

A Call for Help

To the Editor:

Matt Insley is a dear friend, a remarkable, talented and award-winning musician, composer and director. He has co-produced "Queer Quistmas" two years in a row with Fannie Mae Darling. He is an asset to [the] Portland gay/lesbian community and has been [an] avid part in the community theater scene for many, many years. The night of "Queer Quistmas," Matt and his boyfriend were heavily drinking, like most around the holidays. He, unfortunately, drank too much and with those drinks he was taking bipolar medication. Bad news! [He] and his partner got into an altercation and Matt was arrested and charged with four counts of assault. He is not innocent, we all know that, but what he needs is help not prison. Please read this information and help my dear friend and one of Portland's most treasured musicians. ...

During this time he has been diagnosed with and successfully treated for bipolar disorder. At



Matt Insley

the first settlement conference, a young, inexperienced deputy district attorney [was] pursuing his case as a purely criminal matter without regard that Matt's mental illness is [a] significant, mitigating factor. Justice will not be served if Matt is sent to prison. Matt's trial is imminent, so we must act now. Matt needs you to immediately email or fax the Multnomah County D.A. to request [that] Matt's case be transferred to a deputy D.A. who has experience with mental health cases and that Matt's case be referred to the Mental Health Court.

Here is a summary of the facts:

- Matt's legal name is Norman Matthew Insley.
- He had untreated bipolar disorder at the time of the incident.
- Both Matt and his boyfriend were highly intoxicated at the time of the incident.
- At the time of the incident, Matt was taking medication that makes bipolar disorder worse.
- The judge at the settlement conference told Matt that the deputy D.A. was inexperienced and clearly did not understand the uniqueness of his case.
- The judge also said the deputy D.A. had other options available to her and that her current course of action would go badly for Matt.

The Mental Health Court is an appropriate option in Matt's case; see mcda.us/mental_health_court.php.

More than 200 of you have sent letters of support to the public defender. Matt needs the same level of support again. Please immediately email or fax the Multnomah County D.A. at the following:

Michael D. Schrunk, District Attorney
Email: DA@mcda.us
Fax: 503-988-3643

Request that Matt's case be transferred to a deputy D.A. who has experience with mental health cases and that Matt's case be referred to the Mental Health Court. If you have any other avenues available to you that may help Matt, please pursue those today.

Thank you,

Jeffrey Darling and Brett Asmann
Portland

Marriage and Family

To the Editor:

Last week I received a Basic Rights Oregon mailing for their new same-sex marriage campaign [Vol. 28, No. 9, April 1, p. 12, "Can They We Do It?"]. I applaud their efforts and this mailing campaign. As I was reading along fairly impressed and in agreement, I came upon this one simple sentence about marriage: "...it does



Making BRO's TV ads

give couples who want to make a lifetime commitment to each other and be a family the ability to do so." Whoa! Read that again, please.

At first it sounds like perfectly good reasoning, but it sends the wrong message. It is not state-licensed marriages that hold the key to lifetime commitment and family. My little household of three (partner, son and myself) has formed a family that is committed to each other even without marriage. We want to have equal marriage for many reasons—but it is not a precursor for confirming our commitment to each other or our ability to be a family.

Come on, BRO—stop muddying the waters. People make their own families and commitments—without the state's help. Marriage gives those families rights and responsibilities. Let's not confuse the issue.

Scott Cooley
Portland

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That one right there looks like a winner to me.