

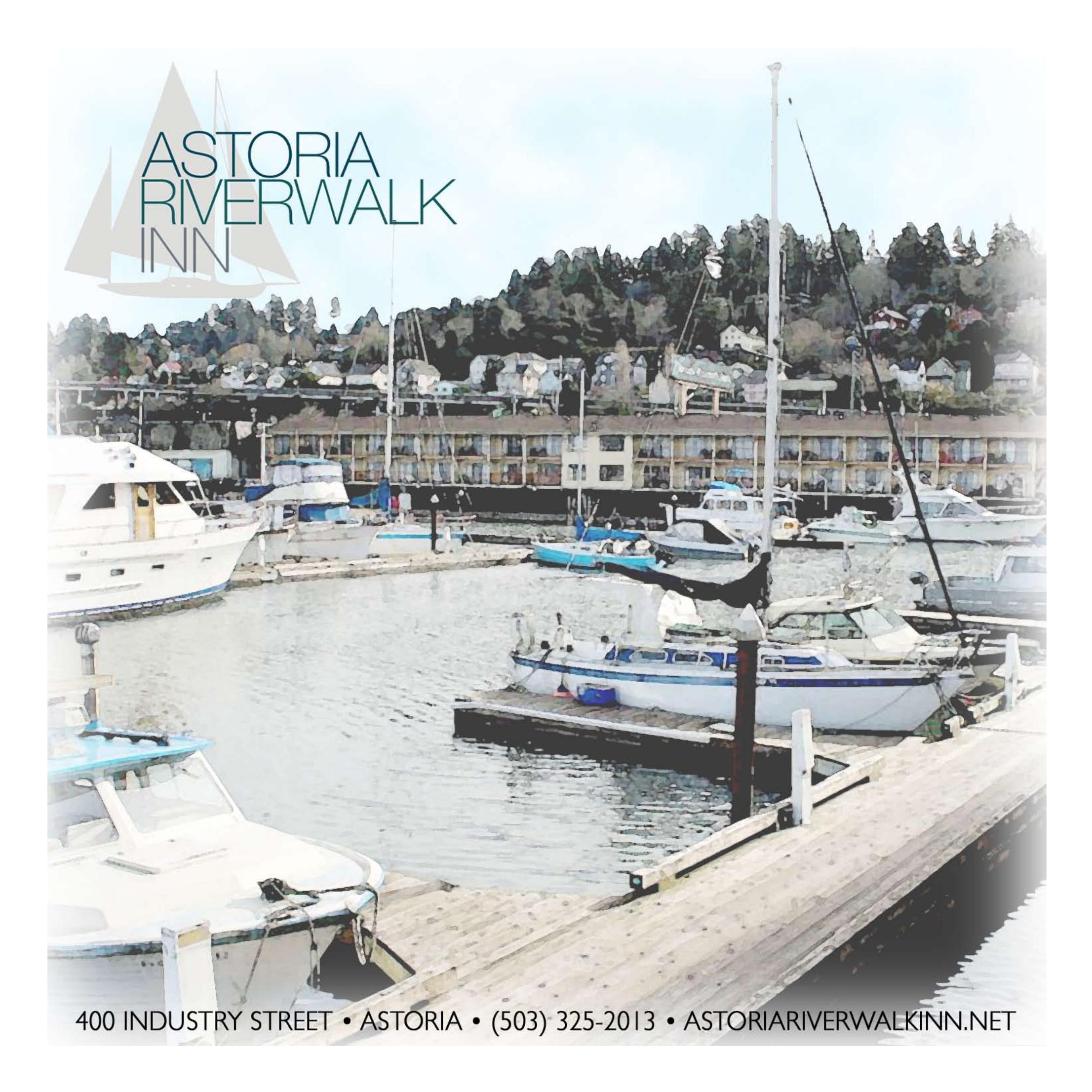


FOLLOW THE RAINBOW!

