

“You feel like you’re an intruder because you’re fulfilling a part of your identity that fits in with hetero-normativity.”

— HANNAH STEINKOPF-FRANK

from other, needier people. When I came out to my family, reactions varied from “What? I don’t understand” to “You’re doing this for attention” to “Your boyfriend can never trust you not to cheat.”

My parents probably still think I just went through a phase in college. I’m in a happy relationship with a man right now, so clearly my “gay phase” has come to an end. I can assure you that I remain bisexual despite my loyalty to my male partner. I certainly feel like an outsider in LGBTQ communities — too straight to fit in, not queer enough to be considered.

Straight partners can be quite jealous, too — or can fetishize the idea of two women making out in front of them. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve searched Tinder for potential dates with women and found couples seeking

a third for a ménage à trois. From an actual Tinder bio: “Cute boy in the first picture and I trying 2 find one more [tongue sticking out emoji].”

Osborne says being bi can feel like you’re not quite queer enough. “I worry about taking the conversation away from people who are more in danger and more in need of support than I am,” he says. “But at the same time it does bug me that the queer community in general can be really exclusive towards bi people even now, and dismiss them as either closeted men or promiscuous women who are just going through a phase and trying it out.”

So what does this mean for bi people? They tend to have mental health issues and feel isolated, as it turns out.

According to the *Bisexual Invisibility* report, “Previous studies may have overemphasized the risk of mental health

problems for homosexuals by grouping them together with bisexuals.” The report says that 45.4 percent of bisexual women report suicidality, compared to 29.5 percent of lesbians. There’s a similar disparity between bisexual and gay men.

Being invisible means bisexuals don’t have clear role models in the media. Bisexuals don’t have precedents for their sexuality, and neither queer communities nor the straight population understands them. Even Oregon’s bisexual governor, Kate Brown, occasionally faces ignorant questions because she is married to a man.

But with high-profile people like Brown out about their bi status, as well as celebrities such as Drew Barrymore and Carrie Brownstein, bisexuals are finally becoming more visible. ■

DANCING IN THE STREET

The Wayward Lamb puts on its second Downtown Pride Block Party

BY MEERAH POWELL

Normally, Pride festivals take place in the downtown sector of big cities, or at least nearby — take Portland Pride along the waterfront or Seattle Pride along Fourth Avenue, for example. They’re also traditionally held during June, National LGBT Pride Month. But we all know Eugene isn’t normal.

As a part of what seems to be Eugene’s tradition for operating outside the norm, the Eugene/Springfield Pride Festival has been held in various spots around town throughout the years, but most recently its home has been in Alton Baker Park. It also traditionally takes place in August (see the story this issue).

Colin Graham, owner of downtown queer pub The Wayward Lamb, says there are some advantages to Eugene’s Pride Celebration taking place outside of National Pride month, such as the lack of competition from other Pacific Northwest Pride celebrations. But for him, having Pride activities downtown is essential.

Last year, Graham went to one of the Pride Committee’s public meetings and proposed the idea of moving the festival downtown. “They considered the idea, but based on where they were in the planning stages they had said that it’s probably logistically not possible to accomplish it for that year,” Graham says.

Graham agreed that moving Pride downtown on short notice would be potentially challenging and expensive for the committee, so he made his own plans.

“What I decided to do was put on a block party as another event for the Pride Festival weekend. It gave me proof of concept and enabled me to discuss the idea from a more practical perspective,” he says.

Graham, this year’s site/city liaison for the Pride Committee, proposed Pride’s downtown relocation again. “The proposal was to have the daytime element of the festival in Monroe Park [and] have a parade up West Broadway ending in an evening event downtown,” he says.

The committee accepted, but the new plan didn’t work for the city. “We hadn’t worked out too many details before the city confirmed that they couldn’t grant a permit for an event expecting that large a crowd,” Graham says. “So, we may consider it again next year, but it would require an event layout where crowds would naturally disperse over a larger area rather than convene in one small one.”

Instead of giving in to defeat, Graham decided to host another Pride block party out in front of The Lamb on Broadway Street. The Lamb’s block party will take place Aug. 11, a day before the Pride Festival in Alton Baker.

Like last year, The Wayward Lamb’s block party is chock-full of entertainment, says the pub’s marketing manager Tony Tam Sing.

The party will be hosted by Angelica D’Vil, a drag performer who used to be a permanent part of Glamazons, a cast of drag artists who perform at the Lamb every Friday night.

