

northwest

Opposition Records Go Public

Earlier this year, political activist and former lobbyist Ellen Lowe filed a complaint with the Oregon secretary of state's office stating that the anti-gay group Concerned Oregonians was misleading potential donors by calling itself a political action committee. The complaint is still in process. Concerned Oregonians has since changed its tune and filed as an official PAC.

In late October, the group officially registered with the state elections division as opposing Measure 49 (which is not gay-related). This required Concerned Oregonians to make its financial records public. The now official PAC's complete campaign finance activity was posted Oct. 29 on the secretary of state's Web site.

Records show the group spent \$3,550 to retain the services of CH Consulting, a Minnesota-based sales and marketing firm.

Glenn Zirkle has made by far the largest contribution to Concerned Oregonians at \$10,000. He is president of Portland-based WSCO Petroleum. He graduated from Multnomah Bible College in 1979 and once told the alumni publication, "Every time my life brushes up against someone else's, I have an opportunity to leave the fragrance of Christ."

The committee directors are listed as Jim Stentz, Epic Aviation contract administrator, and David Crowe, better known as the executive director for Restore America, one of the groups that gathered signatures in a failed attempt to refer Oregon's new domestic partnership and non-discrimination laws to the 2008 ballot.

Crowe lists his Lake Oswego post office box as

his address under director for the PAC, but when he reimburses himself \$2,667.86 for money he spent, he lists a different address in Grimsley, Tenn. In October, *The New York Times* identified Crowe and his wife, Merrily, as being "of Tennessee."

When asked directly about the discrepancy, Crowe told *Just Out*: "An attempt has been made on my life. In protection of my wife, children and grandchildren, we won't tell anyone where we live."

Crowe's most recent effort is through a group called the Alliance Defense Fund, which filed suit Dec. 3 against the Oregon secretary of state, claiming the office "wrongfully invalidated voters' signatures" on the attempted referendum.

Basic Rights Oregon executive director John Hummel said in a statement that he is confident the lawsuit will be dismissed. "The secretary of state's job is to ensure the uniform and efficient administration of elections, and we're confident that all of the proper rules and regulations were followed as usual."

Rebirth of the Peacock

There's chatter among the drag community. Rumors are trickling through the court. The bears got wind of it. Activists feel the tingle.

Peacock in the Park is back.

Or is it?



This 2004 crowd shot demonstrates the popularity of Peacock in the Park.

According to its three core organizers—Kimberlee Van Patten, Maria Council and Kevin Cook (aka Poison Waters)—interest exists. Money doesn't.

"All the reasons we stopped doing it still exist, except we've had a chance to rest. In 2004, we'd been doing it for 10 years. We were all fairly exhausted," said Van Patten. "All the other reasons—that it's all very expensive to put on, that we have to make it not only the best party in the city but a fund-raiser as well—those challenges still exist."

The main organizers have added the energy of a new board in hopes of revitalizing Peacock in the Park. They have also secured the day and location, June 29, 2008, at Washington Park Amphitheater.

Peacock in the Park, the brainchild of the late Rose Empress XXIX Lady Elaine Peacock, was a party that raised money for the Audria M. Edwards Scholarship Fund. The organization has awarded more than \$156,200 in grants to the queer community and its children.

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