

In *Other Words* screens and discusses **Beyond Disability: The Fe Fe Stories** to kick off the new disabled women's support group Disability Express. (7 pm. 8 NE Killingsworth St.)

Dad's Group, a monthly support/social group for men coming out later in life, meets every third Thursday at Q Center. (7-8:30 pm. 69 SE Taylor St.)

Eowyn Wood reads from *Naked in the Rain* at St. Johns Booksellers. (7:30 pm. 8622 N Lombard St.)

FRI • JUNE 22

GO OUT **The Back Room**—an occasional series of presentations, symposia and bacchanals hosted by queer scribe Matthew Stadler—presents gay author Tom Spanbauer (*The Man Who Fell in Love with the Moon, Now Is the Hour*) with a meal planned and cooked by Morgan Brownlow (Clarklewis) and live music by Phil Elverum (aka The Microphones, aka Mount Eerie) at Podkrepa Hall. (7 pm. 2116 N Killingsworth St. \$45 from www.thebackroompdx.com.)

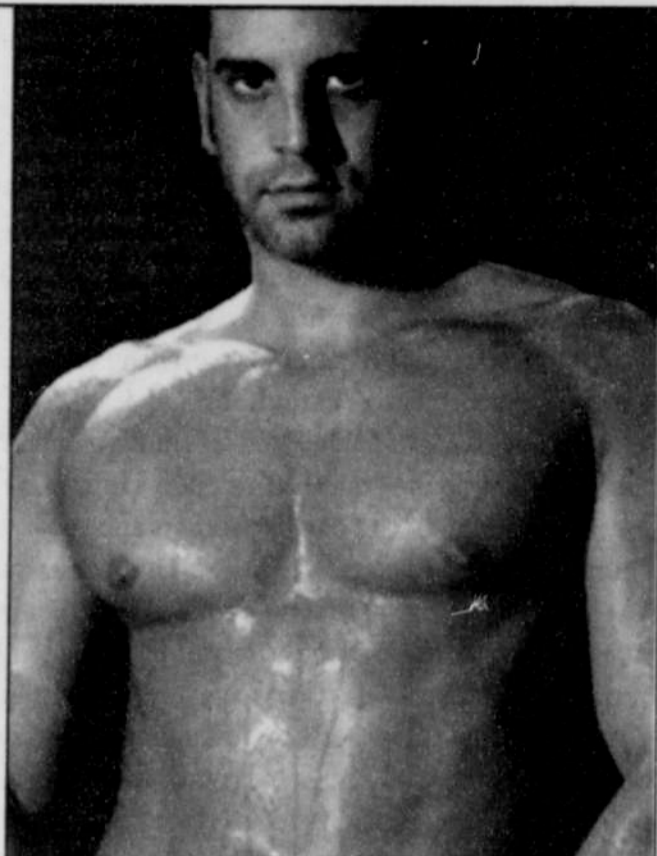
Show Me the Pink performs with Dan Deacon, Videohippos and DJ Beyonda at Holocene. (9 pm. 1001 SE Morrison St. \$7.)

SAT • JUNE 23

The Oregon Gay and Lesbian Lawyers Association hosts the legal workshop **Financial Planning for Same-Sex Couples** at Q Center to answer questions about what to do in light of the newly passed domestic partnership legislation. (Noon-5 pm. 69 SE Taylor St. \$15.)

Come to the **Q-LAND/MenSpirit Celebration Feast** to honor all of the powerful transformations that men have experienced in its old Northwest Portland studio for the past three years. (6-9 pm. RSVP to 503-223-8822 or www.lovetribe.org/menspirit.)

GO OUT Fez Ballroom hosts the **2007 Gay Oregon Pageant**. This year's theme is "Through the Looking Glass—An Adventure in Chaotic



Steam Portland celebrates Pride with porn star Matt Cole on June 16.

Characters." Proceeds benefit the Pride of the Rose Scholarship Fund. (7 pm. 316 SW 11th Ave. \$15 from www.rosecourt.org.)

The **Portland Lesbian Choir** presents its 20th anniversary concert, *Feel Like Goin' On*, at Bridgeport United Church of Christ. (7:30 pm. 621 NE 76th Ave. \$12 from *In Other Words, It's My Pleasure* or *Music Millennium*.)