Along with food trucks, vendors and beverage options, there will be a stage set up on the sidewalk for live entertainment from musicians like Betty and the Boy and Austin Chevalier as well as two dance troupes. “The rest are the other drag queens who are performing,” Sing says.

Along with Glamazons, there will also be two drag queens from Portland, Miss Innana and Cody Wojahn, as well as a drag queen all the way from L.A., Nebuer Styles.

Graham says another exciting point of the Block Party is that Star 102.3 FM will be broadcasting live for the first two hours of the event from a booth set up right in the center of the action.

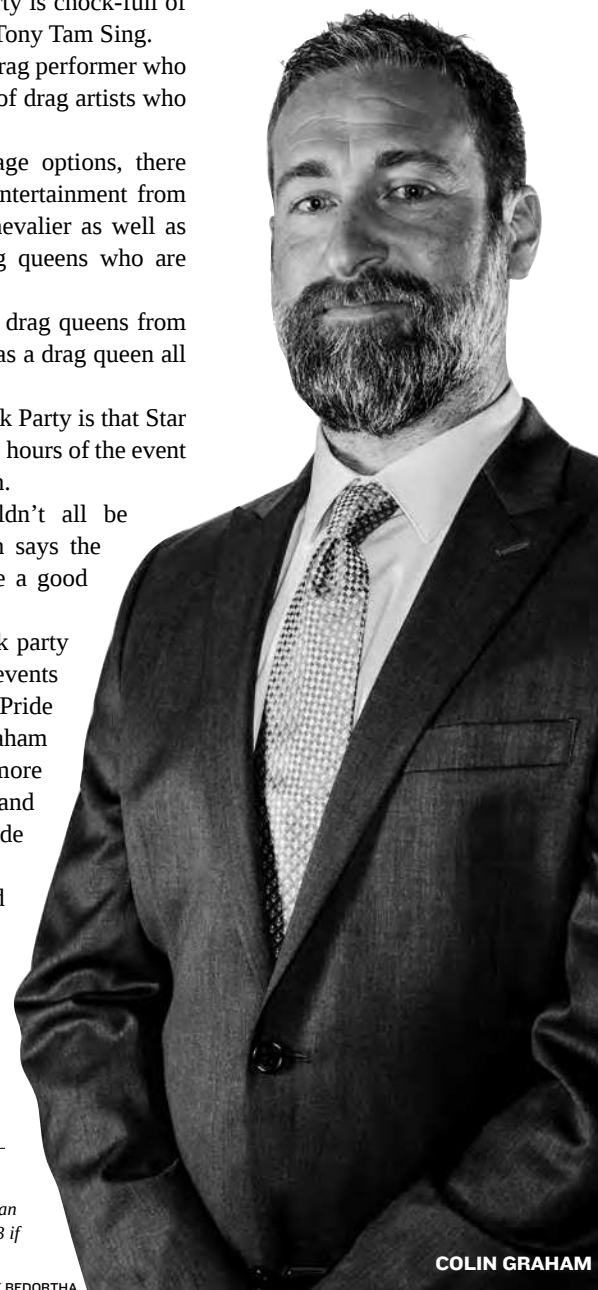
And although all of Pride’s activities couldn’t all be condensed into a single day downtown, Graham says the spread-out nature of the events could actually be a good thing.

“For the time being, we intend to hold a block party on Pride weekend every year. With this and other events held at other venues, it’s nice to be able to refer to Pride weekend as something that grows each year,” Graham says. “I think with each passing year there will be more and more things at various venues around town ... and perhaps we will eventually be referring to it as Pride week.”

For Graham, Eugene is only improving, and with it he thinks the Pride Festival will, too.

Eugene “is positioned beautifully between Seattle and the Bay Area,” he says. “I think that’s just one of the factors that will cause Eugene to continue to grow in importance in the tech industry. As this happens, my hope is that our Pride festival grows with it.” ■

The Downtown Pride Block Party will be 5-11 pm on Friday, Aug. 11, in front of The Wayward Lamb on Broadway between Olive and Charnelton. The event is 21 and older and costs \$5. It’s followed by an afterparty at The Wayward Lamb which starts at 11 pm. It’s \$5, or \$3 if you attended the Block Party.



COLIN GRAHAM

PHOTO BY TRASK BEDORTHA