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for Transgender Equality
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**Fly your Flags
on Fridays!**

MAC partners with Spokane's Queer History Project

Museum may also begin its first collection of regional GLBT documents, artifacts

By Joyce Crosby
Special to Stonewall News Northwest

Rose Krause, Curator of Special Collections at the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture (MAC), located at 2316 W. First Avenue in Spokane's historic Browne's Addition confirmed that the museum is partnering with Maureen Nickerson, the driving force behind Spokane's GLBT history project, "Yesterday and Today: A Century of LGBT Faces in the Inland Northwest," to compile and preserve materials relevant to local lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender history. The project, according to Nickerson, is also "affectionately known as QHP (Queer History Project) by the younger set."

Initially, Nickerson contacted Kris Major, Curator of Education at the MAC, to discuss research related to an exhibit Nickerson is planning to display at Odyssey Youth Center that will focus on Spokane's GLBT historical figures.

Please see MAC page 3



Above: Spokane's Museum of Arts and Culture (MAC)

Photos by Joyce Crosby

Left: Adjoining Cheney Cowles Center

Vista Youth Center Opens March 1 in Tri-Cities

by Joyce Crosby
Special to Stonewall News Northwest



Mark Nathan Lee

Photo by Joyce Crosby

Mark Nathan Lee is a man with a vision of how the future should look. When the 44-year-old moved to the Tri-Cities area of Washington in September 2006, he knew that he wanted to do something to address the needs of south central Washington's GLBTIQQQA youths. Because of his efforts, a new youth center will open in Kennewick on March 1. The center has the support of Planned Parenthood, the Benton-Franklin Health District and local volunteers.

According to Lee, GLBTIQQQA is an all-inclusive acronym meaning gay, lesbian, transgender, intersex, queer, questioning and allied. Lee explained the new definition of the word 'queer.' "Now kids in the MTV generation are able to sleep with somebody, to choose that, and not have it brand him or her. It doesn't mean 'I'm gay just because I slept with someone of the same sex.'" Queer now means anything other than heterosexual. It is a label that is a non-label.

Lee volunteered at Planned Parenthood while he investigated the needs of GLBT youths in the area. He found some of their statistics appalling. According to Lee, young Americans ages 13-24 are infected with HIV/AIDS at the rate of two per hour, and half of all new infections are in people under 25. Education is a big piece of the activist work Lee is undertaking. The Tri-Cities has 181 reported cases of HIV/AIDS, and having teens and youths become infected because of ignorance terrified Lee.

He also learned that no Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) existed in any high schools in the Tri-Cities. Furthermore, the Kennewick School District teaches only abstinence. "What century are we in?" Lee asks. He believes that if local GLBT youths receive support through a center, they will advocate for GSAs at their schools.

Lee asked local people and organizations what they saw as the most urgent need in the GLBT community.

Please see VISTA page 3

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2006 | *Love & Support Award* | Mr. Gay Spokane XXVI
1999 | *Rainbow Award* | Inland Northwest Pride
1997 | *Vice Versa Award* | Q Syndicate
1996 | *Rainbow Award* | Inland Northwest Pride

Spokane & Regional

VIP’s to speak at INBA’s Business Lunch Out

by Joyce Crosby

The Inland Northwest Business Alliance, a professional business organization comprised of GLBT and allied business owners, has scheduled several prominent speakers for their upcoming monthly luncheons.

On January 10, Steve Smith, Editor of Spokane’s daily newspaper the Spokesman-Review, and the person who broke the story alleging sexual misconduct by then Mayor Jim West, will speak. His topic will be value-driven management as it applies to the newsroom and the resonating effects of this approach to quality reporting on complex and diverse issues throughout the community.

The February 14 luncheon will feature Dr. Kim Thornburn, former Medical Director of Spokane Regional Health District. She is undecided about her topic, but Thornburn indicated that she may discuss HIV/AIDS, including politics, or business standards from the business owner’s point of view but with a regulator’s approach and experience.

Spokane Mayor Jim Hession is scheduled to speak at the INBA luncheon on March 14.

INBA board member Marvin Reguindin reported that newly elected Democratic Senator Chris Marr has requested the opportunity to address INBA members and guests at a Business Lunch Out later this year.

Spokane’s Int’l Film Fest to show two gay films



Spokane’s International Film Festival will be including two films this year of interest to the GLBT community.

“Fall of ‘55”

screens Feb 4 at 11:00 am

In the fall of 1955, the citizens of Boise, Idaho were told there was a menace in their midst. On Halloween, three men were arrested -- accused of being part of a giant “sex ring” preying on teenage boys. There was no such ring, but the result was a widespread investigation which some people now call a witch hunt.

By the time the investigation ended, 16 men were charged with sex crimes -- including men accused of having relations with other consenting adults. But countless other lives were also touched. In some cases, men implicated fled the area. At least one family actually left the country.

“Time To Leave”

screens Feb 4 at 2:00

From French director, François Ozon. Romain (Melvil Poupaud), a good

looking young fashion photographer with a successful career, a cute boyfriend and seemingly everything to live for, collapses during a shoot. His initial concern that he might have AIDS is obliterated by a diagnosis which reveals untreatable terminal cancer. Faced with the knowledge that he has only a few months to live, he decides to tell no-one except his grandmother, who he chooses to talk to because she herself is close to death. Time to Leave is an intimate, minimalist and moving work in which Melvil Poupaud excels in the demanding central role, physically diminishing before our eyes.

The Spokane International Film Festival runs Jan 25, 26, 27, 28 and Feb 1, 2, 3, 4

The Spokane International Film Festival, now in its ninth year, is a small, selective festival of world-class films. The festival is overseen by its parent, the Contemporary Arts Alliance of Spokane, with an active Board of Directors and generous financial support from a variety of local and regional underwriters. Contemporary Arts Alliance is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

For more information on this film festival you can visit their web site at www.spokanefilmfestival.org (not to be confused with the GLBT Film Festival at www.spokanefilmfest.org)

Mace returns

By Joyce Crosby

Len Mace, former Interim Pastoral Leader at Emmanuel Metropolitan Community Church, has returned to Spokane, and on January 2, began working for a local non-profit corporation that manages affordable housing for people with disabilities or low incomes.

After receiving accolades from the congregation during his last service as Interim Pastoral Leader at Emmanuel MCC and visiting with family for two weeks, Mace moved Boise, Idaho on November 2, 2006. He spent the next month working with the Interim Pastoral Leader and congregation of Treasure Valley Metropolitan Community Church, having a “wonderfully fun time” with his sister and nephews, and taking time to reflect, relax and renew himself.

“During that much needed time of rest and recovery, I felt strongly led to return to Spokane earlier than originally planned. I wasn’t sure why I needed to return, but throughout my life experience, I’ve learned when one has a very strong ‘leading of the Spirit’ to do something, it is best to follow and not ask questions,” Mace said.

So Mace returned to Spokane, and on December 21, accepted a position as a member of a team that processes intake applications and qualifies people for low-income housing, and also communicates with tenants. The position provides Mace with the opportunity to help people in a new way. Mace states, “Everything we do is ministry when we see our service as such.” Securing employment and being able to enjoy his one-year-old granddaughter cemented Mace’s decision to stay in Spokane.

In reference to being drawn to one place only to discover it is but a stop on a journey of self discovery, Mace disclosed, “In my case, it meant arriving at what was always meant to be a ‘first’ destiny in Boise to have time to reflect and refocus and realize the real destiny was right here in Spokane all the time.”

While Mace cares deeply about the congregation at EMCC and is supportive of Wayne Schull, who took over leadership at the church when Mace departed in October 2006, Mace says he believes, “My greater calling is to be involved in other congregations who have become ‘open and affirming’ to people in the GLBTQ community, and to be part of that ongoing process as more of the mainline denominations ‘see the light’ and realize we are all God’s children.”

