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However, one of Smith's recent campaign ads attempts to associate him with Ted Kennedy's fight against hate crimes. The ad cites the tragic 1998 murder of Matthew Shepard in Wyoming. Why does Smith ignore an equally heinous hate crime committed right here in the state he was hired to represent? More importantly, why does Smith only feel it's important to discuss this issue when he's in a fight to keep his Senate seat?

Michelle Abdill and Roxanne Ellis deserve to be remembered and honored as the heroines they were.

And Gordon Smith deserves to be outed as the hypocrite he is, and to be relegated to the roster of dishonor that includes Bush, Cheney, McCain and Palin.

FERN SOPHIA
Portland

Dose of Reality at Sex Clubs

TO THE EDITOR:

Your Sept. 19 issue included a letter to the editor by Alison Goldstein, "Release the Scapegoat."

Talk about PC-speak: "The mainstream media [in] our sex spaces...sensational, uninformed accounts of our social and sexual cultures...sexually active people who don't organize their sexual relationships on hetero-normative paradigms...just plain salacious."

Ever been to a bathhouse or bookstore, Ms. Goldstein? Tromp around in a few of them, Ms. Goldstein. You'll find that "cum-stained floors" and fungi-infused air are indeed the norm. More to the point, such places are meant to be "salacious"! That's the lure, both for the money-mongers who

build them and for us gay guys who get suckered in. "Relationships"!!! C'mon. More like anonymous hit-and-run encounters lasting 20 minutes max.

Which brings up perhaps the most dangerous theme hidden in Ms. Goldstein's letter: that somehow we gay folks are intrinsically different from our straight sisters and brothers. Somehow only sexuality defines us, trumping everything else—even our humanity! Sorry. It's not merely "hetero-normative" to seek out love over everything else. It's human. The sad prick-pits are mostly about loneliness, Ms. Goldstein, and pretending that if we avoid love our need for it will go away.

HORST GESCHNORTZ
Portland

HIV Mythology

TO THE EDITOR:

While reading the letters to the editor in regards to the Iris Festival, I came across one from John Glazier from Otis that just goes to show how uneducated about HIV/AIDS issues some citizens of Oregon still are.

He wrote: "Will it be safe for nonhomosexuals? Who is harming who? Straights are not spreading AIDS, homosexuals are."

It is a shame that people are not getting their facts straight: 75 percent of the new infections in women are heterosexually transmitted, according to www.until.org. We as a community need to do more outreach to inform our citizens of the facts and not the myths.

RYAN STRONG
Portland

TRANSITIONS

Corey Baker, 1931-2008

Corey Baker, an advocate for people with HIV/AIDS in Portland in the '80s and '90s, died Sept. 18. He was 77.

Baker was born May 10, 1931, in Ft. Ackerson, Wis., and lived in Portland and Palm Springs, Calif., most of his life. He worked for Oregon's unemployment division.

Baker's involvement in the HIV/AIDS community began with Esther's Pantry in 1985, when his friend Sandy Director asked him to help deliver food to a client. The client needed someone to drive him to a medical appointment the next day, so Baker volunteered.

He spent every day for the next seven months with that client until he died. From then on, Baker worked tirelessly for AIDS patients. He sometimes reminisced about working at Juniper House, a Portland hospice, where he administered shots when doctors and nurses refused to come. He figured that if they wouldn't come to help, they wouldn't come to arrest him, either. For a short time, Baker also ran Esther's Pantry.

His major accomplishment was starting, along with a few friends, the Friends of People with AIDS Foundation in 1990. This grew out of giving clients clothing from the informal Tod's Corner, named in memory of Tod Hutchins, who left a sizable amount of clothing when he died. Baker was the board chairman of the foundation through 1997. During this time the foundation also hand-

ed out emergency food boxes, gave Easter baskets to clients, provided Christmas presents to families affected by HIV/AIDS, hosted Thanksgiving dinner for clients, helped clients make final visits to family, paid for phone service for residents at Our House, paid for veterinary care for companion pets, arranged and paid for cremations, took clients to movies and more. He and the foundation helped thousands of clients, always on a shoestring budget.

Baker often butted heads with community volunteers who didn't feel the same sense of urgency he did and with staff and leadership at local social service agencies who were constrained by budgets or policies. He worked 24/7,

always answering his pager or phone.

In 1998, Baker and Jerry McBride, his partner of 38 years, retired and moved to Mexico, but they returned to Portland in 1999 when McBride became ill; he passed away that year. Baker remained in Portland and in September started volunteering at Our House, once again helping people with HIV/AIDS. He got only two shifts in before he had a heart attack and could not be revived.

Baker is survived by his sister Joyce Carroll and nieces Sadona Wise, Joyce Shields and Ginger Sale.

A memorial gathering will take place 3 p.m. Nov. 23 at Darcelle XV Showplace, 208 N.W. Third Ave.

Remembrances may be made to Our House/Tod's Corner, 2727 S.E. Alder St., Portland, OR 97214.



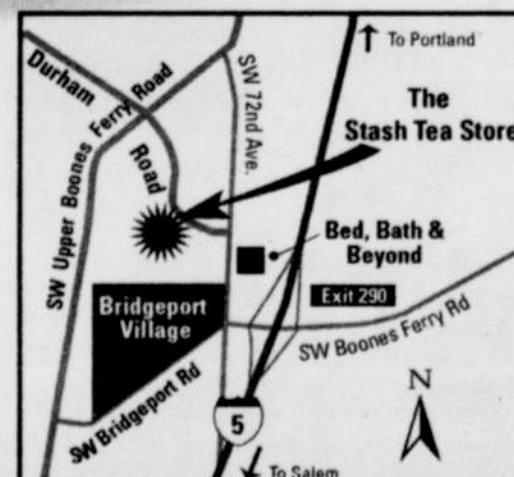


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Sara Chinske
Loan Officer
Oregon Mortgage Group, Inc.
541-868-2660
sara@oregonmortgagegroup.com



1551 Oak Street, Suite B
Eugene, OR 97401