

PERSONALITIES

KOIN-ing an Identity

It's Sunny Skies for Openly Gay Meteorologist Tim Joyce

By RYAN J. PRADO

The life of a television weatherperson would seem to be an endless volley between cloud formation diagnostics, storm front assessments, the daily pursuit of the perfect coif, and advanced arthritis from involuntary finger-crossing that those forecasts pan out. The life of a television news reporter pings and pongs, to and fro, from fingers-on-the-pulse journalism to pinpoint accuracy and a killer smile. Put these visuals together, plus a whole lot of smarts, and you've got yourself a Tim Joyce.

And not just a Tim Joyce—the Tim Joyce, KOIN 6's luminous, openly gay meteorologist and environmental news reporter. Joyce was born in Chicago, and attended the University of Kansas. He's been a weekend weatherman with KOIN 6 in Portland since 2004, and was a news anchor and covered the weather out of Eugene for almost a decade at KVAL-TV and KMTR-TV in Springfield, where he co-hosted the region's number one morning show.

"Most people in journalism will bounce around a lot of places," explains Joyce over a maple bacon bar and java in the Brooklyn District's True Brew Espresso. "But once I landed a job in Eugene, I was there for nine years. That says something, either to my insanity, or to the fact that I really like this [region] a lot. This is really home to me."

Joyce's path to journalism wasn't without its share of cloudy days, however. He admits to having first contracted the TV bug before he really had the desire to be a news reporter, but was stymied a bit during his forays into high school cable access.

"We had a TV studio in our high school, and I worked behind the scenes," says Joyce. "I got the bug to do some on-camera stuff, so I auditioned and my high school teacher basically told me I was horrible, that I had no talent whatsoever, that I was monotone and I should never ever get in front of a camera."

Flash forward to 2009. Joyce is one of the most accomplished meteorologists and environmental reporters in the Northwest. He has



Despite being told in high school that he shouldn't be in front of a TV camera, Tim Joyce can be found every weekend on KOIN 6 at 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. You can read his blog, "Generation Green," by visiting the KOIN 6 Web site at www.koinlocal6.com.

PHOTO BY MARTY DAVIS

earned awards from the Kansas Association of Broadcasters, the Northwest Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists and the Associated Press.

Joyce's career, he says, is "a really bizarre medium." His standing as a go-to guy for daily planning in terms of the weather has made for some interesting backlash—complaint emails, complaint calls, even stalkers. But Joyce takes it in stride.

"People think they know you," Joyce says of being invited into people's homes via the television. "That's where sexuality comes into play. A lot of people have no clue [I'm gay]. Some people say, 'The first time I saw you, I totally knew.'"

Following September's news that KATU 2-TV reporter Jeff Jaeger's contract would not be renewed, Joyce finds himself as the most high-profile—if not the only—openly gay television personality in Portland. Joyce's passion for playing an integral role in fair and accurate journalism in the office appears to occupy a larger part of his agenda than does flying a flag of sexual independence. He recalls covering the news of anti-gay ballot Measures 36 and 9 in recent years.

"[It was a benefit that] at least there was someone on the inside, even as a reporter, where [I would say], 'It's not about gay rights, it's

about gay equity,' explains Joyce. "Those subtle language things are lost on a lot of straight allies that don't necessarily know the difference. But language is powerful, and on some of those subtle things, I think it's important to have someone who's of Hispanic descent, or African-American descent, or someone who's differently oriented sexually to be like, 'Hey everybody, this is kind of something that's important.'"

When Joyce isn't busy working on "day seven of a nine-day work week," his focus is divided between his board position on Growing Gardens—a nonprofit mentorship program aimed at teaching low-income families and individuals how to grow a portion of their own food, his environmental blog "Generation Green," the toils of being a new homeowner in a very old house, his two dogs Hugo and Gladys, and the summer addition of four chickens. In short, Joyce is the kind of person whose exhaustive tendencies benefit everyone around him—and, most of the time, everyone who's welcomed his zeal for weather reporting into their homes.

"I think if I stop to breathe, I probably would be like, 'Oh my God, you're insane, what are you doing?'" he says. "I think some people look at me and think I'm crazy; and people who know me, *know* that I'm crazy." JO

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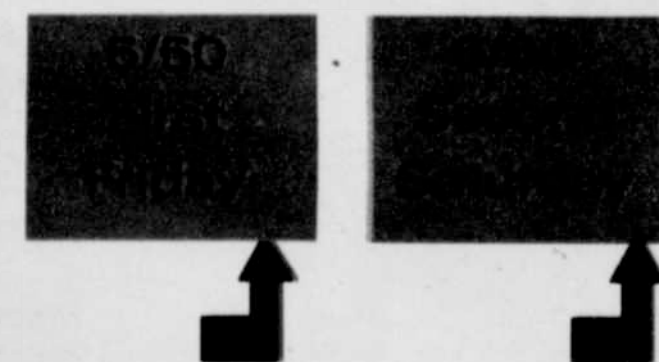
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