Churches should teach love

The ripping apart of churches over the issue of homosexuality is a sad thing to see. But it pales in comparison to the ripping apart of families. We look to our religious leaders for guidance. When they condemn our children, we feel we must condemn them as well. When they excommunicate our children, we feel our families must do the same.

What if the One to whom all churches are dedicated grieves mightily at these divisions?

What if we, churches and families alike, remembered that, in the words of Rabbi Harold Kushner, “The task of any religion is to teach us whom we’re required to love, not whom we’re entitled to hate.”

What if we actually used the great power of all our religions not to divide but to unite?

What a headline that would make!

Carol Lynn Pearson
Walnut Creek, Calif.

-- Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

Voices

“You must give up everything, in order to gain everything.

What must you give up? Everything that is not truly you; all

that you have chosen without choosing and value without

evaluating. All your self-doubt that keeps you from trusting

and loving yourself or other human beings. What will you

gain? Only your own true self; a self who is at peace, who is

able to truly love and be loved, and who understands who and

what s/he is meant for. But you can be yourself only if you are

no one else. You must give up “their” approval, whoever they

are, and look to yourself for evaluation of success and failure,

in terms of your own level of aspiration that is consistent with

your values. Nothing is simpler and nothing is more difficult.”

VISTA

continued from Front Page

Nearly everyone agreed that the community would benefit most from a youth center or community center. According to Jennifer Aalgaard, Community Relations & Marketing Manager, Planned Parenthood of Central Washington, the agency "has supported the research and strategic planning of the youth center from the onset of the idea."

With the encouragement of Planned Parenthood, Lee decided in November to gather a group of youths to discuss their needs. While doing online research about how to conduct youth focus groups, Lee stumbled on the website for Odyssey Youth Center in Spokane. Lee contacted Ramon Alvarez, Executive Director, Odyssey Youth Center and set up an after-hours visit to find out about OYC. In December, Lee returned to Spokane with his supporters to observe a typical night at the center. (See sidebar: Odyssey Serves Diverse Group) Lee proclaimed, "I was totally amazed by what I found there!"

Lee and his supporters returned to the Tri-Cities and held a meeting with Planned Parenthood and other interested local people. They quickly reached a consensus that, "This is something we can do for the youths" of Kennewick, Pasco, Richland and the surrounding area.

A building near Vista Way in Kennewick was chosen as a home for the center. It is central to all of the Tri-Cities and is on a major bus route that connects Kennewick to Richland, Pasco and the outlying areas. Lee also likes the location because River of Life Metropolitan Community Church owns it.

A donor has paid the security deposit on the building and the first several months' rent. This generous supporter has also donated a warehouse full of furniture and all of the supplies for the kitchenette. ROLMCC is helping with launch events, and three sets of parents of GLBTIQQA youths are involved, too. The youth center currently has nine volunteers, all of who will be required to pass background checks before working directly with the youths.

In reference to Planned Parenthood's role in the center, Jennifer Aalgaard stated, "We feel that all persons regardless of sexual orientation should feel safe in their educational settings and communities. We are dedicated to supporting the work at the center and look forward to its success."

"GLBTQ youths are faced with more risk factors and receive far fewer health care services than their heterosexual peers," stated Aalgaard, speaking on behalf of Benton-Franklin Health District, as well as Planned Parenthood. It is the agencies' hope "to end the unnecessary and preventable spread of HIV and STD's throughout the GLBTQ communities, as well as provide comprehensive sexuality education to empower youths to make life long healthy decisions." A volunteer from either the Health District of Benton-Franklin County or Planned Parenthood will be on site when the center is open.

Vista Youth Center will open on March 1 and serve GLBTIQQA youths between the ages of 14 and 21. For the first two months, it will be open Thursday nights from 3 to 8 p.m. Plans call for expanded days and hours beginning in May. The initial goal of the center is to "build familiarity in a place where it is safe for kids to be." Youths are encouraged to drop in to hang out, have some fun, eat good food, and play games. Support and information will be available, too.

Lee believes that realistically the center should average at least two-dozen youths per night after it has been open for a few months. His philosophy is that the number of youths who are present on any given day is unimportant. From his post as Chairman of the Board of Vista Youth Center, Lee is optimistic. "Realistically, if we open and three kids show up the first day, with word of mouth, after about forty days, I think we'll get to our goal of twenty youths per night."

Lee is overwhelmed by the huge amount of support offered by Odyssey

Youth Center's Executive Director. "My thanks to Ramon. It's because of his support that Vista Youth Center will be opening. Essentially I've recreated what he has done." Alvarez has provided documents that include rules, boundaries, forms and fund raising ideas.

The next step is to grow the volunteer and funding pools. "As we do that, the center will be self sustaining," Lee affirmed. One of the challenges Vista Youth Center will face is "finding volunteers who are transgender to be there as role models for kids." Another challenge is finding enough bilingual volunteers to assist the population of Hispanic youths.

Lee has some ideas about how to approach funding. He hopes to recruit one hundred donors to pledge a small amount of money each month. "Individually the amounts are small." But Lee is certain, "together they will keep Vista Youth Center going for a long time."

Mark Nathan Lee's vision is to give our GLBTIQQA youths a safe place to be themselves, "so that these kids, in these times, grow up proud of who they are. I want it to be different than my generation. I want these kids to be...not just ok...I want to get to a place, a time, where kids are proud to be who they are, where kids flirt just like everybody else, where they will be just like everybody else. Even today, the kid who is out, who is willing to step up, is still on the fringe, is still not "normal." The vista that Lee sees on the horizon is the prospect of our youths becoming proud and strong; where acceptance and equality are prevalent; where diversity is applauded.

Vista Youth Center can be reached at:

www.vistayouthcenter.org
info@vistayouthcenter.org
Phone: 971-344-6121

Odyssey Serves Diverse Group

Mark Lee visited Odyssey on December 8, 2006 so that he and his supporters could see how the youths interacted. During the visit, Ramon Alvarez, Odyssey Executive Director, provided time for Lee to have discussions with 19 GLBTQA kids. Lee discovered that the youths who come to the center are a diverse group.

Lee asked them why they come to OYC. "Their primary answer was to be with this, their family of choice, verses their family of origin. Some shared that their family of origin was often not understanding—or able to understand—especially with the Trans youths. Also, many said they came to the center to be able to be themselves and feel safe and comfortable as themselves." Some youths come to use the computers, get help with homework, or for the meal served on Friday nights.

When asked how long they travel to get to the center, most of the youths said around 30 minutes. The longest was 90 minutes by bus, and one lived nearby. However, only two said that parents bring them, and it appeared to Lee that "most didn't tell their parents where they were going." All but one youth found out about Odyssey by word-of-mouth, and attendance varied from about once a week to monthly.

MAC

continued from Front Page

Major then mentioned the project to her colleague, Krause, who manages the Joel E. Ferris Research Library and Archives at the MAC. Krause met Nickerson while Nickerson was searching for LGBT references in the MAC's Police Department Crime Scrapbooks, which, Krause explained, "are made up of newspaper clippings" about crimes that were reported in Spokane.

The museum, according to Krause, currently does not have any "collections that document the history of the GLBT community in Spokane." The only hints of GLBT history currently archived at the MAC are the references Nickerson has been able to find in the Crime Scrapbooks. Other than the private homes of our LGBT elders, there is currently nowhere

researchers can go to learn that when the first Spokane PFLAG meeting was held in Harry and Katie Urbanek's home in 1984, eight people were present. There is no archive that contains the original September 1985 Agenda to prove that, a year later, the Spokane Gay-Lesbian Coalition had thirty-three member organizations. And to learn that within two years, all but a few of these organizations were gone, you would need to talk to long time PFLAG member, Ann Wood. Krause couldn't be more correct in her statement, "We're really at the beginning stages on this project."

