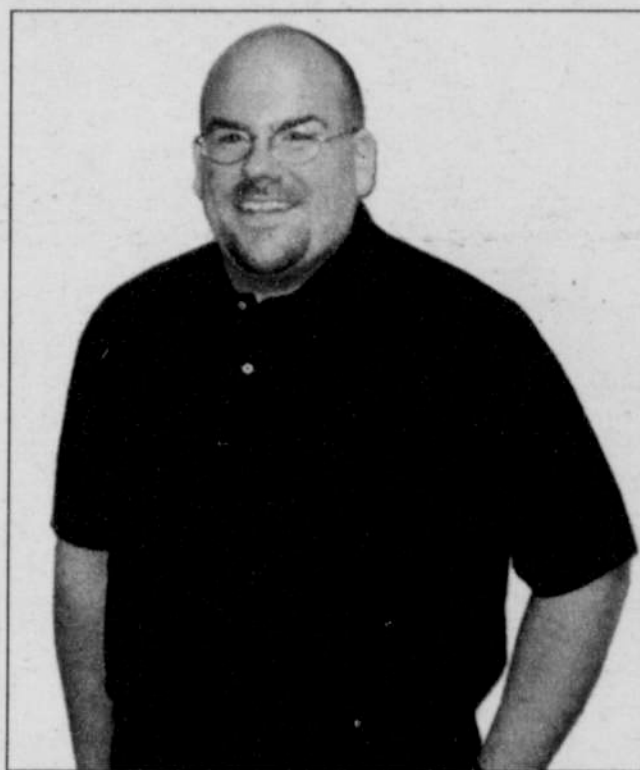


northwest

Loan Officer Becomes Specialist

Gary Boyer, senior loan officer and branch manager of Guarantee Mortgage, has just earned the Certified Mortgage Planning Specialist designation.

The designation is granted by the Certified Mortgage Planning Specialist Institute of Ann Arbor, Mich. The recipient of this certification integrates financial planning concepts into the mortgage process and offers clients strategies that encompass mortgages, debt, taxes, home equity and real estate investment.



Loan officer Gary Boyer has joined the ranks of less than 1 percent of his colleagues by earning designation as a Certified Mortgage Planning Specialist.

business watch

The institute is a joint effort by leaders in the mortgage and financial planning industries to raise professional standards among mortgage professionals and integrate sound financial planning advice into the mortgage process. "Borrowers need expert advice now more than ever," said Boyer.

He felt the specialist designation was an important step to take because many homeowners have become frustrated and confused with the myriad choices in today's mortgage market and how they apply to queer homeowners. Boyer has specialized in working with the sexual minorities community for more than nine years. He has been a longtime supporter of and participant in gay-specific organizations including Pride Northwest, the Bill and Ann Shepherd Legal Scholarship, Our House, Esther's Pantry, the Portland Lesbian Choir, the Portland Gay Men's Chorus and the Portland Lesbian & Gay Film Festival.

"The mortgage-planning needs are very complex in the GLBT community," he said. "My focus is to help my clients become homeowners, manage their home equity and personal cash flow wisely, while planning for their future."

Less than 1 percent of mortgage lenders and brokers nationwide have this special certification. "A mortgage professional who dedicates the time and effort to learn about these financial concepts is much more qualified, committed and equipped to serve the complex needs of today's homeowner and buyer," says Gibran Nicholas, chairman of the Certified Mortgage Planning Specialist Institute.

Boyer can be reached at 503-243-2674 or www.mortgagemonkey.com.

Big Girls Have Style

Like a Technicolor glow emanating from the Full Circle Women's Temple, Size Queen on 3125 E. Burnside St. offers plus-size women fashionable and comfortable apparel, rarely available in the mainstream market.

Owner Bertha Pearl, 50, has always loved designing clothes. "I hope to bring fat visibility into the GLBTQ community," she said. "You don't often see fat people in a fabulous outfit, so we're not often appreciated."

Born in Manhattan and beginning her training at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York, Pearl learned how to design on small forms but did not want to design for the mainstream market.

She moved to San Francisco and made boxers ranging in size from extra large to 6XL because there was "nothing for butches." When she relocated to New York City, her brand became Big Boxers of Brooklyn.

Now in Portland, Pearl is only taking appointments.

Her girlfriend of eight years, Michelle Hunt, met Pearl in San Francisco. "We've settled in Portland for its supportive community of small and queer businesses," Hunt said.

Customers and friends at Size Queen's grand opening Sept. 23 described Pearl's fashion as one-of-a-kind alternative couture.

"I feel like I'm wearing her brain," said Deb Malkin, 37, "like I'm wearing the creative essence of who she is as a person."

Pearl offers deconstructed skirts made for dance.



Size Queen Bertha Pearl designs alternative couture for plus-size bodies.

ing. These fun bottoms are made from panels of fabric patterned with Campbell's pork and beans, cupcakes and other designs attached only at the hip and laced together with intricate seams. They can be worn with capris or without (showing off plenty of leg).

Size Queen also carries pajamas, bloomers and bustle dresses.

"The bustle adds to the back of the skirt. If you think your butt is too fat or too big, the bustle says, 'Here, it's even bigger,'" explained Pearl. "I'm excited to see fancy skirts for fat girls."

Pearl describes her style as fun, silly, irreverent and SoHo for fat girls.

For more information visit www.sizequeen.com. 10

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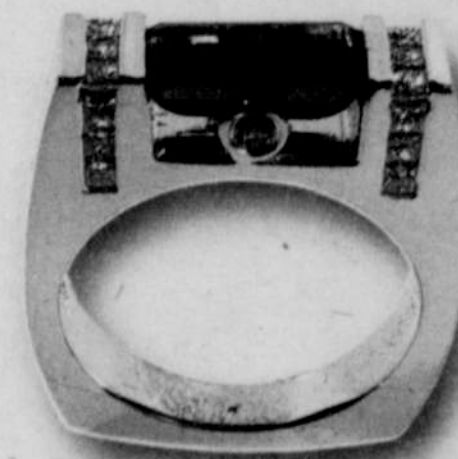


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