

OREGON'S LGBTQ NEWSMAGAZINE **eveninglife.**

Flash, Miriam insists, "This is not discrimination, this is female empowerment."

The dance's policy on trans attendees also attracts complaints. The policy states that FTMs must identify at the door. "MTFs already have their identity established as female," Miriam says. But "if somebody comes in with a beard and moustache," she wants to know that person's identity in order to keep Hot Flash a female-oriented environment.

"It's one of the best policies that we have. ... It also gets me in trouble," she admits. Miriam adds that she sees a generational gap wherein "when an FTM comes in looking like a male ... younger women are usually fine, older women get angry."

The idea for Hot Flash came to Miriam about 10 years ago, following the end of a long-term relationship and, two years later, the death of her mother. In a time of despair, she was visited by the Celtic goddess Brigid, a pre-Christian power with ties to fire, Miriam explains. She first began dreaming of Brigid in her early twenties, at which time the goddess told Miriam she must leave her but that she would return when Miriam was 47-53 years old. The goddess returned, as promised, and gave Miriam the vision and strength to create this female-affirming event, Miriam says.

Brigid is “the energy force in the universe that has compelled me to provide a safe place for women to gain empowerment, strength and vitality,” she shares. Miriam is always looking for new ways to foster connections among women in general and in the lesbian community, and Hot Flash is not only a party but also a place where women form business networks and meaningful friendships. You’ll find carpenters, roofers, real estate agents, cops and attorneys all having a good time under one roof, she notes.

The weekend of May 29, Hot Flash hosts the Lezberados, a comedy duo consisting of Latina lesbian comedians Mimi Gonzalez and Sandra Valls. Sometimes political, sometimes bawdy, Gonzalez has been performing for almost 20 years, and *Curve* magazine included Valls in its top 10 lesbian comedians list. "These women are two of the funniest women, in my opinion, in the 'celesbian' scene," Miriam says.

Fans and women unfamiliar with their comedy will have a chance to meet the funny



"We don't deserve back alley bars anymore. We deserve beautiful venues. We deserve to respect ourselves and be in places where we will be respected."

-PAULINE MIRIAM

ladies at Hot Flash the night before their Sunday performance at Aura. While the dance is a female-only event, the May 29 Lezberados show is open to all. The Pride dance in June is also not gender exclusive.

Miriam and her partner, Joyce Schiltz, who works as Hot Flash/Inferno Dances' accountant, are always busy—the weekends usually find the two women overseeing dances in different cities. According to Miriam, even though managing the parties takes a lot of energy and work, her love for women and being able to provide this event for them keeps her going.

As for those dark days of the past, she says, "Up from the ashes came Hot Flash, and how much better could that be?" 

LEZBERADOS perform at 7 p.m. Sun., May 29 at Aura, 1022 W. Burnside; \$15-\$20, available at the door or online at brownpapertickets.com. Meet Mimi Gonzalez and Sandra Valls at this month's HOT FLASH, 6-10 p.m. Sat., May 28 at Barracuda (9 NW Second Ave.), \$8 cover.



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