

Rally, I Do

Chant for equal rights

One, two, three, four, we won't take it anymore! Five, six, seven, eight, the state should not discriminate!

Hundreds of pro-equality demonstrators rallied on Oregon's Capitol steps March 7 to call for what now seems the very likely passage of – at long freaking last – nondiscrimination and civil unions laws. Not exactly your angry torch-and-pitchfork mob, but our rainbow gathering of lesbian, gay, bi and trans people and fabulous allies made our presence known.

We'd driven to Salem in the pouring rain from Eugene, Springfield, Bend, Ashland, The Dalles and every corner of the state, to attend the Basic Rights Oregon Day of Action. Queer people young and old and a huge showing of our families and friends showed up to protest unfair treatment under the law and to support two new bills up for a vote this session.

SB 2, the Oregon Equality Act, creates a statewide law prohibiting discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodation, public services, and education on the basis of sexual orientation (which in this law includes gender identity and expression).



HB 2007, the Oregon Family Fairness Act, creates legal recognition (civil unions) for same-sex couples and their families.

We need these laws.

Dig it: Here it is the 21st century, and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is still perfectly legal – in the Beaver State, no less. That means anyone who doesn't measure

up to what's considered "normal" can be denied a job, evicted from an apartment, or kicked out of a restaurant, movie theater, or the mall (true story!) just for being queer – or because some boss/ landlord/ manager THINKS you "look queer."

Under current Oregon law, gay and lesbian couples lack critical protections, including the rights to:

- take bereavement or sick leave to care for each other
- choose a final resting place when one dies
- wrongful death benefits for the surviving partner
- transfer property and assets from partner to partner
- obtain joint health, home, and auto insurance policies
- enter joint rental agreements (if we can get someone to rent to us!)
- file joint state tax returns.

And, unlike straight couples, we have no legal right to equitable division of property when we divorce. Does that suck or what?

These protections are automatically bestowed upon the legally married and, since the passage of Measure 36, legal marriage is constitutionally prohibited to same-sex couples. Can someone say catch-22?

And what about protecting our families? Lesbian moms and gay dads don't have the right to:

- take leave to care for a partner's child
- obtain joint child custody, visitation, adoption, or foster care, or
- be recognized as a valid parent of a partner's kid.

DUDE! It's not good.

We've been living under this social apartheid system all these years. Now everybody say, *One two three four, we won't take it anymore!*

During a sign-from-God break in the rain, Gov. Kulongoski stepped up to the podium, and the crowd broke into a huge ovation. "This is the pen I use to sign bills into law," the gov said over the din. He waved his PaperMate at the cheering throng. "I'm ready to sign!"

Let's take the governor up on his offer. Legislators who support basic fairness for all Oregonians are on our side. They know it's time. Now they want to hear from you. Call, write, email, and visit your senator and representatives and tell them you support House Bill 2007 and Senate Bill 2.

Don't make us get out the torches and pitchforks.

Sally Sheklow won the 2006-2007 Best of Eugene award for "Best Local Writer."



drawing as therapy

by harvey dickson



with a neighbor will grant additional acreage to that neighbor in exchange for increasing access to 10 dwellings on the rezoned property. Lininger has literally harassed the neighbors with repeated phone calls and mailings in order to gain support for his application.

County Commissioner Bill Dwyer has stated that when somebody buys a piece of property, they must accept the zoning on that property and not have expectations of changing it. Former Commissioner Lininger should take note of that statement.

Neal Miller
Eugene

ADAM ROCKED IT

Bravo to Adam Golthwaite for his balls-out (hee-hee) reprise performance as Hedwig in *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* at the the Lord Leebrick. It takes major guts and talent to play the role of our dear Hedwig and Adam rocked it to a tee!

We saw the event as a chance to shed our Birkis and let our inner Club Kid free but are wondering where were the rest of you? We know you're out there — let's not miss the next opportunity to glam up!

Teri Ewing
Sundaye St. Onge
Eugene

AWKWARD FOR PEACE

Last week I wore an armband with a peace symbol to the grocery store. It was a Monday, and I had a long list of things to buy: milk, bread, potatoes, etc. I felt a little nervous wearing the bright blue band around my left arm. I wondered if people would notice it and how they might react. As I moved from the produce section to bulk foods, I felt a little awkward and began to think about what I was doing.

Every day the horrors of the Iraq war and its consequences reach into my life and color it more hopeless. Every day when I wake up to a cup of coffee and kindergarten children, I remember that far beyond my horizons an unimaginable catastrophe is crushing people just like us, with our tax dollars. Every day we are involved in a catastrophic war we cannot see and could not stomach if we could. And we just go on.

Now when daffodils and warm sunshine lighten our steps, a bloody horizon beyond my imagination weighs on my heart. So I put on an armband as a sign of mourning and feel awkward. I can't remember seeing anyone

wearing one before. But I suppose I feel awkward also because I want to wear it as a sign of hope. I hope that we've had enough. I hope that we the people are ready to stand together to stop this war and start creating a more peaceful world. Anybody want to feel awkward with me?

Kara Steffensen
Eugene

SOLUTIONS, PLEASE

Hey, remember that Steve Miller Band song, "Fly Like an Eagle"? I heard it the other day and I got to thinking: Why are people *still* living in the streets? What is the solution?

Jen Workman
Eugene

GIVE ME MY HOOT

First off let me say that I am a big fan of Dan Savage and have enjoyed howling over his columns for several years. He provides a unique cultural service with the refreshing openness and honesty he brings to discussion of sexuality.

And I'm fascinated by the debate around whether his column is appropriate in *EW*. I don't have kids myself, but I don't think it's a stretch to imagine the concerns of parents who feel the *Weekly* is so ubiquitous in this town and that Savage's column (good as it is) might not be appropriate for, say, 12- and 13-year-old children. I'm a little disturbed by the tenor of pro-Savage letters that tar people expressing those concerns as *ipso facto* sanctimonious prudes. It's either disingenuous or reflecting a serious lack of imagination to not be able to recognize those concerns as possibly legitimate. I think the impact on children of explicit sexual material in a free community paper is a legitimate issue, and a fair and compassionate debate could be a good thing for this community.

One thought I have is that it might be ex-

WHO YOU GONNA BLAME?

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