

letters

Silence Is Compliance

TO THE EDITOR:

President Bush submitted a supplemental budget request for an additional \$100 billion to be spent this year on the war in Iraq. Congress will vote in the upcoming weeks on this request. If we allow Congress to grant this money to continue the war, then we cannot be surprised when it escalates and expands.

The 538th American troop to die in Iraq, Feb. 12, 2004, was my 19-year-old nephew from Portland. More than 2,500 have followed him since. How many more young lives will be wasted?

Yes, we were lied into this war, but after four years, any congressperson who votes to continue funding it is complicit. Every American citizen needs to let them know we are watching. Call your senators, write your representatives, and tell them you do not want any more American lives and dollars lost in Iraq. Defunding the war is not abandoning our troops—leaving them in Iraq is!

ANNETTE PRITCHARD
Military Families Speak Out

Smoking Tops Gender-fication

TO THE EDITOR:

I enjoyed the article about Stark Street, and as someone who travels a lot, would offer a few thoughts ["The Gender-Fication of Stark Street, Jan. 19]. This is a nationwide trend. With the exception of Chicago's Halstead Street, most former "gay" areas in cities I've visited are becoming a thing of the past.

As a gay man who lived through the post-Stonewall era, who marched, fought and eventually moved to West Hollywood, Calif., this trend is even happening in West Hollywood. In the 22 years I lived there, more than 80 percent of the gay-owned or "gay-friendly" businesses that were once there in the early '80s are gone. The City Council is working fast to erase the rest, even though there are three gay men on the council.

If real estate goes up, we get moved out—that simple. Most of the bars and businesses in "Boys Town" are now straight-owned, and increasingly non-gay people frequent them because they are "so cool."

I don't like this trend, but it parallels what happened in African-American communities after desegregation. Places like Stark Street might in fact become the victim of increasing openness in society—the "metrosexual" trend among many people younger than 35.

What will help all bars is a ban on smoking. Every time I go out in Portland, I get a bad sore throat within a couple of hours, and my clothes stink of cigarette smoke. When the state bans

smoking in bars, I'll go out more. Until then, I meet most men on the Internet.

ED GARREN
Portland

Grateful Creatures

TO THE EDITOR:

We are very fortunate to be part of a community that embraces a win-win spirit, is proactive in fostering success and advocates for those about whom it passionately writes.

SafeJourney Pet Sitting would like to thank Malka Geffen for the fantastic, articulate and accurate article she wrote about our business ["Handled with Care," Feb. 2]. It was a surprise and honor to be approached and included. Thank you for all you do.

SHAWN RYAN, DAN LLOY, PEANUT, JONAH,
PHINUS AND FOUR FISH TANKS
SafeJourney Pet Services

A Clear Frontrunner

TO THE EDITOR:

Of Multnomah County Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey, and her announcement that she plans to run for re-election to her seat in 2008, Marty Davis offers the advice, "Work hard, play nice and hope voters let history lie."

Having known and worked with Maria on and off for more than 15 years, my hope is that voters get to know her better. I first met Maria when she was working to bring institutional support to what would come to be known as the Sexual Minority Youth Resource Center, a place that has created safety and support for LGBTQ youth in Oregon for nearly a decade. Her early dedication there, when no one else was around, is only one of many examples of her nonstop support to our community, and clearly makes her the frontrunner in my eyes.

JIM CLAY
Portland

What's in a Name?

TO THE EDITOR:

Marty Davis asserted that the "T" in LGBT stood for "trans" in response to an anonymous writer who objected to *Just Out* using words such as "trans, transys, etc." ["Slam Dunk," Feb. 16]. Perhaps part of the problem is that "T" originally stood for transsexual or transgender instead of "trans."

People close to me often denote their sexual orientation and gender identity as being either a straight or gay female-to-male (FTM) or male-to-

female (MTF). Some "genderqueer" people refuse to be labeled as male or female, similar to how bisexuals refuse to be labeled as being gay or straight.

To complicate matters further, intersex people are born with a so-called ambiguous "biological sex," which is defined by three observable sex traits (gonads, external genitalia and chromosomes) that are not all male or female. The definition of biological sex is getting fuzzier as scientists discover more biological sex traits that have an even greater overlap between males and females.

Also, some people have had a "sex change" operation that changed some of their biological sex traits. Paradoxically, for a legal marriage, some states recognize only the biological sex at birth and other states only the current sex.

I live in an excessively politically correct university town with gay sheep and fruit flies. Through the years, I've observed that nothing stays politically correct forever.

In the past few years, *Just Out* has bent over backward to occasionally use words such as "queer"

to make some people happy, only to offend others. Therefore, I would suggest the anonymous writer worry less about terminology and more about educating the majority who do not understand people with a different gender identity.

THOMAS KRAEMER
Corvallis

Our Own Words

TO THE EDITOR:

Thanks to Jaymee R. Cuti for the Lon Mabon interview ["Lon Mabon Exclusive," Feb. 2]!

I like a newspaper adult enough to allow those with opposing views to present themselves in their own words. All of us are sunk or elevated by our own words more than anything else. That's why we should be annoyed by, but not legislate against, hate speech.

TREVOR BLAKE
Portland

TRANSITIONS

Heather MacAllister, 1968-2007

Heather MacAllister died of ovarian cancer Feb. 13. She ended her suffering by making use of Oregon's physician-assisted suicide. She was 38. MacAllister was born Feb. 25, 1968, in Detroit, Mich. She moved to Portland nine months ago from San Francisco.

MacAllister led an ambitious and active life. She received a degree in anthropology from Eastern Michigan University. She worked with the Triangle Foundation, Michigan's statewide gay rights organization.

MacAllister founded and directed the Big Burlesque and Fat Bottom Revue, a spinoff of 1920s burlesque performances. She was known on stage as Reva Lucian. Leonard Nimoy photographed her and the dance troupe for his 2005 exhibit *Maximum Beauty* in New York City. MacAllister founded the Venus Group, a women's social support group in Ann Arbor, Mich., where she was known as Ms. Demeanor. She served on the board of directors for Al-Fatiha, an organization for queer minority Muslim youth. In addition, MacAllister served on the NoLose board, a human rights organization for fat women and gay people. She was involved in many gay and human rights movements around the country, from assisting in anti-discrimination laws in California to unifying Arab-gay relations after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

MacAllister is survived by her sisters, Hope MacAllister and Holly Jones; grandmother, Doris Simion; partner, Kelli Dunham; and dear friends Tina Palivos and Sossity Chiricuzio.

Several memorials were held around the nation. Services were held Feb. 17 at St. Charles Parrish in Portland and Feb. 25 at All Saints Church in Manhattan.




CORRECTIONS

In the Feb. 16 article "Homestyle Cooking Comes to Town," the owners' names were misprinted. Willie Houston, who prefers to simply be called Will or Willie, and his sister Mari Brock own Odessa's Cafe at 3445 N.E. Broadway.

In the Feb. 2 issue, *Just Out* misidentified the resignation date of Basic Rights Oregon's interim executive director. Aisling Coghlan plans to stay on through the transition period of a permanent executive director, perhaps until the end of the legislative session. The organization expects to hire a new leader in April.

Just Out regrets the errors.



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