

Express Yourself

Put your love to the test

I'm not a sentimental guy. I generally don't celebrate my birthday (or Marc's), I despise the December holiday season, and for 21 years, I've never even bought Marc an anniversary card. So you can imagine how much thought I usually give to Valentine's Day.

But recently, while cruising YouTube, I stumbled upon Madonna singing "Express Yourself" and was distressed when the Material Girl sang, "Make him express how he feels and maybe then you'll know your love is real." Was this true? Did I need to express how I feel so Marc knows my love is real? With Valentine's Day just around the corner, how should I do that? I needed help and found it at the steamy premiere of *The L Word*, sponsored by the Human Rights Campaign.

Kathryn Ricciardelli told me, "Overboard is not the key." Instead, she prefers "simplicity and genuineness." So does Tammi Morasch, who likes to "spend quality time together, perhaps a quiet night in front of the fire." Kaki Marshall, host of the popular Pop Tart dance parties at Holocene, would also agree. "I express my love through random acts of kindness," she said. Incidentally, Kaki is showing her appreciation for Gina Daggett and Kathy Belge (aka Lipstick & Dipstick) by hosting their book launch party Feb. 10 at Holocene.

A slew of Sapphos have a soft spot for romantic travel. The key to Angela Horgan and Stacie Palmer's five-year relationship is secluded retreats. Angela likes the beach, while Stacie opts for the mountains. "Obviously, we don't go anywhere



Out Going
BY FLOYD SKLAVER

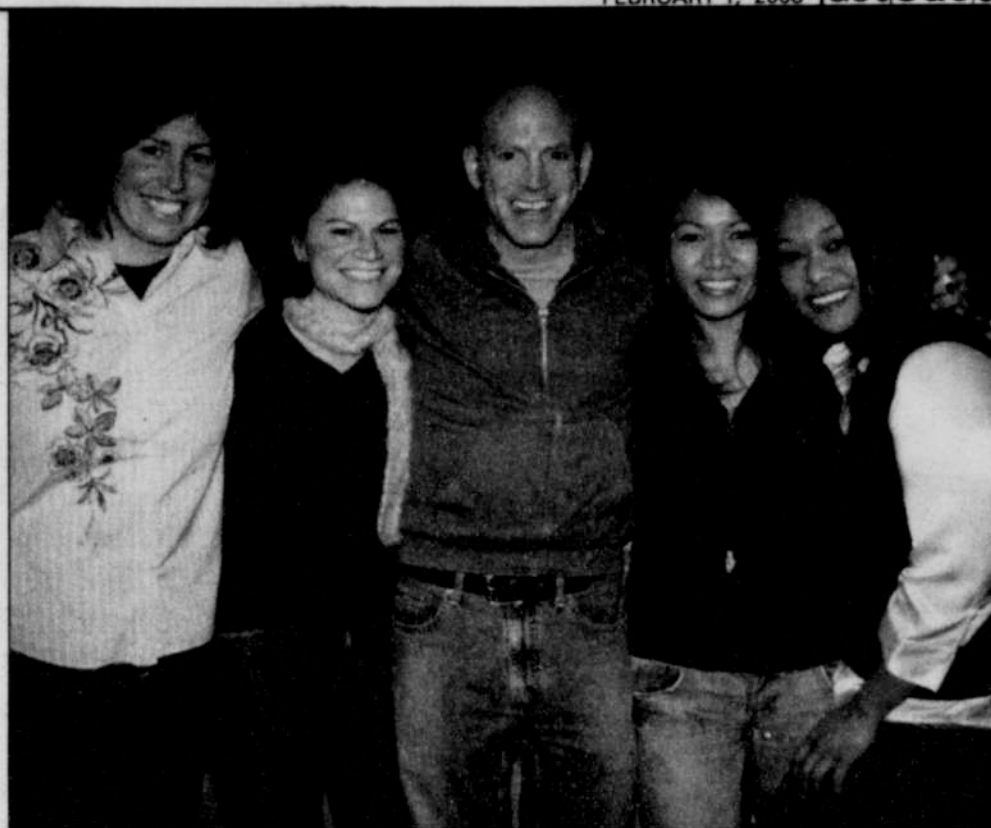
together," joked Angela. Annie Putnam would while away the hours with her sweetie on a weekend getaway, while Angie Myers would take a road trip, "staying at someplace really nice." On the other hand, she says, "I'd cook a special seafood meal followed by a yummy chocolate torte."

Chocolate (and other foods) are the drug of choice for the loving lesbian. Melissa Sanborn is "lucky to work in the building where Moonstruck is located." So she would dip in and surprise her honey with "mounds of chocolate." Dana Lee would take her main squeeze to The Melting Pot for fondue followed by a full-body massage with rose petals on the bed. And Elita Mitchell will cook "a five-course candlelit meal followed by a full-body massage—both sides—with tiger balm and body butter." Then she'll follow up with "any pleasure my honey wants."

Of course, gifts are a popular way of evincing one's emotions. Megan Borg has to "fight the temptation to buy everything I see" for her babe, but "once that's suppressed, a nice microbrew or bottle of wine will do." Marilyn Schmeer would "buy a nice gift and go out for a romantic evening," while Pauline

Tuma practices the art of self-love by "treating myself to nice things." A self-proclaimed "romantic at heart," Pauline is girlfriend-free at the moment but accepting applications. ("Rainbows and unicorns 4ever," she told me.)

Gay men express their love in similar ways, although with fewer carbohydrates. At Portland Center Stage's hilariously bawdy *The Beard of Avon* (about bisexual nobleman Edward De Vere, who may—or may not—have penned Shakespeare's plays), several couples shared the keys to their longevity. Mike Duvall "makes time" to be with his partner of 36 years, George Maki, by scheduling romantic dinners and weekend getaways. Lane Hickey expresses his love through "devotion and dedication." Then he laughed, adding, "And by finding a way to agree even when I'm right." Bill



Luscious ladies surround Floyd at *The L Word* premiere: from left, Stefanie Avery, Alana Perley, Kathy Blas and Debbie Bounnavath.

Looker tries to appreciate his partner, Ed Faison (38 years together and counting), every day. Upon hearing that, Ed blushed and quipped, "That's because at your age, you can't find anyone else." Curtis Thompson says, "Love is an action," and he expresses it by "being there and being supportive." And Eric Schnell likes to do "unexpected thoughtful things" for his boyfriend, Judge Kemp.

Thoughtfulness seems to be the key. So, those of you trying to think of a date idea should definitely see *The Beard of Avon*. Not only is it thought-provoking, but actor Brent Harris has a torso that will make you think, "I'm glad I'm Out Going." **jo**

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