

Continued from Page 23

A Year in Organizations

Groups played musical chairs in 2007

by Jaymee R. Cuti

Basic Rights Oregon's executive director, John Hummel, made a surprise announcement Dec. 13. After seven months on the job, he resigned.

BRO spokeswoman Karynn Fish said: "It wasn't a good fit for him. He is returning to Denver to be closer to his family."

Hummel was known in his hometown of Boise, Idaho, for helping organize the state's first gay rights organization, Your Family Friends and Neighbors. The group was responsible for Idaho's first Pride celebration in 1990.

"Everyone says when they leave a job that they want to spend time with their family, but in this case it's actually true," said Cris Land, BRO board co-chairman. "We are going to move very quickly to put an interim leadership structure in place. We are committed to naming an interim ED hopefully by Jan. 1."

On June 11, Portland met Kendall Clawson, Q Center's first executive director.

Clawson, a consultant and former United Way executive from Massachusetts, moved to Northeast Portland to take responsibility for fund-raising programs, administration and community relations efforts, supporting the board and shaping the center's long-term vision.

"I don't think it is possible for me to be more excited to work with such a dynamic organization and to help build more connections between the diverse elements of our LGBTQ community," Clawson said in June.

Thomas Bruner, former executive director of Cascade AIDS Project, returned to the nonprofit sector in March when he accepted the chief executive officer position with the Oregon Trail Chapter of the American Red Cross.

It didn't take long for Bruner to outgrow that role. In August, he was promoted to regional executive of the American Red Cross, meaning that in addition to being the CEO of Portland's chapter, CEOs from Salem, Eugene, Medford, Bend and Baker City also report to him.

This was a year of tremendous change for the Revs. Glenna Shepherd and Kermie Wohlenhaus.

Shepherd resigned as senior pastor for Metropolitan Community Church of Portland and left Portland in January to start her new position as elder (bishop) over Western Europe and Africa.

Her partner, Wohlenhaus, planned to join her in England until she received a breast cancer diagnosis in March. She remained in Portland to fight the cancer.

In September, Wohlenhaus joined Shepherd. Wohlenhaus has received a clean bill of health and is serving as interim pastor at MCC of North London.


Shepherd spent her first year assisting congregations with transitions and conflict, working with congregations and clergy who want to be part of MCC and creating liturgy and music resources.

"I have worked with our churches in Scotland, England, Denmark, Germany, France, Nigeria and South Africa," said Shepherd via e-mail. "We support an orphanage in Zimbabwe, and spending time with the staff and children there was a highlight of my year—our work with these 175 children who've been orphaned because of HIV truly touches my heart."

Shepherd says she has also worked with new pastors in Kenya and Zimbabwe as they affiliate with MCC. "All over sub-Saharan Africa, our LGBT people are longing for affirming faith communities! I'll travel to Uganda and Nigeria in early 2007 to visit churches and explore interest there as well," she said.

The community said goodbye to a nonprofit organization that had been serving people with AIDS for 17 years. The Friends of People with AIDS Foundation folded in June because its executive director, Kevin Friends, retired for health reasons. Leaders within the organization decided to close the group because they could not find a replacement for Friends, whose demanding position was unpaid.

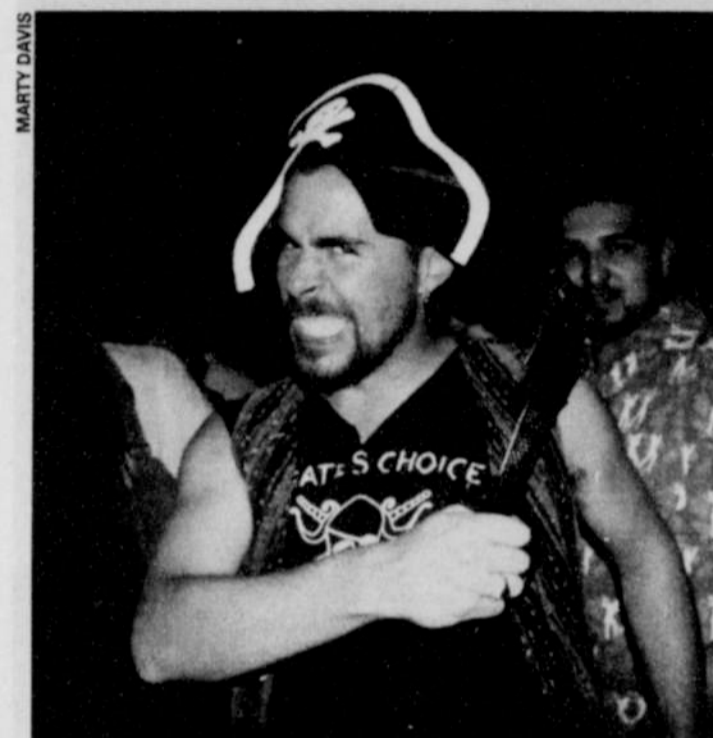
Instead of ending its programs—Tod's Corner, Esther's Pantry and the Kids and Holidays gift-giving program—Our House of Portland stepped in to take over every service provided by Friends of People with AIDS. Allen Brady, director of administrative services at Our House and co-founder of Friends of People with AIDS, smoothed the transition.

Meanwhile, Friends continues to rack up good karma by volunteering for Oregon Greyhound Association. 

A Year in Entertainment

Curtain calls keep gaiety in motion

by Julie Sabatier and Jaymee R. Cuti



Booty DJ Puppet (bottom) and reveler Wayne Bund gave the queer dance party a sendoff Sept. 27.



Silverado patrons will walk to the bar's new location at 318 S.W. Third Ave. on Jan. 1, 2008.

It was the end of a short-lived era in Portland's queer history when Sissyboy took the stage for the last time Oct. 6 at Holocene.

The punk drag troupe of self-described "gender terrorists" ended three years of monthly shows with a bang, performing a revue, appropriately titled *Sissyboy Goes Away*, full of musical numbers, outrageous costumes and raunchy humor. At the end, the boys went "full monty" for the standing-room-only crowd (except Lee "Splendora" Kyle).

When asked what he learned from the Sissyboy experience, Kyle said: "I'm more comfortable with myself as a drag performer, and I'm more comfortable with breaking eggs on myself and shoving things up my ass on stage. We pushed ourselves as performers, and we had a really gracious audience."

Kyle continues to perform with a new group called the Gender Fluids with Chad Tolson and former Sissyboy Garrett "Kaj-ane" Winter. The new venture is distinct from Sissyboy, incorporating gender-bending elements but eliminating some of the gross-out factor that helped define Sissyboy.

Also leaving the alterna-queer scene was the popular dance night Booty. After three years in at least as many venues, Booty walked the plank Sept. 27, bidding farewell to DJ Puppet, who relocated to San Francisco in November.

Much of the real estate in Portland's gay district on Stark Street changed hands this year, perhaps most notably the Continental Building, which was once home to the Club Portland bathhouse and continues to house Silverado. Gerding Edlen Development acquired the 15,760-



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