The role of the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture in the project is for Krause, Curator of special Collections, and Marsha Rooney, the museum's Curator of History, to lend their professional expertise and to evaluate "materials the MAC may want to acquire." After historical artifacts from the GLBT community are entrusted to the museum, the MAC will catalog the materials and, according to Krause, "provide long-term climate-controlled storage" as well as allow interested individuals to access the materials. Maureen Nickerson reports that she is proud to be involved in finding a permanent home for the collection of oral histories and primary source materials she is gathering from the GLBT community. And she is pleased that the materials will be archived for future generations at the MAC.

Krause indicated that she and Rooney are depending on Nickerson's contacts and the GLBT community as a whole to connect them with people who may have "collections of business, personal, and/or organizational records and artifacts that reflect the history of Spokane's GLBT community."

When Krause attended a conference in Portland, Oregon, one of the sessions highlighted the joint efforts of that city's public library, the Oregon Historical Society and the local GLBT community to collect and preserve it's history. That experience sparked Krause's interest

and she "hoped there would be an opportunity to create a similar collection at the MAC." When she learned of Maureen Nickerson's GLBT history project, Krause enthusiastically offered the museum's support and assistance.

"The GLBT community is part of Spokane's history, just as any other minority or diversity group, and it is the mission of the museum to collect and preserve the history of Spokane and the Inland Northwest," Krause affirmed. This is a great opportunity for both the museum and the GLBT community because, Krause explained, "Writing history depends on source documents for support; if there are no documents, it is very difficult for researchers to produce articles, books, exhibits, etc. By collecting from the GLBT community in Spokane, the MAC will ensure that primary sources are available to researchers now

and in the future."

From Spokane's first "Gay-In" in 1971 to its first Pride March twenty years later, the GLBT community has been working to promote acceptance and equality through visibility. The alliance between the GLBT community and the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture will not

only document and preserve our history. It will also bring recognition and credibility to the contributions of the Inland Northwest's lesbian gay bisexual and transgender persons throughout history.



Maureen Nickerson

Photo by Joyce Crosby

Truth Wins OUT (TWO) is a non-profit think tank and educational organization that counters right-wing disinformation campaigns, debunks the ex-gay myth, and provides accurate information about the lives of GLBT people.

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Anything but Straight

Science Strikes Back

by Wayne Besen

University lecturers left their classrooms this week to lecture Focus on the Family's James Dobson to tell him he has no class. The tenured were teed off and staged a revolt because they were revolted by how Dobson had perverted their work in TIME magazine. In a guest column criticizing Mary Cheney, Dobson justified his trashing of gay families by citing the work of renowned researchers. But instead of allowing their work to be distorted, the scholars hollered and told Dobson to stop lying for the Lord."

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The first professor to profess her displeasure was Dr. Carol Gilligan, a renowned psychologist and author of In a Different Voice. Gilligan has also taught at Harvard and University of Cambridge and has more degrees than a thermometer. She is so well-respected that Dobson tried to justify his argument against same-sex families in TIME by citing her work. The devious goal of Dobson was to force reasonable people to think, "If a learned scholar likes Gilligan says gay families are harmful, maybe Focus on the Family is right."

The problem was Dobson deliberately got it wrong. I contacted Gilligan and she was "stunned" and "mortified" by the way Dobson had manipulated her research. Indeed, she wrote a letter to Dobson demanding that he "cease and desist from quoting my research in the future."

"Not only did you take my research out of context, you did so without my knowledge to support discriminatory goals that I do not agree with," continued Gilligan in her letter and reiterated in a video airing on YouTube. "What you wrote was not truthful and I ask that you refrain from ever quoting me again and that you apologize for twisting my work."

A second researcher I contacted was Dr. Kyle Pruett, professor at Yale University School of Medicine and the author of Fatherhood: Why Father Care Is as Essential as Mother Care for Your Child." Pruett was also unaware that Dobson had butchered his scholarship.

"You cherry-picked a phrase to shore up highly, in my view, discriminatory purposes," wrote Pruett in a letter to Dobson. "This practice is condemned in real science, common though it may be in pseudo-science circles. There is nothing in my longitudinal research or any of my writings to support such conclusions (about same-gender families)."

If this wasn't embarrassing enough, this week, Angela Phillips, author of "The Trouble With Boys," and professor at Goldsmiths College in London, said she was "incensed" to find she was misquoted in another Dobson article.

"It has come to my attention that my book 'The Trouble with Boys' has been seriously misrepresented in



writings by James Dobson," she wrote to Focus on the Family. "I would be grateful if you could publish this letter prominently on your website."

Of course, Dobson will never apologize to Dr. Gilligan or stop using Dr. Pruett's research or place Professor Phillips' letter on his website.

As long as his organization is raking in nearly \$150 million a year and he is on the White House's speed dial, Dobson will mock the truth with mendacity. Bearing false witness is his modus operandi.

In June, Dr. Elizabeth Saewyc, an associate professor at the University of British Columbia, said Focus on the Family twisted her study on lesbian teen suicide.

"The research has been hijacked for somebody's political purposes or ideological purposes and that's worrisome," Saewyc told CBC news. Focus on the Family justified its lie by misquoting the work of Columbia University's Dr. Robert Spitzer, who felt it necessary to respond.

"Unfortunately Focus on the Family has once again reported findings of my study out of context to support their fight against gay rights," said Dr. Spitzer.

Feeling the heat of international condemnation, Dobson turned to character assassination on his webpage this week, suggesting his accusers were hostage to "liberal groupthink." I suppose, as a group, these acclaimed scientists do think that misrepresenting science is wrong. And, of course, it is worth noting that Dobson respected these very researchers enough to quote them last week. He only changed his tune after they upbraided him for unethical and unprofessional conduct.

Focus on the Family's big "ah ha" moment was more like a "ha ha" moment, as it was quite laughable. They pointed out that I was the one who first contacted all of the professors. But, Focus neglected to say that if Dobson had been honest, I wouldn't have had to make these calls. Finally, Focus on the Family derided Dobson's detractors as name-callers. However, some of Dobson's fiercest critics have come from the far right.

In October, former ultraconservative Rep. Dick Armey (R-TX) said that Dobson is a "real nasty bully" who commands a "gang of thugs."

I would agree that his organization more often acts like Crips than Christians. It is time to take the Dramamine, as Dobson is about to spin legitimate criticism in the same dishonest way he spun the actual studies he is being criticized for distorting.

Wayne Besen is a columnist, author and the founder of Truth Wins Out, www.TruthWinsOut.org



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Former President Gerald Ford on equality...

Deb Price quoted President Ford in "Gerald Ford: Treat Gay Couples Equally" in The Detroit News. (Oct. 29, 2006)

"...I think they ought to be treated equally. Period," Ford declared. Asked specifically whether gay couples should get the same Social Security, tax and other federal benefits as married couples, he replied, "I don't see why they shouldn't. I think that's a proper goal."

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L Word Steams up Dempsey’s

The Fourth Season premiere party of the **L Word** had its mishaps on Sunday evening, but the people in this community pulled together to make it happen.

Murphy’s Law hit OutSpokane and Dempsey’s when they were down to the last three days before the party.

First, the big screen TV chose to have tantrums and was only working part of the time. Then at the last minute it was discovered that the scheduled hookup had been postponed until Monday following the scheduled premiere.

