

JUSTOUT at 25

co-founder of the region's first official Latino Gay Pride festival. His leadership might be trailblazing, but he's quick to shake off any air of grandiosity.

"There's always been people of color involved in the LGBTQ movement—like Stonewall," he says. "People forget that there were Puerto Rican drag queens!"

Drag may be the one thing Martinez *doesn't* do. Instead, after long days as Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey's policy manager, he's usually butchering it up on the softball field with the Bella Boys team or planning a new event in the ever-expanding Latino Pride fest.

Come December, with Rojo's term as county commissioner ending, Martinez will find himself facing yet another first: what step to take next in his career. "Now," he says, "I'm at a crossroads."

PAULA NIELSEN

Trans televangelist is tops

Claim to Fame: Host of her own low-budget, high-religion cable access show, *Let's Have Church*, for 13 years.

So They Say: "I believe that God loves all people and that Jesus never mentioned homosexuality in his teaching. I know from my own experience that God accepts me for exactly what I am. I believe this is true of all gay people." (January 1988)

Gay activists can tend to have tenuous relationships with the religious right. Evangelicals generally shy from embracing the transgender community.

Which makes the case of Sister Paula Nielsen that much more notable. For the uninitiated, her video and podcast shows present a curious challenge:



Is that really a trans woman preaching the "good word of the Lord" in a rolling baritone voice?

It is, and from the late '80s until 2002, Sister

Paula ruled the Portland cable access airwaves with a preach-and-chat talk show so singular that it attracted the likes of comedian Fred Willard among her special guests. She wrote columns on gays and religion for every queer publication in town except *Just Out* and launched an entertainment career on the stage of Darcelle's, emulating one of her most beloved entertainers, Sophie Tucker.

"Someone told me one time, 'You can't be a preacher and entertainer both,'" she says. "And I said, 'Oh yeah, watch me!'"

Paula was showered with national media attention throughout the 1990s, landing in the pages of *People* and on *The Joan Rivers Show* and the BBC. A heart attack in 2005 laid her low for a few months, but, never one content with sitting still, she's bounced back with a weekly podcast on her Web site, SisterPaula.org, tying evangelical Christian themes and Scripture passages to current events.

"I've had more people say to me, and it's the best compliment I get: I'm an atheist or I'm an agnostic," she says, "and you're the only religious show that I watch."

DONNA REDWING

Sin't no mountain high enough

Claim to Fame: Lesbian hero and political junkie

So They Say: "We have to go beyond the rhetoric to bring people of color into our organizations, to address their concerns in a serious manner." (August 1991)



Who's Next: Kendall Clawson. Aside from Clawson, Redwing says, "I'm worried. I see a movement run by lawyers—or lawyer types."

Donna Redwing was given a button.

Not the type you sew on a shirt, or one you'd pin to your lapel. Redwing's "special button" came

Continued on Page 30

STRAIGHT BUT NOT NARROW

Civil rights leaders will tell you that gains toward equality would not have been possible without support from the community at large—hetero folks who vote and talk to their colleagues, faith leaders and neighbors about why they despise discrimination and judge people only by the content of their character.

Dan Gardner, former commissioner of the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries, who is now a lobbyist for the Washington, D.C.-based International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, views himself as an advocate for working people. His gay brother helped him understand that people are born gay and deserve equal treatment.

As labor commissioner, Gardner was charged with enforcing Oregon's nondiscrimination law. He has shown his support by joining in rallies and appearing in the Portland Pride parade with Secretary of State Bill Bradbury. Gardner testified in favor of gay rights ordinances and held a press conference in 2004 to speak in opposition of Measure 36.

Anne Sweet, a work force development specialist, was moved to join the cause in 1992 when the Oregon Citizens Alliance collected signatures for Ballot Measure 9 in a parking lot

near her home. She asked people not to sign the petition until the store owner asked her to leave. She called Bigot Busters, and within 10 minutes, a crowd of supporters of equal rights formed.

Sweet continues to support gay rights causes. "I learn about who folks are. I show up. I learn what it means to be an ally. I vote. I talk to my neighbors. I interrupt when I need to because homophobia is socially entwined within the black community. I look at my own biases and how I can change my own actions," said Sweet, who is African American.

Tom Ranieri, operator of Cinema 21, was awakened to the gay rights movement as a college student in the 1960s in Prairie City, Ill. His movie theater hosted a queer film series in the '80s that evolved into the Portland Lesbian & Gay Film Festival. He also dispels myths about what it is to be gay and the challenges gay people face.

Portland has enjoyed leadership from a slew of pro-gay mayors. Before PFLAG dad Tom Potter took office, Mayor **Vera Katz** took many leadership roles fighting for gay rights. In 1973, as a freshman state representative, she sponsored and worked for legislation to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. She was responsible for the only vote ever to reach the House or Senate floor at the time that would have prohibited discrimination.

Much of supporting the movement is showing up, a policy proven by former Oregon Gov. **Barbara Roberts**. She focused on legal protections for gays and lesbians and became the first elected official in office to join the Gay Rights National Lobby in 1984. In 1993, Roberts introduced a bill to create a Human Rights Commission. On May 9, 2007, she stood with Gov. Ted Kulongoski and other allies in the Legislature as he signed the state's nondiscrimination and domestic partnership bills into law.

—Jaymee R. Cuti



Gay Oregonians have been fortunate to find allies in political leaders such as former Gov. Barbara Roberts.

ADORN
Tattoos & Piercing

Woman-owned Studios
Quality Custom Tattoos
Amazing Jewelry Selection

East: 503.232.6222 West: 503.292.7060
2535 SE Belmont 9217 SW By-Hill Hwy

\$165⁰⁰
3 Massages Package (\$30 savings)
1 hour massages - Regularly priced \$195.00

We are one of Portland's
Finest Spa Services, offering
Massage • Acupuncture
Skin Care • Spa Services

Private treatment rooms with
jacuzzi and saunas at our
Downtown location!

For more great deals and coupons
on our services offered please visit
www.angelichealinghands.com

ANGELIC
Healing Hands, Inc.

3 LOCATIONS TO CONVENIENTLY SERVE YOU:

CEDAR MILL
1225 NW Murray Rd., Portland
(503)644-6109

DOWNTOWN - PTLD CENTER PLAZA
2075 SW First Ave., Ste 1-C, Portland
(503)226-1672

SUNSET ATHLETIC CLUB
13939 NW Cornell Rd., Portland
(503)644-6109