Astoria Pride • June 8-10

Pride Guide 2018





ASTORIA RIVERWALK INN

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Welcome to Astoria Pride 2018!

This year, as we step through our 3rd Lower Columbia Q Center's Astoria Pride 2018, I think of our theme, "Follow the Rainbow." I am reminded to look up and out along the way and to catch eyes and strides with my family as we take to the streets and let our lights shine with tears of joy in our eyes while our inner rainbows light the sky and lead us on.

We are all on our paths – each of us making our way the best we know how. Oftentimes, we find that we share the journey with others. Some we naturally fall into stride with. Others pose challenges to keep us moving along. And then there are those who make us pause, maybe to let others pass or to take in a view, have a celebration, recharge, or avoid conflict.

The path I have been on has been incredible. At times I've felt like I was strolling along the Champs-Élysées in Paris; other times along the sea and through the forest. Most often the path requires constant attention as the terrain changes – with curious eyes on me as I ease on down the road – my gait not like the others. Cheers and sneers, fingers and waves.

For many years I found I couldn't walk alone and needed protection during my journey. Then I took a fork in the road and found myself in places that made me feel safe, and even less visible. As the journey has unfolded, my road turns the corner and returns me here. Rainbows lead the way, I have courage in my soul. I've found my family, my community, my home. This home is my soul, and the journey I have been blessed to be on with this community is one that encourages and asks me to walk tall and shine bright and not back down because others may be uncomfortable with my presence.

We have been working hard at building our LGBTQ+ community in the Lower Columbia Region. Our allies are many and the work we do through our community partnerships is visibly growing. The LCQC's Astoria Pride is our way to continue thanking our area for all of the love and support that helps us be able to live open and rainbow-strong in this magnificent region. So, while you are enjoying the festivities, take the time to knock the walls down and let the love shine in as we celebrate our culture, beliefs, relationships, families and the community we are so fortunate to be a part of.

Much love,
Marco Davis, Chair LCQC's Astoria Pride 2018

June 8 -10 • 2018

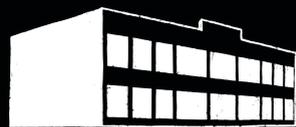


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Astoria Pride 2018 Guide Committee

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Stephen Hildreth and Jodi Libertad
Designed by Ramey Holsman



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Meet Your Regional 2018 Pride Ambassadors



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ASTORIA: Dulcye Taylor

Dulcye is a gifted graphic designer who left her job as an animator and illustrator at Microsoft in 2006 to buy a business in downtown Astoria.

She is the owner of OldTown Framing, specializing in custom framing; and the President of the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association, a thriving association that works with the City of Astoria to boost economic development by revitalizing the historic commercial district and hosting popular local events year round.

Through her art shows, Dulcye has met many people and participated in her community. She has danced and partaken in the wonderments of Astoria with all her new friends who have embraced her for who she is – no fear or shame – living the dream in Astoria with a smile on her face.



KNAPPA/SVENSEN: Christina Mae Ketcham

Christina was born and raised in Southern Oregon. She worked in house construction before undertaking a six-year enlistment in the Navy as a boiler technician and serving on an aircraft carrier and a fast frigate.

Christina later took a position at the Clatsop County Fisheries and earned an Associates in Arts and Science at Clatsop Community College.

She lives in Knappa and enjoys her yard, family, dog Bella, and the wonderful and diverse outdoor experiences here. As a fierce transgender woman, Christina has lobbied for transgender identity and equality with the National Center for Transgender Equality and Basic Rights Oregon, as well as for Criminal Justice Reform with the Partnership for Safety and Justice.

Christina is thrilled to participate in this year's Astoria Pride as the Knappa Ambassador, and is especially excited to meet new folks in our community. Trans Liberation!

LONG BEACH PENINSULA:

Kimberly Smith

Kimberly was raised in Ilwaco, Washington surrounded by generations of family and a list of friends as long as the peninsula is, well, long. Her love for the area is infectious and her knowledge deep. And she readily shares both when finding homes for those lucky enough to meet her in the bright yellow Lighthouse Realty building in Long Beach.