Not wanting to let anyone down and be true to their **own** word, OutSpokane and Dempsey’s formed a back up plan and borrowed a video projector from publisher Mike Schultz and a pull down screen from local activist Bonnie Aspen. Still the day was not quite saved

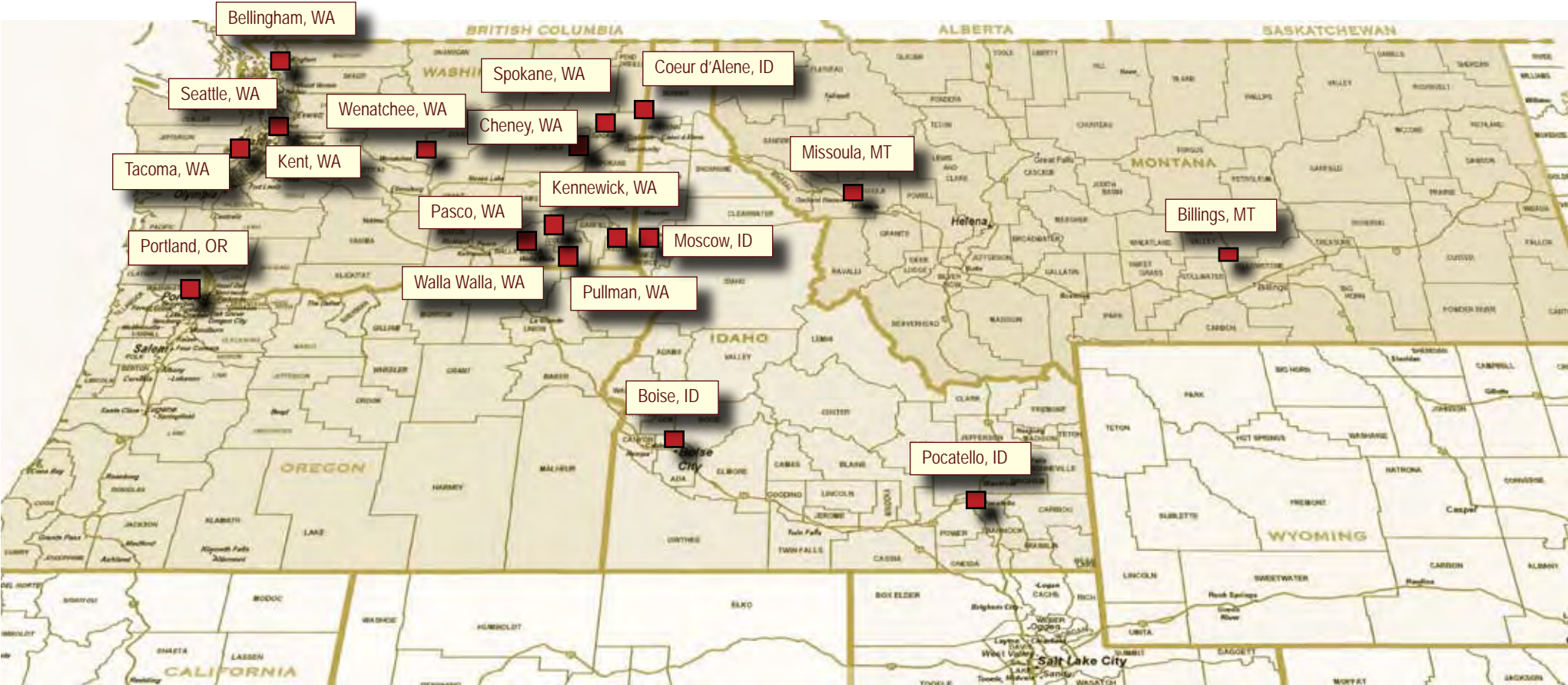


because of technical difficulties at show time and it took an eager room full of lesbians and a few homos working together to make it happen. Who says we can’t get along? The evening was rowdy and fun.

Women’s Night Out at Dempsey’s looks like a real winner!

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National & International

Panel calls for finding legal way to recognize gay relationships

OREGON - Discrimination based on sexual orientation should be illegal under state law, a task force appointed by Democratic Gov. Ted Kulongoski recommended in a report released Thursday, after months of discussion.

The task force also called for some form of "legal recognition" for gay relationships, a tricky issue considering Oregonians voted in 2004 to restrict marriage to unions between a man and a woman.

Instead, task force members said Oregon should model its own system on Vermont-style civil unions, a plan that was proposed in the 2005 Legislative session, but never made it past the Republican-controlled House.

With Democrats now in control of both chambers, supporters of the task force's recommendations said they are

feeling hopeful about their prospects.

"But we don't take it for granted that we have already won," said Rebekah Orr, a spokeswoman for Basic Rights Oregon, the state's leading gay rights group. "There is lots of work to do. We also recognize that our opponents see the historic opportunity before us."

Groups likely to oppose the bulk of the task force's proposals said they'd need time to go over the recommendations carefully, but warned that if legislators go too far, in their opinion, a ballot referral campaign could be in the works.

"If we felt it was bad public policy enough, extreme enough, then we would probably refer it," said Tim Nashif, who heads the Oregon Family Council. "Then at least it puts the forum into the hands of the people."

New Surveys List Gay-Friendly Favorites

By JENNIFER CONLIN,
New York Times

What do gay travelers want? According to two recent surveys, pretty much one thing. As Aretha Franklin might put it: R-E-S-P-E-C-T. Nearly half of all gay men and lesbians surveyed by the Travel Industry Association — in conjunction with Harris Interactive and Witeck-Combs Communications, a gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (G.L.B.T.) strategic marketing and communications agency — said a destination's "gay friendliness" was the key factor in planning a vacation.

Also high on their list — safety, specifically a place where they will not feel intimidated or threatened if they publicly hold their partner's hand. The online study also revealed they want places that are "culturally welcoming" and "support diversity and G.L.B.T. civil rights." Given those results, it was hardly surprising that panelists named San Francisco; Key West, Fla.; New York; Fire Island, N.Y.; and Prov-

incetown, Mass., as their top five "gay friendly" United States destinations.

More interesting, perhaps, are the results of a second study, conducted by Community Marketing in its 11th Annual Gay and Lesbian Travel Survey. While favorite destinations included Las Vegas, London, Palm Springs, Calif., Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and even China and South America, interest in the Caribbean, the survey reports, "appears to be waning." While the study points to the bad reputation some Caribbean islands have received after isolated gay-bashing incidents in the last few years, one company specializing in gay travel, Atlantis Events, thinks it may have more to do with the fact that the Caribbean has a "been there, done that" feeling for many high-end travelers.

"A lot of our clients have been to the Caribbean and are looking for a new experience," said Stephan Roth, director of guest relations for Atlantis, adding that the group's Baltic cruise, scheduled for this summer, sold out in a week and a half.

County requires marrying couples to swear they aren't transsexual

Transsexual question unique to Clark County. During the marriage license oath, couples are asked whether either person is a transsexual or has syphilis.

By Gail Cetnar
Staff Writer, Springfield News-Sun

SPRINGFIELD, Illinois - Most couples on their way to the wedding chapel are prepared to answer the big question.

You know, the one they answer "I do."

Few are prepared for a more personal question they get first at the courthouse — and only in Clark County.

Sharon Weldy knows that better than anyone.

Issuing marriage licenses is part of her job description as deputy clerk of Clark County Probate Court. Each couple that approaches her desk must fill out the application, pay a \$45 fee and raise their right hand to take an oath before they're issued a license.

Weldy, poised and professional, looks at the happy couple and pleasantly begins to recite the oath.

"Do you solemnly swear you are not a transsexual..."

That's when the looks of bewilderment hit.

"Most of the time, I'd say 75 percent of the time, when I give the oath I get laughter or giggles or questionable looks. You know, they can't believe that's what they're being asked to say," Weldy said.

She continues with a list of other questions: Are they related closer than second cousins? Are they under the influence of intoxicating liquor or a controlled substance? Are they infected with syphilis?

If they swear they're not, they get the license.

"I usually can get through it, but there are times when I have to stop in the middle because they're laughing so hard," Weldy said.

