

BY RYAN J. PRADO

Bears Growl Toward Summer

With a new board of directors in place and a new president in Brent Marr, the Oregon Bears are gearing up for another summer of fundraising and community awareness campaigns.

On March 2, the Bears elected Marr to their highest post, following his reign as Mr. Oregon Cub in 2007, and his position as an art contributor since his move to Portland in 2003. As Marr reports to *Just Out*, his main focus is on furthering the legacy of inclusivity that distinguishes the Oregon Bears—the largest Bear organization in the country with more than 500 members.

"We don't discriminate against anybody just because they don't fit a physical parameter or because they're a different sex or anything like that," explains Marr. "My focus is going to be to reach out to the entire community and make them realize we're well aware that we're part of the entire community and not just another little clique."

Part of that awareness includes traditional Bear events for members and nonmembers alike, such as the weekly Friday Happy Hour at Fox and Hounds (217 NW Second Ave.), as well as the monthly BearPaw Busts and Bear Busts at the Eagle Portland (835 N. Lombard St.). Additionally, the BearTown committee has secured dates and a schedule of events for the organization's 16th annual festivities.

From June 9 to 12, the Bears have slated an action-packed weekend of furry, fabulous fun. Be it the Shed the Shirt Happy Hour and T-shirt exchange on Friday, June 10 at Local Lounge (3536 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.), the Underbear Dance Party later that night at CC Slaughters or the Mr. Oregon Bear and Mr. Oregon Cub 2011 contest at the Jupiter Hotel on Saturday, June 11, this year's BearTown casts a wide net.

This 2011 BearTown beneficiary is the Sexual and Gender Minority Youth Resource Center (SMYRC). As a new charity for the Bears to work with, members are excited about the opportunity to support the community resource.

"I was myself a homeless gay youth, lost in Spokane, Wash.," explains Marr. "So having an outlet like that is something that's always had a place for me. There just weren't those kinds of resources when I was a kid."

"I believe [SMYRC] deserves and needs our help," says Mr. Oregon Cub 2010 Corey Fortuna. "I think that sometimes organizations like SMYRC get overlooked, so I am proud the Bears have decided to make them our charity."

Fortuna will hand over his title during the June 11 Mr. Oregon Cub contest, as will current Mr. Oregon Bear Don James. At press time, candidates for this year's contest were still trickling in, but after a few years of low applications for contestants, Marr and Fortuna

hope this year sees a renewed interest—particularly when it comes to the titleholders' fundraising duties throughout the state.

"I am hoping that the new Cub and Bear will do their best in continuing [to make] the club fun and exciting," says Fortuna. "I hope they will continue on with fundraising efforts, which Don and I have made an important part of our reign. This last year of being Mr. Oregon Cub has been amazing. It has been so nice to give back and be part of an organization that loves to raise money and have fun at the same time."

Most imminent in the Bears' pre-summer planning is its long-awaited website overhaul. Marr says his hopes are that the new site will be operational by the end of May.

For more information on upcoming summer events, as well as a full schedule of events for the 16th Annual BearTown, visit oregonbears.org.

KOIN 6 Declines Contract Renewal for Tim Joyce

Longtime KOIN 6 News meteorologist and reporter Tim Joyce was informed Friday, April 8 that his contract with the company would not be renewed. The popular, openly gay weatherman-about-town was told by his employers that the decision was not personal, and that it was just business.

The reasoning didn't sit well with followers of Joyce on Facebook, as word of his dismissal



Say it ain't so, Tim Joyce!

prompted several encouraging remarks for Joyce and some less-than flattering missives for KOIN 6. Still, though Joyce describes his reaction to the news as "utter shock," he reports that he's moving on slowly from the layoff.

"I think everyone always feels like they want more of an explanation," says Joyce. "But the nature of the world is that things happen all the time where we never fully can understand what's going on—either behind the scenes or sometimes in plain view. So I've kind of accepted that and am sort of, 'Okay, well, I guess I'll just see whatever happens to me next.'"

Casey Wenger, KOIN 6 human resources

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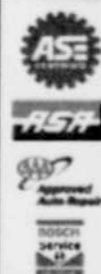
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