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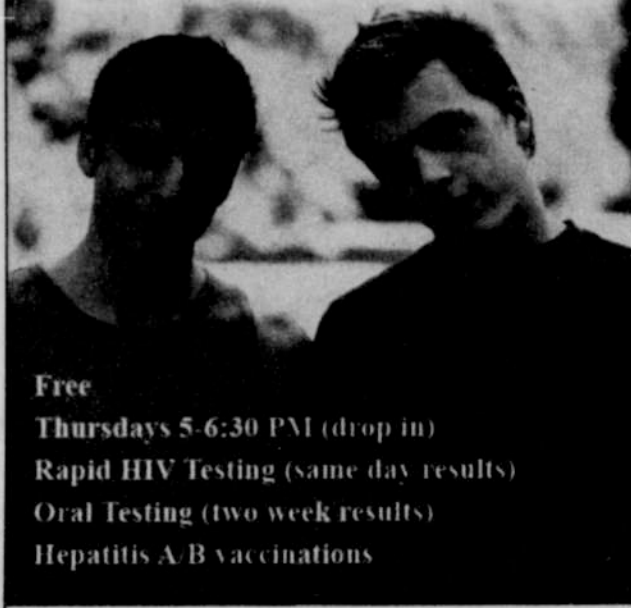
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Continued from Page 9

Portland in 1983. EQUAL offers queer-focused individual and couples counseling, parenting classes and workshops, relationship enrichment workshops and more on a sliding fee scale.

The services and workshops are strengthened by queer-identified staff, putting a gay spin on otherwise regular services—helping people through life transitions, dealing with relationship and family issues, increasing community connections and focusing on how societal constraints surrounding sexual orientation and gender identity impact queer people personally.

Samaritan Counseling Center, although not directly religiously affiliated, was founded at Westminster Presbyterian Church and has a history of using church office spaces to keep costs low. Samaritan has seven locations throughout Portland, Lake Oswego, Milwaukie and Gresham. It is led by a volunteer board and is able to bill

Hollywood Bowl, 4030 N.E. Halsey St. Others can participate in a raffle and bingo game.

General admission is \$30 at the door or \$25 in advance from communityevents@hrc.org. The price includes bowling, shoes and HRC membership.

Donors can serve as a lane captain for \$150 to guarantee space for their team of at least six. There is a special prize for captains who recruit the most bowlers. A lane sponsor pays \$100 and receives recognition on the HRC Web site, local advertising pieces and signs at the event.

Q Center Expands

In the thoughtful, methodical, incremental style that has guided all progress at Q Center, the organization has expanded by taking over an office upstairs from its original space at 69 S.E. Taylor St.

The interior walls came down March 16, adding several hundred square feet to the center. Ad-



MARTY DAVIS

ministrative offices and a medium-size conference room moved upstairs, just down the hall from Portland City Commissioner Sam Adams' mayoral campaign office.

The Portland Area Business Association has relocated to the upstairs Q Center office, contributing to executive director Kendall Clawson's vision of a gay hub.

"We are really fortunate that PABA gets the vision and is in line with it," said Clawson. "We've been talking about

Q Center's Kendall Clawson and the Portland Area Business Association's Michael Long share an office as part of the center's "queer clubhouse" vision.

several insurance companies for its services.

Since the passage of the domestic partnership law, the Oregon Family Fairness Act, the center has prepared to offer pre-union counseling workshops to couples planning on making the legal hitch, but it hasn't stirred much interest so far. If the community shows significant interest in these services, accessible, affordable counseling will be administered by its experienced professionals.

Simpson works closely with Mike Binks and Nina Watt in designing the queer-specific programs and workshops.

"On the traditional relationship track, a couple dates, gets engaged, gets married, and usually the ceremony is performed by some person of faith," she said. "Usually there's a bit of guidance administered there. I'm not sure about everyone else in the community, but that isn't how my relationships have been carried out."

To contact Samaritan Counseling Center, call 503-281-3318 or visit www.sccpdx.org.

HRC Bowls for Equality

The Portland Human Rights Campaign is encouraging supporters to sign up for the HRC Federal Club and receive a free bowling ball during Strike for Equality from 6 to 9 p.m. April 26 at

this notion of co-location for a long time now. It's the very beginning of a queer entity joining forces with Q Center."

Despite the recent expansion, Clawson continues to campaign for an even bigger, more fabulous location in about a year.

"Eventually, in our bigger center, we want Q Center living with other queer associations and businesses—a cool, queer clubhouse, where we can have great visibility for each other," said Clawson, referencing opportunities to share expenses and grant symbiotic exposure.

In fact, Clawson said she has an eye on leasing a center that can eventually be purchased, but she declined to give details. "The bottom line is this community deserves a nice space to celebrate great things, mourn our losses, plan, strategize, where young people can learn leadership and seniors can have a wonderful, warm, welcoming place to be."

Q Center is hoping community members will step forward to contribute a brick-and-mortar "legacy gift." It will announce a housewarming event for its new office later this month. 10

By MELANIE ALTARAS, STEPHEN MARC BEAUDOIN and JAYMEE R. CUTI

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