

northwest

\$200,000 in 90 Days

Is Q Center up to the challenge?

by Jaymee R. Cuti

Kendall Clawson wants to come to your barbecue.

She'll speak at your group meeting and is accepting invitations to meet your friends for happy hour.

Clawson is asking for donations at every turn. Her swelling social calendar is part of her plan to raise \$200,000 for Q Center by September's end.

And this is no arbitrary goal. Clawson, executive director of Portland's sexual minority community center, was challenged to raise the money in three months with the promise of a matching grant by an anonymous donor. Paired with money from past capital campaigns, Q Center hopes to relocate to a permanent home.

"I'm not married to four walls," said Clawson, trying her best to not be coy while continuing to keep details such as the new center's coordinates close to the vest. She does not want to get the community's hopes up with the location of a new center until the ink dries on the lease or mortgage contract.

Clawson also would not disclose the owner of the deep pockets who challenged Q Center to raise \$200,000, stating only that he's "been to the

well before." She described him as a generous philanthropist who "wants to help create a legacy."

It became clear to Clawson that Q Center outgrew its capacity on the corner of Southeast Water Avenue and Taylor Street during two key community events.

Q Center hosted a memorial service Nov. 20, 2007, for Dan Callaway, a much-loved gay Portlander who was murdered. Family and friends filled the 1,600-square-foot space beyond capacity at the standing-room-only event.

Q Center's location along train tracks had caused delays and deafening whistles since the center's inception, but never had the train bothered Clawson as much as that night.

"Not only was it crowded, but the train came through at the worst time. Dan's mother came to the microphone, and the moment she began to speak, the train went by and I was so upset for her," said Clawson. "This was a mother's moment, and it was being interrupted by this stupid external thing."

Q Center was thrust into dire importance again Jan. 1 when couples had planned to celebrate their new domestic partnerships. Instead, a federal court judge delayed implementation of

the domestic partnership law, so a group of furious, disappointed and frustrated community members gathered at Q Center. This time, Q Center could not accommodate the crowd.

"We were supposed to go to our spot, and our spot was too small for us. I remember facing the window and, in the pouring rain, looking out at people's faces pressed up against the window, not being able to get into their community center. That was the moment when I said, 'This isn't working for us,'" said Clawson. "I can't have people looking into Q Center."

The demand for Q Center has continued. The Portland Area Business Association (PABA) became a partner tenant, sharing the center's upstairs administrative office. The center also launched an enormously popular film screening and speaker series centered around the documentary *Ballot Measure 9*.

In her attempt to meet the challenge of raising \$200,000, Clawson said: "This place belongs to the community. I'm just the innkeeper. I have so much faith in this community and how well they rally around things."



The successes of film screenings, speaking engagements and bingo bouts have caused Q Center to outgrow its space at 69 S.E. Taylor St.

As of July 9, the center had raised \$60,000 through grassroots means. Clawson has asked individuals, groups and corporations to "sponsor a day" at \$2,222. Clawson passed a basket around at a PABA luncheon. A supporter brought in an empty 10-gallon water jug to stuff with change, and Clawson asked for donations from the crowds at Portland Pride.

Large donations have come from corporate entities, small businesses and organizations such as Wells Fargo, Albina Community Bank, Pride Northwest, the Rose City Softball Association and PABA.

Tim Bias, an insurance agent and man about town, is spearheading the Power 100, in which he is asking 100 people to donate \$1,000 each to Q Center's capital campaign.

"It's not only about those who can write the big checks. It's also about the person who cleans out their coat pockets and gives what is significant to them," said Clawson. **JO**

For more information about Q Center call 503-234-7837 or visit www.qcenter.org.

LUXE
AUTOHAUS



EUROPEAN DEALER FUN CERTIFIED PRE-OWNED TRUST COUPE

OPEN 7 DAYS AUDI CONVERTIBLE TRADE-IN FINANCING HUMAN DRIVE

VALUE COMMUNITY BMW 33000 SF INDOOR SHOWROOM

FACTORY WARRANTY EASY MERCEDES RESPECT YOU

NO COMMISSION INTEGRITY EXTENDED WARRANTIES FIXED PRICING

CONSIGNMENT MAINTENANCE COMPLETED VOLVO PERSONAL LIFE

SHINY NEW TREAT GLOWING TESTIMONIALS HASSLE-FREE

INCREDIBLE PRICING GERMAN ENGINEERING

ENTHUSIASTS SOUND ADVICE TIME FOR A NEW CAR?



LUXEAUTO.COM 410 NE 17TH AVE. 503.233.LUXE

Enjoy your summer sizzle with us
at our Gay Retirement Community



RAINBOW VISTA

Rainbow Vista
Active Senior Living Community

(503) 667-5575
(888) 470-0130
www.rainbowvista.com

QT

tuesday, august 19th

gay/fashion/bi/iran social mixer

@ Vault Martini Lounge / No Cover, Drink proceeds to Basic Rights Oregon / 226 NW 12th Portland, Or 97209

6 pm-close

V
VAULT MARTINI
INGENUITY
MARKETING SOLUTIONS LLC