

BILL BANNING CONVERSION THERAPY FOR LGBT YOUTH

The Youth Mental Health Protection Act (HB 2307) would ban licensed mental health providers and psychologists in Oregon from providing “conversion therapy” to minors. Conversion therapy is a largely discredited practice that attempts to change a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity. HB 2307 passed in the Oregon House 41 to 18 on March 17 and now heads to the Senate.

More than 20 people showed up at the Capitol in Salem in early March to testify on HB 2307. Among them was Alyssa Chiampi, a student from Western Oregon University. She used her personal story as testimony because she says it proves that conversion therapy is a very real threat to LGBT youth in Oregon today.

In December of 2014, Chiampi says her mother convinced her to try going to a session with a licensed psychologist who provides conversion therapy. Chiampi had recently come out as pangender — or someone who does not identify with the male-female gender binary — and when her mother found out, she turned to the internet.

“She Googled places that provide conversion therapy,” Chiampi says. Her mother found a psychologist close to their home in Medford, and Chiampi agreed to go. She now remembers that hour as the most uncomfortable hour of her life.

If HB 2307 were the law, Chiampi says she would not have had to go through a “step backwards” last year in her coming out process.

“This bill would have been my backbone in order to stand up to my mom, to say that I wasn’t going to go,” Chiampi says.

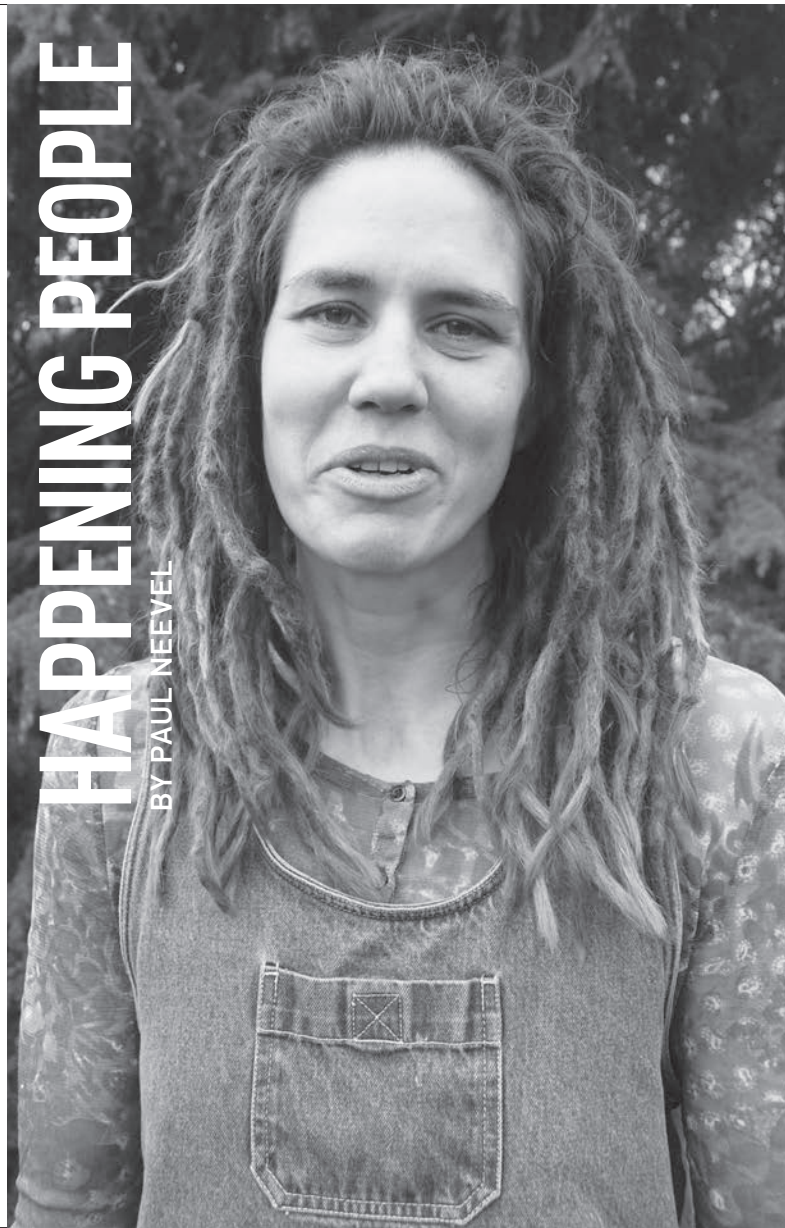
>>> CONTINUED ON P. 8

MIA NELSON

Farm girl Mia Nelson grew up outside of Glencoe, Minnesota, where her dad managed the local Green Giant packing plant. “The world’s largest corn-packing plant,” she says. “I worked there summers.” After two years at Rice University in Houston, she transferred to Oregon State to study biochemistry. “I wanted to be a vet,” she says, “but I quit school to work for the Green Tortoise bus company.” GT had a shop in Lowell, where buses were converted for cross-country touring. She worked there three years, drove a couple of trips and met her husband, Richard Johnson. In 1992, with the help of her dad, who took early retirement and moved west, they bought a 500-acre farm near Lowell, where they now raise self-reliant New Zealand Kiko goats. Learn about Kikos at the Lookout Point Ranch web site. Their land purchase included a tract within the town of Lowell. “We blundered into becoming developers,” says Nelson, who spent 15 years dividing and selling the land. “I lost my ignorance and learned how land-use decisions get made.” When she saw how population forecasts could be manipulated to influence urban growth boundary decisions, she began volunteering for LandWatch Lane County. In 2009, she was hired by 1000 Friends of Oregon as its Willamette Valley Advocate. As a member of the Technical Resource Group that advises the Envision Eugene planning process, she found an error in the way population density had been calculated. Corrected figures showed that two proposed South Hills expansions wouldn’t be needed. “My work as a developer was helpful,” she says. “Now, I can finally feel proud of what I’m doing.”

HAPPENING PEOPLE

BY PAUL NEEVEL



SPRINGTACULAR SEASON PASS

Unlimited spring skiing & riding
on one of the deepest snowpacks
in the U.S.A.



\$99
Youth/70+

\$149
Adults

\$129
Teen/Senior



Visit **WWW.MTBACHELOR.COM** to Buy Now
Purchase by Noon on Monday, March 23 for the Best Deal



Pass valid to use
starting Monday, March 30