Hey, what's your vice? Holocene presents **Double Down**, the fab queer party where the player always wins, every fourth Saturday. (8 pm. 1001 SE Morrison St. \$5.)

SUN • JUNE 24

The **Adventure Group** takes a difficult mountain bike ride among the spectacular scenery at Mount Hood National



Gay-owned Onda Arte Latina unveils Pepe Moscoso Paniagua's photographs of Mexican indigenous women June 28. Don't miss the group show of Latin queer artists closing June 26!

Forest. Bring food, water and a helmet. Meet in Starbucks at Hollywood Fred Meyer or two hours later at trailhead. (7:45 am. 3030 NE Weidler St. Laurent 503-227-2914.)

The **Adventure Group** takes an easy hike at the colossal Lewis River Falls in the foothills of Mount St. Helens. Meet in Starbucks at Hollywood Fred Meyer. (9 am. 3030 NE Weidler St. Evan 503-701-7922.)

Q-LAND and LoveTribe take a moderately challenging **Men's Eco-Hike** to Monte Cristo Ridge, a secret place full of rare Columbia Gorge wildflowers, old-growth forest and spectacular views of Mount Adams. Facilitated by a naturalist and Northwest native plant specialist. (10 am. RSVP to 503-223-8822 or www.lovetribe.org/menspirit.)

GO OUT **Keshet** holds a potluck for all who identify as queer Jews as well as their spouses, partners, significant others and good friends and family, whether Jewish or queer or not. Bring a dish and a beverage. (5 pm. David 503-224-7075.)

MON • JUNE 25

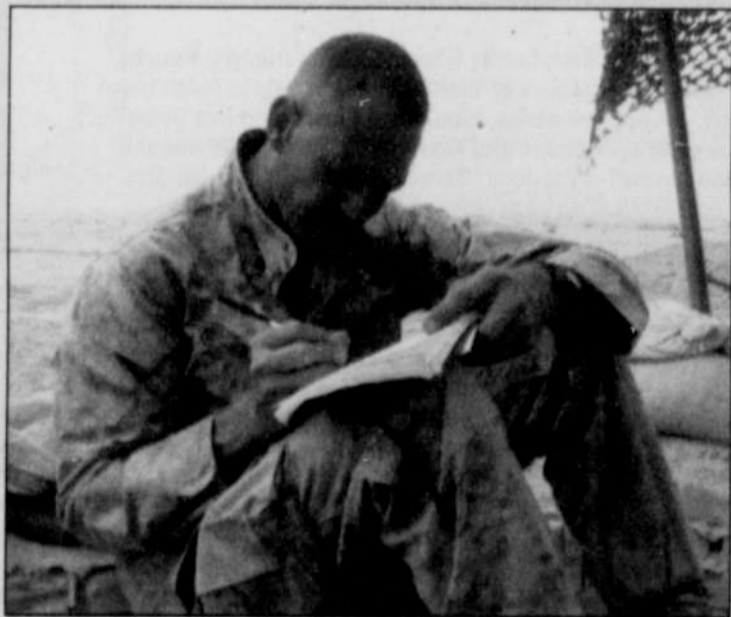
Learn about opportunities to help during the **Q Center Volunteer Orientation**. (6-7 pm. 69 SE Taylor St.)

Q Center hosts the **Queer Trying to Conceive** discussion group for women interested in pregnancy every fourth Monday. (7-9 pm. 69 SE Taylor St.)

Q-LAND and MenSpirit present **Life Circle of a Man**, a workshop to help men rediscover their dreams, the play-

Grace Under Fire

At first glance, *Semper Fi* looks like a standard-issue queer confessional with all the expected elements: a gay kid growing up in the Bible Belt and harassed as a "sissy"; the minister praying for his hetero redemption; the father who "can't understand it"; the loving mother who gives unstinting acceptance. The opening scene of a somewhat awkward, and seemingly amateurish, one-man play with the film's star, **Jeff Key**, in Marine dress uniform talking about his experiences as a gay soldier seems like something we've heard before.



Semper Fi premieres 8:30 p.m. June 25 on Showtime.

