

BY RYAN J. PRADO

Lincoln City Officials Respond to Iris Pride Opposition...Sort of

An uproar by some Lincoln City residents over the city sponsorship of the annual Iris Pride festival has been quieted, or at least set aside for now.

Following a media email from Iris Pride organizers Franci Miller and Rebecca Barnhardt sent October 13, in which they urged recipients to inform the Lincoln City Visitor & Convention Bureau of the critical need for the yearly event, the bureau replied with a cursory statement in response.

Sandy Pfaff, director of VCB, said that due to the newness of the reports, there had been "no time or appropriate opportunity for discussion by the City" to comment further.

"The Lincoln City Visitor & Convention Bureau ... has been the primary organizer and financial supporter of the Iris Pride Festival for the past four years," said Pfaff. "Its efforts to execute the festival have been supported by a variety of individuals, businesses and organizations, both local and outside the immediate Lincoln City area, who contribute and participate in equally varied ways, including entertainment, educational material, and retail vending. I am in receipt ... of a number of emails expressing support of the festival. The 2012 festival is currently scheduled for September 15, 2012."

Pfaff noted that the bureau always calen-



Look out, Lincoln City! It's only a matter of time before these rainbow kites try to push their agendas on our children!

dars special events for the next year immediately after the event is completed to maintain organizational and marketing focus, unless they have already decided they will not pursue the event further.

Miller and Barnhardt reported that the first rumblings of controversy stemmed from an article dated October 4 in local paper *The News Guard*, in which community member Jim Hoover said that the VCB's decision to post a link to a "raunchy" YouTube video featuring a drag performance by Lily Armani "showed lax oversight at City Hall."

But the opposition to the city-sponsored Iris Pride hasn't ended with complaining to the media.

"There are also businesses in town that have received threatening phone calls," reported Miller and Barnhardt.

One of those businesses is BK Mulligan's, a Lincoln City sports bar that hosted the show in question, Drag-U-Licious. The event was a benefit for the Oregon Safe Schools & Communities Coalition and other local charities.

Just Out will continue to report on this as news becomes available.

BRO's Ignite Fundraiser Brings Record Crowd; Town Hall Meetings to Help Decide Gay Marriage Ballot Initiative in 2012

Basic Rights Oregon's fundraising gala "Ignite" far exceeded its organizers' expectations October 7 at the Kridel Grand Ballroom at the Portland Art Museum.

BRO development director Juan Martinez reports that a record crowd of more than 900 people attended the annual benefit. With the record influx of attendees came an inflated fundraising total, as over \$265,000 was generated to benefit BRO.

"We keep hearing from those who attended that the energy level in the room was so high, which made for a truly memorable evening," says Martinez. "Our goal was to make the event accessible to more of our supporters, gathering people to celebrate those who ignite change and to spark everyone's passion to support LGBT equality. We feel we accomplished this in a big way!"

As BRO's accomplishments continue to pile up, the public interest on whether or not the organization will move forward with a gay marriage initiative on the 2012 ballot remains high.

As was previously reported, an Advisory Group had been tasked to meet in late October to make a recommendation on whether or not BRO should begin gathering signatures for a freedom to marry ballot initiative for 2012's general election. Now BRO executive director Jeana Frazzini says that this process will also include a series of Town Hall meetings across the state throughout the first week of November.

"No state has ever put a proactive measure to win marriage equality at the ballot before," says Frazzini. "It's a herculean task, and not a decision we take lightly. Making this decision must be a shared responsibility of Basic Rights Oregon and the community."

Frazzini says that BRO will review results of an online survey of supporters, professional public opinion research and input from the organization's Advisory Group before making a final decision on the ballot measure for 2012.

Scheduled Town Hall meetings include stops in Eugene on Saturday, November 5 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the First Christian Church (1166 Oak St.); in Corvallis Sunday, November 6 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church (435 NW 21st St.);



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