A realtor and managing broker for the past 15 years, Kim has an intuitive ability to understand your needs and works tirelessly to fulfil them. You will love your new home and you will also have a lot of fun finding it.

Spend any amount of time with Kim and you will soon learn that her passion for everything Pacific Northwest is all encompassing. Whether she's clam-digging, foraging for mushrooms with her wife Alice, gathering other ingredients on the beaches and in the forests, smoking fresh fish or experimenting with new spices, Kim always has a smile on her face and a heart-warming giggle at the ready. She is thrilled to represent her home county as the Long Beach Peninsula's Ambassador.



SEASIDE: David Muschamp

David is a native Virginian who has spent the past 19 years on the north Oregon coast after meeting partner Walter in Cleveland, Ohio. He is still growing to love the cloudy, rainy winters but certainly loves the beach!

David has spent much of his life in the hospitality industry, though he boasts an accounting degree. He has committed himself to supporting many organizations which work towards the recognition of LGBTQ equality and rights.

In addition to helping his partner in the care and support of his parents and their two dogs, David enjoys traveling and experiencing the rich diversity of nature we are blessed with in the northwest. As a Seaside resident he has witnessed the increase in the LGBTQ population and also knows that the future of our community rests in the freedom for each of us to be who we are together.

David is happy to represent Seaside as ambassador and knows that Astoria Pride is our time to unite and share in our family's pride.

Grand Marshal

Walter "Abe" Trumbull



Walter is honored to be the Grand Marshal for the 2018 Astoria Pride parade. As a native Oregonian, long-time member of the north coast community, and an LGBTQ family member, he feels it is truly with a sense of pride that we all march. We march for that which our brothers and sisters have fought for over the years: the justice we deserve and the freedom to live as we choose.

For most of his adult life, Walter has been active in the effort to realize the equality that millions like us deserve, to live open lives together with those we love.

He began in New York City in the 1980's caring for a dear friend and love who was lost to AIDS at the age of 26. Walter helped to establish an HIV support group and PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) chapter in his memory. He has cared for his gay brother who has AIDS, and for his parents. He believes the very reason we march and lift our voices is because we care.

Walter has been blessed for 26 years with the love of partner David, and with his support and efforts, they have made it through many difficult days. As a performer, Walter has had the opportunity to realize his love of the theater and in particular the life of a mentor – Abraham Lincoln.

"He would be standing right here with us declaring, 'Those who deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves,'" Walter says. "It is true that 'a house divided cannot long stand,' and together we ALL unite in the cause of freedom for all."

Walter and David live in Seaside with their two canine kids with hopes of developing a rescue home for unwanted elderly dogs in the near future. Speak out and be proud!

HONEST ABE LINCOLN

Honest Abe had a few secrets, namely Joshua Speed who was his lover while he was younger and later David V. Derickson who was captain of his bodyguard – and his lover! When he wasn't scurrying away from Mary Todd's bed to canoodle with Derickson or trying to maintain the union at all costs, Abe had a terminal affinity for the theatre.



CANNON BEACH: Richard Bowman

Richard is usually found on the Coaster Theatre stage performing in musicals or plays with an amazing community of volunteer actors and crew. He is also on the board of directors for Coaster Theatre.

Richard is from Salt Lake City, where he first found his love of singing and acting and trained at The Academy of Performing Arts for five years. A few of his hobbies, aside from performing, are marathon running, designing costumes, and karaoke.

Richard is a Gemini/Taurus cusp baby so he is very outgoing and friendly, and a bit mischievous. This is his first year as a Pride Ambassador, and he is honored to represent Cannon Beach.

WARRENTON: Judi Lampi

Judi grew up in Portland, but Astoria has always felt like home. Her great grandparents came to Astoria from Finland in the 1890s, and four generations of family, including Judi, lived on their dairy farm in Brownsmead, Oregon (18 miles east of Astoria).

