplished. He's also part of the choir and the church worship team and serves as a lay delegate to the denomination's regional and general conferences. The seven-year member of MCC lives with his partner of 22 years, Matthew Matuskey.

Highhouse, leader of the five-member queer Christian rock band Elevation, facilitated the spiritual development committee, working with former pastor Glenna Shepherd when the concept for a youth-focused, get-down-and-groove style led her to form the band and a weekly Sunday evening service at the church. With one CD out and another soon to be released,

Elevation is raising money to send the band to next summer's general conference, having captivated attendees at last year's regional conference.

Former pastor Roy Cole initiated the award to highlight lay members making outstanding efforts for the Portland church. The first recipient, Gordon Branstator, also headed up a major remodel. Other past recipients include Rick Nye, Chuck Harvey, Betty Nelson and Kimberly Brown.

Bartlett and Highhouse expressed appreciation of the honor bestowed on them by fellow parishioners. Bartlett says the award "was a very big surprise to me" and finds it



Leslie A. Stone (left), board president of the Abdill-Ellis Lambda Community Center, and her partner, Karen von Bergen, look glamorous at a Lambda Awards event in Southern Oregon.