Sometimes she has to start over — and that's not to say repeating it helps matters.

Weldy used to feel a little weird reciting the oath. But now she's said it so many times that she's got it memorized and can rattle it off without even thinking about it, like the Pledge of Allegiance.

"It doesn't bother me anymore," she said.

After the initial shock of Weldy's questioning has passed, applicants follow up with their own line of questioning.

They ask her the definition of a transsexual. She had to look it up when

she first started her job. A transsexual is not the same as a transvestite (cross-dresser). A transsexual has had a sex-change surgery.

"Some ask me why they have to say that. Or they look at each other and say 'Are you a transsexual?' to the other one," Weldy said.

No one has ever answered yes.

"I think the average man and woman, by the time they're getting married, kind of just assume that their partner is not a transsexual," said Richard Carey,

Clark County Probate Court judge.

The first part of the oath, the part about transsexuals, is unique to Clark County. The Springfield News-Sun requested mar-

riage oaths from every county in Ohio and found that the question is not asked in any other probate court.

That might seem surprising in an age when the political spotlight is on gay marriage. In 2004, Ohio voters passed a constitutional amendment declaring marriage a union between one man and one woman.

But this section of Clark County's marriage oath dates back to 1987. That was the year Stark County Probate Judge Denny Clunk wrote a landmark opinion denying a marriage license to a woman and her fiancé, who was born female but had a sex-change operation to become male. The ruling held that

chromosomes, not genitals, determine sex.

Under Ohio law, the sex noted on the birth certificate is what counts when marriage licenses are considered. And that part of the birth

certificate can't be changed. So in the Stark County case, both applicants were considered to be women.

David Mattes served as Clark County Probate judge at the time of Clunk's ruling. He said he figured he'd nip any potential problems in the bud by adding a line to the oath.

"It's been there ever since," Mattes said.

The oaths administered in every county vary slightly. Judges have the authority to modify the oath based on their understanding of the law. Most counties are similar to Clark County — minus the part about transsexuals.

Only one other area varies its wording significantly more than others. Crawford County asks an applicant if he or she is a "habitual drunkard, adjudged incompetent, or cognitively impaired, or adjudged mentally ill person."

Under Ohio law, the sex noted on the birth certificate is what counts when marriage licenses are considered. And that part of the birth certificate can't be changed.

Crawford County asks an applicant if he or she is a "habitual drunkard, adjudged incompetent, or cognitively impaired, or adjudged mentally ill person."



Gay teens don't tell docs about sexual orientation

SANTA MONICA, Calif., Dec. 28 (UPI) -- Only a minority of gay, lesbian or bisexual teenagers tell doctors about their sexual orientation, RAND Corporation researchers said Thursday.

Even though 70 percent of the individuals were aware of their orientation as teens, just 35 percent told their doctors.

"We were surprised by these results," said Garth Meckler, assistant professor of emergency medicine and pediatrics with the Oregon Health and Science University, Portland. "We figured they would have a higher disclosure rate than most youth, and yet, despite being out to almost everyone in their lives, only 35 percent had told their doctor about their sexual orientation."

Mark Schuster, director of health promotion and disease prevention at RAND Health in Santa Monica, Calif., and professor of pediatrics and public health at the University of California at Los Angeles, suggested, "This is a reminder to physicians who take care

of teens to try to create a comfortable, safe environment for young people to be open about their orientation, as well as other aspects of their sexuality."

The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association and the Society for Adolescent Medicine all recommend that physicians discuss sexuality with all adolescents and provide nonjudgmental communication about sexual orientation. The study by RAND -- a nonprofit research organization -- and UCLA is published in the December issue of the Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine.

Researchers surveyed 131 participants at the Models of Pride Youth Conference. Ninety percent of the teens had been to see a doctor in the past two years. Despite the fact that 66 percent thought it was very or somewhat important that their doctor know their sexual orientation in order to provide the best health care possible, only 35 percent said their physician knew their sexual orientation.

Retiring Gay Congressman Speaks Up About Same-Sex Marriage Before Stepping Down

By Anthony Cuesta

Retiring Republican Arizona Rep. Jim Kolbe says the GOP's opposition to same-sex marriage is "a terrible mistake" and that opposition to the unions is on the decline.

Kolbe, who is stepping down after 22 years in Congress, told the Tucson Citizen his party has given too much power over its direction to social conservatives.

"It's a terrible mistake," Kolbe said. "It takes the party in the wrong direction. It takes us away from our core element and our core values: fiscal discipline and a strong defense."

Kolbe—the only openly gay Republican in Congress—told the Citizen that same-sex marriage will eventually be legal in the United States.

"As much as the social conservatives might not like to hear it," he said to the Citizen, "there will be a time when your grandchildren say: 'What was the argument with gay marriage? Who cares?'"

Kolbe also said the war in Iraq will de-escalate in 2007 and 2008 because of public opposition.

"You will see a decided decline in the next two years," he said to the Citizen. "Our engagement has got to be dramatically reduced over the next two years."

According to the Arizona Daily Star, among some politicians and reporters the fact that Kolbe was gay was long rumored, but it was viewed as irrelevant to his political career and so it was never reported.

His mainstream political opponents never brought it up, except in 1992 when he was opposed on the right by a religious conservative and on the left by an openly gay candidate, both of whom made veiled allusions to Kolbe's closeted orientation.

"It didn't appear to affect his job as congressman one way or the other," then-Daily Star Editor Stephen E. Auslander said in 1996 after Kolbe was



Republican Arizona Rep. Jim Kolbe

forced to come out. "Public figures have a moral, if not legal, right to privacy. So long as his private life didn't affect his job it's his own business."

"That I am a gay person has never affected the way that I legislate," Kolbe said then, reports the Daily Star. "I am the same person, one who has spent many years struggling to relieve the tax burden for families, balance the budget for our children's future, and improve the quality of life that we cherish in Southern Arizona."

OutGames millions in debt, but planning more events

Some doubt viability of two gay sporting competitions

By JOSHUA LYNSEN
Washington Blade

A leading gay sports official is questioning whether the market can support two international competitions.

Federation of Gay Games governing board member Brent Minor said the revelation that Montreal's OutGames is \$5 million in debt — a figure reported by the Canadian Press that cited a Quebec government audit — shows there might not be enough athletes, fans and corporate sponsorships to go around.

"I think the numbers speak for themselves," he said. "I think it's going to be very difficult to bounce back from the loss that they had."

The upstart OutGames, which concluded in early August, came one week after Gay Games VII, a similar international sporting event held in Chicago.

Gay Games VII, which drew 12,000 athletes, concluded July 22. The First World OutGames, which was organized by former Gay Games workers, drew about 10,000 athletes and ended Aug. 5.

Officials behind both events told the Blade in August that early returns showed enough interest existed to sustain two major gay sports competitions.

The independent Quebec audit revealed last month that OutGames lost more than \$5 million. Organizers have since filed for bankruptcy protection.

Minor said Gay Games VII also is working to break even. Officials hope DVD and picture sales can shore up the event's estimated \$200,000 to \$300,000 debt.

"I think this demonstrates how difficult it is to run two international gay and lesbian sporting events," he said, "particularly in the same year."

Officials with OutGames could not be reached for comment. The organization's web site has been deactivated and its U.S. media liaison is among the more than 200 creditors.

Marielle Dupere, the event's co-chair, told the Canadian Press last month that she had "no regrets about the games," but admitted OutGames owes \$2.2 million to suppliers, and the remaining deficit is largely government loans.



Brent Minor, a Gay Games board member, hopes the two major international gay sporting events can unite in the future.

Separate paths

Despite the debts, OutGames is moving ahead with plans for future competitions.

The first event will be held next year in Calgary, with a similar gathering to follow in the Pacific Rim in 2008. The continental competitions are intended as prologues to the Second World OutGames in Denmark in 2009.

