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**northwest**

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because they are queer-identified or are interested in working with this community," said Wolmark. "There's nothing else like it in Portland."

For information on the women's support group call Murray at 503-294-7404, ext. 2034; for the men's support group call Aleksandr Peikrishvili at ext. 2033; and for the trans group call Heather Sercho at ext. 2001. For kink-friendly counseling, ask for a Blue Dove therapist.

Mayor Weighs in on Bias Crime

At 2:09 a.m. Feb. 23, police officers responded to a call about a disturbance in the parking lot of the Taco Bell at 2079 W. Burnside St.

The altercation began when one driver accused another of taking his place in line at the drive-through. According to the bias crime report, the suspect, later identified as North Portland resident Michael Dietz, asked the two men in the second car, "Are you two guys faggots?" The victim responded by saying, "If that's what you want to call us, I guess we are."

The report claims that in addition to shouts of profanity and slurs, Dietz walked around the car and kicked a dent into the passenger door panel. The victim and witness obtained license plate information, which they gave to the police, who were then able to contact the offender and take him into custody. Dietz was charged with intimidation and criminal mischief and lodged at the Multnomah County detention center.

According to the Portland Police Bureau's bias crimes detective, Mark Slater, the best thing the victim did in this situation was to calmly attain the assailant's license plate number and call it in. "The bad guy was obviously angry about the victim's driving and then attacks the men for who they are," he said. "I'm sure it happens hundreds of times each year, but these cases tend to go unreported. If enough incidents were reported and it got out in media that 50 arrests were made of people doing this type of thing, maybe it would have an impact."

In a letter dated Feb. 23, Mayor Tom Potter thanked the victim for reporting the crime. "My office is very concerned when physical or verbal bias attacks happen within our city. I am saddened that you and [the witness] had that experience. As mayor, I am working hard to reduce and one day eliminate the occurrence of such crime in our city. It has no place here," he wrote, commending the victim for standing up for himself in the face of verbal assault.

Potter also offered the victim contact with his openly gay staff member, Kevin Easton, and the Sexual Minority Roundtable citizen group, which works with the bureau to combat bias crime, should he wish to talk further about the sensitive subject.

Salem AIDS Organization Closes

LifeLine AIDS Project was founded in October 1996 in Salem as a means of supplying holiday food baskets to people living with HIV/AIDS and their families in the mid-Willamette Valley of Western Oregon. During the next 10 years, it grew by providing education and prevention information, community outreach to at-risk people, HIV/AIDS case management services, emergency client services and financial assistance for items that are ineligible under the Federal Ryan White CARE Act guidelines.

According to board president Don Mathews, LifeLine closed its AIDS Project thrift store and ceased operations as a nonprofit organization Feb. 28.



MARTY DAVIS

Kit Murray facilitates the Thursday evening sexual minority women's support group at the Portland YWCA Counseling Center.

He said he became aware of IRS penalties and owed taxes in March 2006.

"I was asked to come by Patricia Jackson and her partner Mary Albert's house and was given a couple letters," said Mathews. "One was from the Oregon Department of Justice and the other a disconnect bill from the gas company."

Mathews had 15 days to file the necessary paperwork or shut down LifeLine. He completed the delinquent financial reporting just as Jackson, LifeLine founder and executive director, passed away.

In August 2006, Mathews said LifeLine received notice of IRS penalties for the late filing along with a notice of unpaid payroll taxes, which left it owing a total of \$5,375.41. In addition, revenue from the thrift store ceased to cover its monthly costs in May of that year. "I was really disappointed," Mathews said. "All my good thoughts of our former executive director have been just wiped because of all this." He said the right thing to do was to file the necessary paperwork, pay the outstanding taxes and penalties and close LifeLine as gracefully as possible.

"Salem metro has around 200,000 people and is the state capital. There should be an organization like LifeLine in Salem," Mathews said. "What gets me is now it's the third HIV organization to close due to financial impropriety in Salem—Mid-Oregon AIDS Support Services, Unity and Support Services, and now LifeLine because things weren't managed properly."

Mathews, who has lived with HIV for 14 years, said that it's necessary for a new organization to take the place of LifeLine but that he cannot do it alone. "I feel like I've worked my tail off this last year," he said, "and I want to see others step up and help."

Q Center Coordinator Resigns

Q Center announced Feb. 27 that its lone staff member, Gene de Haan, has resigned as coordinator. She is leaving the organization to study veterinary medicine.

According to the center's Web site, de Haan staffed "many...programs; built and fostered programming committees in the areas of art and culture, health and wellness, families, seniors and youth; and helped get us up and running. Over the year she engaged dozens of volunteers and was the face for Q Center, linking new donors, volunteers and media to Portland's emerging LGBTQ community center."

Q Center has begun searching for a full-time executive director and a part-time coordinator. Board co-chairman Tim Healea is taking a leave from the board to manage the transition. 10

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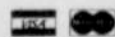
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