The early section of the film explores his upbringing, with revealing interviews with family and friends; it's the kind of "God, don't let me be gay" narrative that's depressingly familiar. Then something unexpected happens. Key quickly emerges as a thoughtful, charismatic man who cannot live inauthentically. He comes out to his parents and eventually moves to California. There, he finds a new family in the form of loving friends, and shocks them by living a boyhood dream of public service—in this case signing up, at age 34, to serve in the Marines. Soon he's shipped to Iraq. His experiences there, both as soldier and gay man, are the meat of the film, and he paints a remarkably vivid, sometimes heart-breaking picture both of the conflict at ground level and his unusual place in it.

Key is a gifted storyteller whose stories are deepened by still photographs and video footage he shot in Iraq. As in any war, there are sad and startling extremes everywhere. One of the most haunting scenes profiles Key's friendship with a 10-year-old ragamuffin who tattoos the Marine's name on his arm. Another telling moment occurs when Key and his company realize the "unparalleled humanitarian effort" they've been told would rebuild Iraq fails to materialize. They desperately dispense M&M's to the hungry children leaping around them.

In a brilliant sequence unfortunately not captured on film, he tells of meeting a gorgeous Iraqi soccer player in the desert and trying to figure out a way to connect. It's clear there's an intense mutual attraction—not surprising considering Key's strapping 6-foot-4 form and rugged handsomeness—and each knows the important questions to ask: "Do you have a wife?" "No?" The Iraqi presses his lips to his palm and holds it up to Key—a bittersweet stand-in for the kisses they can't manage to exchange.

Contrary to the cliché, Key's queerness caused barely a ripple with his company. Those who claim openly gay soldiers would compromise the unity and trust within the platoon need to watch this film. Not only was Key accepted (after a few homophobic remarks are crushed by supportive straights), he was admired, respected and loved by his fellow soldiers, whose interviews are among the most poignant in the film. All in all, *Semper Fi* is a beautifully wrought portrait of a man driven to serve a country that probably doesn't deserve him.

—Gary Morris

Warm, Lo-Fi and Fuzzy

Grizzly Bear is an indie band based in Brooklyn that's generated considerable buzz during the past few years for its gorgeous and ghostly elegies, especially with its second album, *Yellow House*, released last fall on Warp Records. The album's title refers to the yellow house of band founder **Ed Droste's** mother, where it was recorded. Its 10 eerily timeless songs evoke the peaceful, easy feeling of dozing in a hammock on a honeyed summer day or leafing through old photo albums, interrupted by sudden surprise bursts of energy.

Droste (rhymes with "toasty"), who is gay and in a long-term relationship (and happens to be the cousin of Pink Martini chanteuse **China Forbes**), is more or less the band's frontman but, in typical indie style, shies away from rock star self-aggrandizement. He's quick to point out that the band's second album, unlike its 2004 debut, *Horn of Plenty*, was written not by him alone but collaboratively, with contributions from all four members. The band recently played a number of festivals, including Coachella, All Tomorrow's Parties in England and the just-concluded Sasquatch Festival in George, Wash. Of these, Droste says, "Coachella was great just for how huge it was, Sasquatch had the most beautiful scenery, and we played the best at ATP."



Grizzly Bear founder Ed Droste (second from left) shies away from rock star self-aggrandizement.

The day I spoke with Droste, he was preparing to entertain friends at his Brooklyn flat and was having trouble with his Cuisinart. The next day the band was flying to Barcelona, Spain, to take part in the Primavera Sound Festival, to be followed by a stateside tour in support of Canadian singer/songwriter **Feist**, including a June 26 gig in Portland. Droste says that this will complete Grizzly Bear's support for *Yellow House* but that a follow-up has yet to take shape, save for a couple of incipient songs.

"I can't write songs when I'm traveling," he says. "To write music I have to be at home, stationary, in a zenlike, almost catatonic state."

The man's easygoing demeanor is much what you'd expect, at least based on his music. He seems to take everything calmly in stride, whether it's hanging out with **Paris Hilton**, **Mika** and **Peaches** at Coachella or making cabbage in a Cuisinart.

—Tony LeTigre