Meanwhile, the Federation of Gay Games is planning its next event for 2010 in Germany.

Minor said he had hoped Gay Games and OutGames organizers would combine efforts on future events, but that now seems unlikely.

"I continue to think that we are better off united than apart," he said. "But people will do what they need and have to do."

OutGames was created following a protracted feud among gay sports officials. The dispute dates back to the 2002 Gay Games VI in Sydney, which was plagued by financial problems.

In the aftermath of that event, the Federation of Gay Games pushed through a series of rules changes that required local organizers of future games to surrender financial control.

Officials who had already started planning Gay Games VII in Montreal steadfastly opposed the changes. Nearly two years of negotiations followed, as both sides attempted to work together, but no agreement could be reached.

The two groups separated in November 2003, and Montreal planners staged their event independent of the Federation of Gay Games.

Minor said the rules changes ultimately benefited Gay Games VII, and allowed the event to come much closer to breaking even than before. Organizers previously relied on revenues from ticket sales and large parties.

"We had a different model," he said, "and it was a sound financial model that was based on corporate sponsorships, and it was front loaded."

Minor said the earlier revenues brought new stability to Gay Games VII, which had a budget of \$19.5 million.

"That made all the difference in the world," he said. "I feel more confident than ever that the Gay Games is on strong footing."

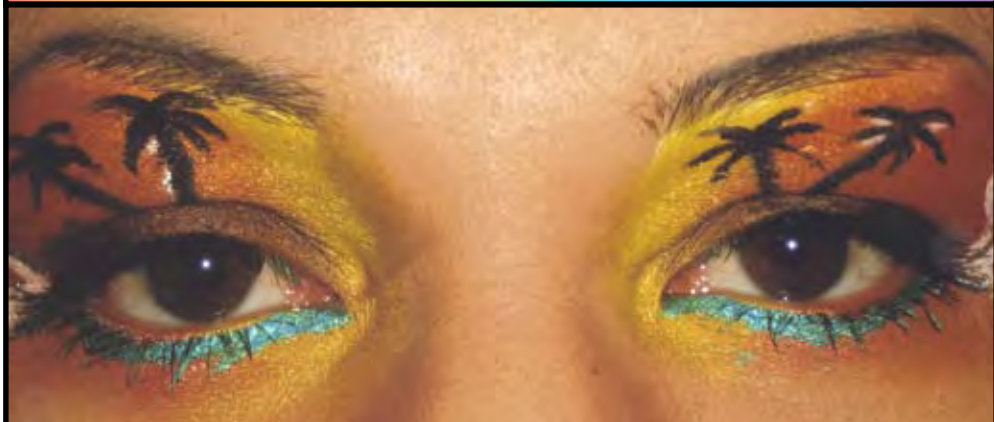
But regardless of the newfound stability, Minor said many Gay Games officials and athletes would welcome the chance to unify with OutGames.

He said the hostility and grudges that once existed on the part of Gay Games have disappeared.

"I know this — and this is a very sincere and real feeling," he said. "If there was a desire for people to come back into the Federation, we would be very welcoming."



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- Dempsey's Divas at 10 PM & Midnight!



SUN

- Women's Night: free pool, darts and appetizers 8 PM—10 PM
- Pictures of PBR beer only \$3



MON

- Karaoke hosted by "Don't Be Shy Karaoke Company" 8 PM—1 AM



TUE

- Men's Night: with 360Presents.com and ClubChannel1.com Videos and free appetizers 8 PM—10 PM



WED

- Steak & Bake Dinner Night: only \$6.95
- Karaoke hosted by "Don't Be Shy Karaoke Company" 8 PM—1 AM



THU

- College Night: Happy Hour all night with college ID
- Movie Night: watch a new release DVD at 10 PM and enter to win 2 free tickets to Regal movie theaters
- Pictures of PBR beer only \$3



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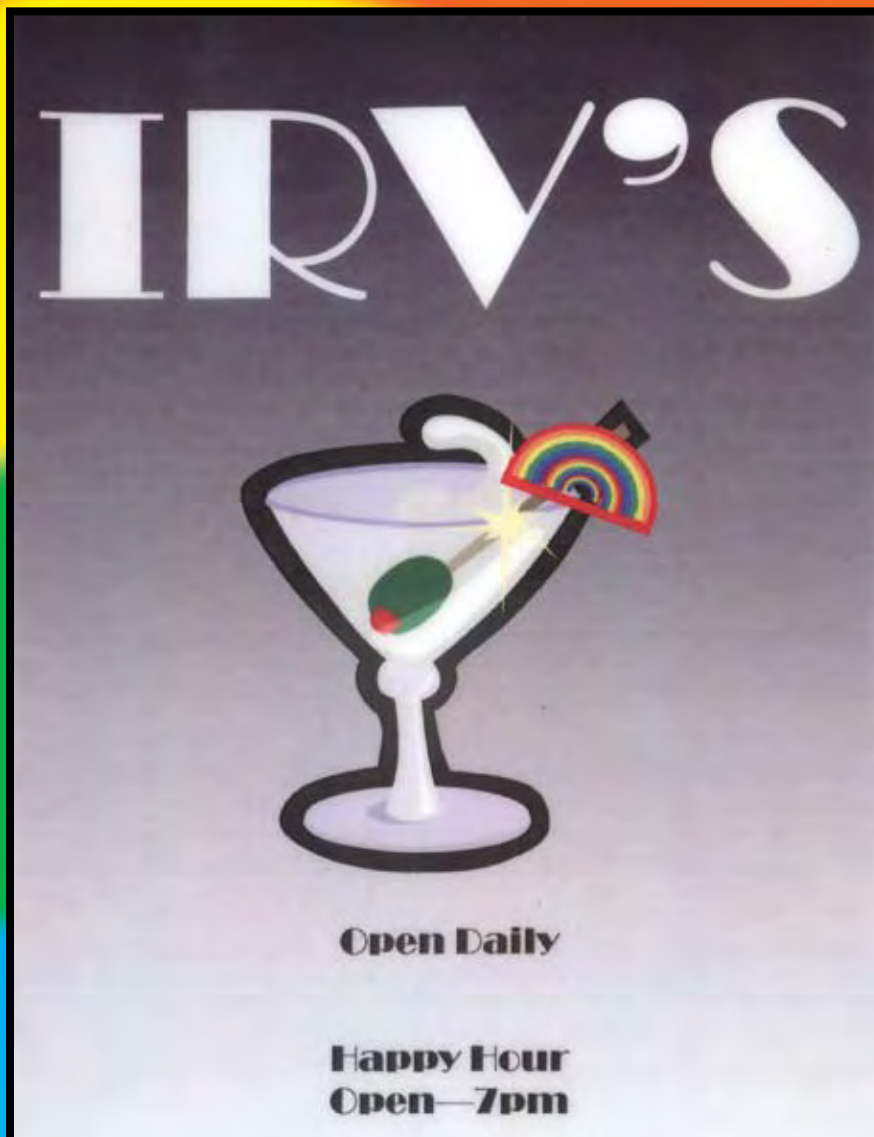


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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT/REVIEWS & PREVIEWS

Christopher Lawrence, A & E Editor

Graham Ames, Music Reviewer

Queer Delight on Screen and Stage

This year started off with a bang with **Dreamgirls** and **The History Boys** packing movie houses, **Hair Spray** bringing down the INB Performing Arts Center and most of the local theaters offering new fare for our appetites. Much more entertainment is coming your way, and almost everything is a sure-fire bet to keep you satisfied and thinking.

The back story about Mary Willson's split from the Supremes has come rocketing directly from the headlines of the early 1960s to the big screen in a dazzling production titled **Dreamgirls**.



that were being imitated. Watch for a spot on a take off on the Jackson Five with a cute little Michael Jackson-wannabe.

