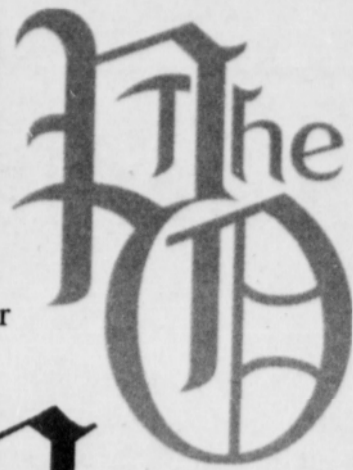




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**Folk, Blues, Country**  
Rose Festival fun on  
the waterfront for  
holiday weekend  
See Metro page 9 inside

**Expanded  
Reach**  
Southeast now  
PCC's fourth  
campus  
See inside, page 3



# The Portland Observer 44

'City of Roses'



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Established in 1970  
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44 years of  
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## Rejoice!

Same-sex couples  
take vows as  
marriage ban lifted

BY OLIVIA OLIVIA  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Same-sex couples raced to pick up marriage licenses and get married Monday after a federal judge struck down Oregon's voter-approved ban on gay marriage, saying it is unconstitutional.

U.S. District Judge Michael McShane said the 2004 ban unconstitutionally discriminates against same-sex couples and ordered the state not to enforce it. State officials earlier refused to defend the constitutional ban in court.

Portland's Melody Ballroom hosted marriage ceremonies throughout the day and into the evening.

LaKeesha Dumas and her wife O'Nesha Cochran-Dumas were the first African-American same-sex couple to take their vows on Monday. The newlyweds picked up their marriage license at the Multnomah County building and then headed over to the Melody Ballroom with their friends and family for a traditional jumping-the-broom ceremony.

"Family is what you make off it," the couple said, advising young LGBT people of color to "be true to yourself."

Another gay marriage at the ballroom was for Cindy Joseph and B.G. Goldberg. The couple said they "waited 30 years for this day."

PDX Pedicab offered free rides to couples going from the Multnomah building to the Melody Ballroom, accepting only tips for the fare.

"I've been biking all day. I love this and feel honored to be doing this today," said Joe Ball, the PDX Pedicab driver.

Khalil Edwards and other members of Portland Black Pride and Communities of Color United for Marriage welcomed the couples as they entered the hall.

Paw Lumley and Phillip Hillaire of the Yakama and Lummi tribes were excited to recite their marriage vows before the press, friends and community members. They attempted to marry 10 years ago only to have their marriage overturned the same year.

They advised lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth to reach out to the elder gay and lesbian community for people to



PHOTO BY OLIVIA OLIVIA/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

LaKeesha Dumas (left) and her wife O'Nesha Cochran-Dumas get married Monday before family and friends at the Melody Ballroom, downtown. They were the first African American same-sex couple to marry after a federal judge struck down Oregon's ban on gay marriage as unconstitutional.



PHOTO BY OLIVIA OLIVIA/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Khalil Edwards and Zach Mohammed of Portland Black Pride and Communities of Color United for Marriage welcome supporters to the Melody Ballroom Monday which was reserved all day and night for same-sex weddings after a judge struck down Oregon's ban on gay marriages.

support them and work with them.

Rev. Chuck Currie, from the Center for Peace and Spirituality at Pacific University in Forest Grove, said he was honored to marry couples on this momentous day.

"When I grew up I remember some Southern Baptist churches didn't ordain black ministers. I didn't want to continue finding reasons to discriminate against others. I considered joining the United Methodist Church, but also didn't because at the time they did not ordain LGBT members," Currie said.

Tye and Willy Elliott met in North Carolina two years ago. They said it was love at first sight and they committed to each other last year with a civil union in Portland. However, they plan to get married later this year and appreciated the new freedom to do so.

Four gay and lesbian couples brought the Oregon ban on same-sex marriages to federal court in Eugene, arguing the state's marriage laws unconstitutionally discriminate against them and exclude them from a fundamental right to marriage.

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