Along with Dinah Urell, Judi organized LGBTQ events at the Cannery Café for several years, which is how she originally got involved with the queer community. She feels the North Coast of Oregon is a wonderful place to live and has always felt welcomed in the community as a whole – where she has met so many great people. "Thank you, ASTORIA PRIDE COMMITTEE for organizing such a great festival! Out & Proud in Warrenton, Oregon!"



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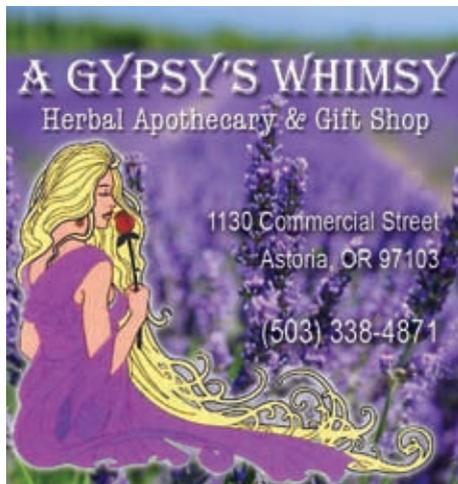
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& Brian Bovenizer



Astoria Pride Committee, from top left: David Drafall, Stephen Hildreth, Tessa Scheller, Amanda Noyes; lower left: Cameron Toman, Don Duncan, Dida DeAngelis, Marco Davis (not pictured: Jodi Libertad.)

The Lower Columbia Q Center's Board of Directors welcomes you – our neighbors and visitors – to Astoria Pride 2018! We are proud and humbled to serve this community and the Lower Columbia Q Center. You are our family, friends, and community as we come together in celebration and recognition of diversity, inclusion, and equity for all. With shared efforts and love, you help make the magic happen.

Astoria Pride 2018 is our three-day festival where we showcase and celebrate the dynamic vitality of this historic area and the emergence of a diverse community, inclusive and welcoming for all. We recognize the members of our LCQC Pride Committee and our stellar volunteers for all that they do to sustain this festival. And we most gratefully acknowledge our many community sponsors, donors, and friends whose contributions make this frivolity possible. So please, enjoy yourselves, make new friends, extend your family, and share your love and light. Follow your rainbow. Happy Pride.

THANK YOU!
Tessa Scheller, LCQC Board Chair

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PRESENTS: Pride 2018 EVENTS

FRIDAY • JUNE 8

SATURDAY • JUNE 9

PRE-WEEKEND EVENTS

- **Liberty Theatre Reader's Theatre Presents: "BUYER & CELLAR" • \$15**
- McTavish Room, Liberty Theatre
- 1203 Commercial Street, Astoria
- May 23, 24, 30, 31 & June 1 • 7pm
- "BUYER & CELLAR" by Jonathan Tolins, Starring Dawson Shadd as an actor playing five different characters! An outrageous comedy about the price of fame, the cost of things, and the oddest of odd jobs.

- **Drag Queen Story Hour featuring Miss Daylight • Free**
- Astoria Library (450 10th St.)
- Sat, June 2 • 10:30-11:30am
- Join us as Miss Daylight shares favorite stories, rhymes and songs, followed by a craft activity. Drag Queen Story Hour (DQSH) is just what it sounds like – drag queens reading stories to children in libraries, schools, and bookstores. DQSH captures the imagination and play of the gender fluidity of childhood and gives kids glamorous, positive, and unabashedly queer role models. In spaces like this, kids are able to see people who defy rigid gender restrictions and imagine a world where people can present as they wish.

- **Liberty Theatre Reader's Theatre Presents: "Best In The Balcony" • \$10**
- Sun, June 3pm
- Our second production for 2018 Pride Festival is "Best in the Balcony," a showing of the movie "Lilies - Les feluettes."