Jennifer Hudson has been tapped as the best new talent and has the pipes to prove her worth in no uncertain terms. She is perfect in the part of an imperfect and highly talented diva, but in my not-so-humble opinion, Beyoncé shines through in her role with an equally talented performance and classic beauty. Her character's strength is like a soft velvet glove covering quiet steel. Watching these black women become independent and victorious is a real treat.

Eddie Murphy is smooth and oily as the self adulating singer who cannot keep his zipper closed around his female performing partners.

Jamie Foxx turns in an excellent performance of the stereotypical producer who wants it all no matter what the cost. As usual, the cost is at the expense of the producer's performers. Typically, the seamy side of show business belies the polish and glorified glamor of these glitzy **Dreamgirls**.

Opening night of **Hair Spray** at the INB Performing Arts Center (Opera House) was outstanding and energetic!

No mere second-rate touring company here. These performers were the real deal. Professional in every detail and ready to give us their all. Based on the NewLine Cinema film by OUT/queer icon and writer/director John Waters, this production does his vision proud.



but we all know that it did. Only recently have we seen the inclusion of GLBTQ characters who barely begin to represent our community's diversity. One day there may be a musical that heralds the battle we are fighting to gain true equality in our own country and throughout the world.

In this instance, our heroine, Tracy (played by Brooklynn Pulver) is cast on the fringes of "accepted society" because she is of more than ample weight and a propensity for back-combed big hair. She finds camaraderie with friends she meets in detention after school with kids of color who also get the raw end of the deal. They teach her how wonderful their rhythms and dances make her feel.

Tracy takes up the torch, and eventually they all stage a demonstration to allow the more sensual music/dances and a more diverse group of kids to participate in their local version of "American Bandstand." It is not an easy road, and jail cell bars really do create a dramatic mood in any musical. Our kids overcome the strident voices that want to bar them from the show, and history has its due.

All the actors were excellent with many who stood out, but I do not have space to include their names here. The dancers and mid-'50's take by the choreographer were creative and inspired. Sets and costumes rocked! If you missed it, I am sorry, but **Annie** will be here from Feb. 15 to 18.

You can still get tickets at www.ticketwest.com.

Local Theater Fare

January offers us a remarkable variety of genres for live theater.

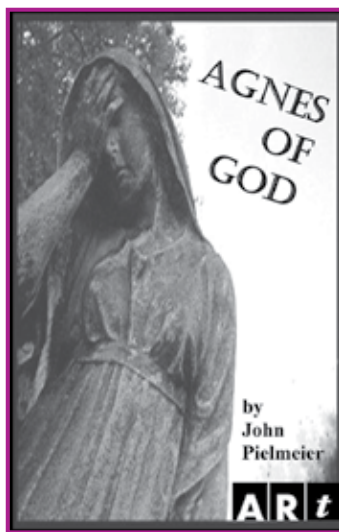
Driving Miss Daisy is being presented by interPLAYERS Theater from Jan. 18 through Feb 3.

Set in the Deep South, just prior to the civil rights movement. Having recently demolished another car, Daisy, a rich woman, is informed that she must rely on the service of a chauffeur, Hoke, a thoughtful black man. In a series of scenes spanning 25 years, the two, despite their differences, grow ever closer to each other. To order tickets, call (509) 455-7529 or 325-7328



ART presents **Agnes of God**, from Jan. 12 through 27 at SFCC's Spartan Theater.

This dramatic thriller is filled with psychological twists as a jaded psychiatrist attempts to disclose the killer of a newborn behind the cloistered walls of a convent.



Consider attending on Talkback Wednesday. After the performance, the artistic director leads a spirited and educational discussion about the play, production and profession of the theatre. Call (509) 838-4013 for tickets.



Barefoot in the Park is Neil Simon's light-hearted comedy. The Bratters

were the perfect newlywed couple ...until the honeymoon ended!

Firth J Crew Theatre's **Assassins** is Sondheim's witty, sharp musical featuring a cast of characters worthy of a rogues gallery! Tickets are available by calling (509)325-2507, (800) 446-9576 or online at: www.ticketwest.com



GLBT Book Group

Spokane's GLBT Book Group meets the first Wednesday monthly in the second floor conference room of Auntie's Bookstore. Facilitator Julie Smith says review sessions begin at 7 P.M.

The upcoming review session is **Blue Place** by Nicola Griffith on Feb. 7.

Ciara: The Evolution

Ciara

LaFace Records



Perhaps I just don't get it. Ciara's first album has gone multi-platinum; she has won numerous awards, including Grammy™, MTV Video Music, and even Soul Train awards. Her sophomore album, **The Evolution**, debuted at #1 on the Billboard Hot 200 chart. And yet every time I listen to the CD, I ask myself, "Why?"

The album starts with a brilliant kick to the face, "That's Right," a collaboration with Lil Jon that sets the bar high, a schoolyard chant for any Strong Female tired of being strung along by an irresponsible male. Sadly, this is followed by "Like A Boy," a lackluster track that stereotypes all men as insensitive two-timing animals. After a brief spoken word interlude where Ciara announces that she was "inspired to do something different this time around," she treats us to the substantially derivative ballad and lead single, "Promise." After two tracks complaining about how men have treated her, she suddenly proclaims that "there's nothing [she] won't do, to spend [her] life with you." C'mon, girl! Either you are fed up with his midnight phone calls asking you to drop everything and find him, or you are happy being his little subservient waif. Make up your mind.

Her interlude about dance is followed by truly boring dance numbers. Her interlude about fashion is followed by a song about copying her own style. Her interlude about herself is followed by tepid statements of self-hood. She insists in each interlude that she is somehow evolving, but if that is so, it is proof that Darwinian forces take millions of years of incremental change to yield results.

The disc is filled with this kind of drivel. The lines are singsong without any melodic creativity beyond a jump rope contest. Despite mammoth production talent (The Neptunes, Lil Jon, will.i.am), few moments make the ear perk up. The music seems to copy Janet or Paula Abdul from twenty years ago, and with less spirit than the first time around. Ciara shares songwriting credits for every track, so she is not fronting for unskilled talent. This bears the stamp of a project from the artist and by the artist. Perhaps it is only for the artist.

The "deluxe" edition of the CD comes with a DVD that features videos for "Get Up" and "Promise," along with instructional segments that "teach" the dance routines for the videos. The teaching segments are awkward, at best, with poor breakdown of the routines and camera work that fails to focus on the important parts of what is being taught. Imagine any video from the classic "Rhythm Nation 1814" made with untrained dancers doing street dance routines and camera work that masked sloppy synchronization between the dancers. Get the idea?

As I said at the beginning, perhaps I "just don't get it." Ciara is phenomenally successful, but her artistic merit remains to be proven. Maybe she is evolving, and this is simply one step toward what may, one day, be a brilliant musical presence, scintillating in its depth and profound in statement. Right now, however, I cannot find any reason to continue listening.

52 Things we can do for Transgender Equality

By The National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE)

Achieving our goal of transgender equality requires activism at the local, state and national levels. While NCTE focuses on federal policies, we strongly support and encourage the vital work of grass roots activists. Each week during 2007, we will feature an idea for action that you can take at a local level. Some will be challenging, some will be simple; all are effective ideas and we will include links, resources and thoughts to help you get started. Some are things you can do on your own, while others are ideas for local groups to work on. We hope that you will take on projects that spark your interest and that meet a need in our community as we work together for equality for all people.

Week #3 January 14-20:
Attend an anti-racism training and put into practice what you learn

Racism is damaging to our grassroots movement and to us as individual people. Trans people come from very diverse backgrounds—we come from all cultures, races, classes and groups. Racism continues to fracture our nation ... and transgender communities.

Taking a strong stand against anything that may divide and weaken our community is one way to strengthen our activism. Attending an anti-racism training, and then putting into practice what you learn, can be a vital step in building a strong movement. We cannot create a world in which all people are honored treated with equality while disrespect and inequities of racism continue.

A good diversity training will not make you feel guilty or powerless; rather, it will give you tools to work with others who are different from you and help you better understand the world in which we all live.

Look for an anti-racism group that has a proven track record of positive work in your area. If you want to set up diversity training for your community group, ask for references from non-profits, religious groups, other community organizations or employers about successful programs that they have done. Some excellent places to start are:

- The National Coalition Building Institute, www.ncbi.org, for anti-racism trainings
- The Conference for Community and Justice, www.nccj.org, for anti-racism trainings
- YWCA, www.ywca.org, specifically focused for women; online resources as well as links to local groups for trainings
- Southern Poverty Law Center, www.tolerance.org, with excellent resources for individuals, parents and teachers, including informative articles, such as how to respond to bigoted remarks

Go to an anti-racism training. You'll be glad you did it, you'll strengthen our movement and it's the right thing to do.

Week #4 January 21-27:
Run for Office

Some of the ways you can work for transgender equality are easy while others are more challenging. This week's idea is one that could turn your life upside down, but imagine the good that you could do as an elected official.

Our government is one that is of the people, by the people and for the people. Trans people have a right to run for office and the right to be well represented by our elected officials. Those who serve in political offices are in a position to make a difference in people's lives, introduce legislation that can improve the lives of their constituents, and set an inclusive agenda. Elected officials have an opportunity to be a part of the decision making mechanisms of our country.

Transgender people have successfully run for office. For example, Michelle Bruce, who is open about being intersex and transgender, currently serves on the City Council in Riverdale, Georgia. Other trans people have held office as well.

Running for office can be an important statement and a worthwhile experience. NCTE Board of Advisors member Amanda Simpson, who was a candidate for state representative in Arizona in 2004 commented, "By running for office, you are able to engage the general public about the issues that are important to them and they can begin to relate to transgender people as people who are fully part of the same community and have the same struggles and hopes as everyone else."

If you are interested in running for office, or in supporting those who do, an important resource is the Victory Fund, which has endorsed and supported transgender candidates. You can find them at The Victory Fund and click on the button marked, "Run for Office." They hold regular trainings for potential candidates; this year, the trainings are being held on March 9-12 in Louisville, Kentucky, June 15-18 in Washington, DC and November 15- 18 in Orlando, Florida. They have had at least one transgender participant at each of the trainings that they have held in the past two years and see this as a very positive sign that more trans people will be running for office in the coming years. If you are even considering running for office or supporting someone who is,

Top 10 gay bills in congress

An excerpt of a longer article found at <http://www.washblade.com/2006/12-15/news/national/enda.cfm>

Gay-supportive members of Congress have introduced these bills at the request of gay rights or AIDS advocacy groups in recent years. All of them have died in committee after Republican leaders in the House and Senate refused to bring them up for a vote. The new Democratic- controlled Congress is expected to be more sympathetic toward the 10 bills, but Democratic leaders chose not to place any of them on their agenda for their first 100 days in office.

Employment Non-Discrimination Act: Calls for banning private sector employment discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act: Calls for giving the federal government authority to prosecute hate crimes based on a victim's sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

Military Readiness Enhancement Act: Calls for repealing the U.S. military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy so that gay male, lesbian and bisexual troops would be allowed to serve openly.

Uniting American Families Act: Calls for amending the U.S. Immigration & Nationality Act to allow foreign nationals who are same-sex domestic partners of U.S. citizens to apply for the same immigration rights offered to foreign nationals who legally marry U.S. citizens. Similar to the existing law's application to heterosexuals, the bill calls for prosecution of same-sex couples who fraudulently form a partnership to enable a foreigner to obtain immigration rights.

Domestic Partner Health Benefits Equity Act/Tax Equity for Health Plan Beneficiaries Act: Introduced respectively in the Senate and House, the identical bills call for amending the Internal Revenue Code to end taxation of health insurance benefits for domestic partners. Under the current IRS Code, legally married employees do not pay taxes on their employers' contribution to their health insurance benefits that cover their spouses and dependent children. But gay and lesbian employees must pay taxes on similar benefits as if they were ordinary income.

Domestic Partners Benefits & Obligations Act: Calls for providing health insurance and other benefits to same-sex and opposite-sex domestic partners of federal government employees. Under current law, these benefits are only available to legally mar-

ried spouses of federal employees. The bill sets various requirements to define a domestic partnership, including an affidavit that the partners live together, are not relatives, are over 18 and are not married.

Clarification of Federal Employment Protections Act: Declares that, "federal employees are protected from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation" and "[repudiates] any assertion to the contrary." Gay-supportive members of the House of Representatives introduced the bill to overrule a controversial decision by U.S. Special Counsel Scott Bloch not to enforce a longstanding federal employment policy banning sexual orientation discrimination against federal workers.

Family Medical Leave Inclusion Act: Calls for amending the Family & Medical Leave Act of 1993 to allow government and private sector employees to take leave to care for a domestic partner who has a serious health condition. The bill also would allow medical leave for the care of a same-sex married partner or the parent-in-law, adult child, sibling or grandparent of a same-sex partner who has a serious health condition.

Responsible Education About Life Act: Calls for creating a \$206 million federal grant program to award funds to states for comprehensive sexuality education that is not linked to advocacy of abstinence-only-until-marriage. Supporters say the bill is needed because existing sexuality education programs funded by the federal government are linked to abstinence-only policies.

Early Treatment for HIV Act: Calls for allowing low-income, childless adults with HIV to become eligible for Medicaid coverage before they develop full-blown AIDS. Under current law, people who meet the income requirements for Medicaid are ineligible for the federal health program if they have HIV but are not "disabled" by having AIDS.

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<div>13 - Volunteers</div> <div>Odyssey Youth Center has both short-term and on-going volunteer opportunities available. Are you interested in becoming a Facilitator during open youth hours? Are you information technology savvy enough to be one of our regular IT volunteers? Call Bonnie at 509/325-3637 for more information.</div> <div>Spokane AIDS Network Needs Volunteers</div> <div>Contact Cherie at 509/455-8993</div> <div>OUTSPOKANE IS LOOKING for community-minded people to help with the 2007 Pride</div> <div>Call Christopher at 509/624-9639 for details on meeting the 1st & 3rd Thursday of each month.</div>	<div>22 - Housing For Rent</div> <div>Beautiful 1913 Craftsman Home for rent on Spokane's lower South Hill. Please see ad on page 14</div> <div>31 - Help Wanted</div> <div>PROJECT COORDINATOR - HIV PREVENTION PROGRAM, .75 FTE, requires volunteer coordination,, meeting facilitation, collaboration, events planning, and community outreach. Must be able to work in a diverse workplace with flexible hours. Some nights and week-ends. Prefer some college but will consider a combination of experience and education. Compensation based on experience. Send resume to Spokane AIDS Network, 905 S. Monroe, Spokane, WA, 992042, attn. Monica Lahr or visit www.lilaccitymensproject.org.</div>	<div>44 - Travel</div> <div>Cowboy Up Montana Roadhouse</div> <div>Dinner & Bed</div> <div>Your special GAY Hideaway in the beautiful mountains of western Montana!</div> <div>Soft beds and gourmet meals! Only 2 hours from Spokane via I-90.</div> <div>www.cowboyupmontana.com</div> <div>13 - Personal-General Services</div> <div>SENSUOUS MASSAGE</div> <div>AROUND-the-world massage by 6-ft., 175-lb., 49, handsome, clean, muscular, willing to please, blue-eyed bottom masseur using latest technique and essential oils. Call Gary: (509) 889-9294 .</div>
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