- **PRIDE Burger Wednesday**
- Fort George Brewery (1483 Duane St., Astoria)
- Wed, June 6, 4:30pm
- #BurgerWednesday is a weekly wood-fired experience at Fort George – and this burger special is going to be stacked high with PRIDE! Join guest burger chef Marco Davis for a creation designed with love for Astoria Pride Celebration. Follow the Rainbow to Fort George for #BurgerWednesday.



- **QUEER-aoke • Free**
- The Labor Temple (934 Duane St., Astoria)
- Thurs, June 7 • whenever
- Karaoke for queers and those who love us. A fabulous evening of Gloria Gaynor, George Michael, Melissa Etheridge, and any and all queer anthems you want to hear and sing.

- **Cocktails with the Queens • \$20**
- McTavish Room, Liberty Theatre
- Fri, June 8, 6-7:30pm
- Come rub elbows with our fabulous Gayla performers at our schmancy pre-show and intermission cocktail and appetizer soiree. Wear your finest evening attire, get photographed at our step and repeat, and get to know the extraordinary individuals who have worked tirelessly to bring our community a fabulous GAYLA 2018! Enjoy inventive and delicious eats prepared by local chefs and a signature PRIDE cocktail. Cums Family will be dressed by Layers Boutique.

- **3rd Annual Astoria Pride GAYLA • \$30**
- (\$15 for partial view)
- Liberty Theatre • Fri, June 8
- Doors at 7:30pm • Show at 8pm
- A fabulous showcase of Astoria's performative talents – queens, kings and everyone in between celebrate expression, inclusion, queer family and love. (See page 10.)

Co-Emcees Daylight Cums and Dida DeAngelis present performances by: Daylight Cums and the Cum Family Dancers (David Drafall, Jessamyn West, Andrea Mazzarella, Josh Conklin, Celeste Olivares, Ronni Harris, Amanda Cordero, Julie Kovatch, Audrey Long and Emily Geddis); Singers: Richard Bowman, Kevin Violete, Dinah Urell, Walter Trumbull, Martin Bule, Daric Moore, Amanda Noyes and Bree Libertad; the Lower Columbia Q Center Qchoir; Drag performances by: Liza, Sofonda Peters, Arty Chokes, Ginger Vitus, Annie DePressant; Dance performances by: Trixie Leone, Work Dance Co., and AAMC Belly Dance Troupe

- **Unofficial PRIDE After Party • Free**
- The Labor Temple • Fri, June 8 • after the Gayla
- Keep the party going at the Labor Temple.



- **Riverwalk PRIDE Parade • Free**
- Leaving from the Riverwalk at 4th Street
- Sat, June 9 • 12pm
- Building on the great tradition of the 1970 Christopher Street Gay Liberation March, we march for our community: freedom from oppression, violence, bullying, discrimination, and hate. Join the parade on the stunning Astoria Riverwalk to showcase pride and solidarity as we continue to celebrate our victories and forge brighter futures for all of us. Led by Grand Marshal Abraham Lincoln (Walter Trumbull) and our regional ambassadors. (See pages 4-5.)

- **PRIDE Block Party • Free**
- Riverwalk at Barbey Maritime Center
- Sat, June 9 • 1-8pm
- The parade funnels into our fabulous Block Party, featuring performers, local food trucks, vendors, and non-profits. We've got a huge stage and a line up that will keep you proud and entertained for years to come! (See pages 10-11.)

- **Affable Gentlemen presents "Quiernos United" • Free**
- The Labor Temple • Sat, June 9 • 8pm
- Join us for a fun and friendly storytelling show about the gay experience! With special music guests Renée Muzquiz and SHENatra! Hosted by Jason Potter.



Light Cairn

- **AVA Pop-Up Art Show**
- AVA Pop-Up Gallery (80 11th Street, Astoria)
- Sat, June 9 • 5-8:00pm
- Jill Mulholland, Q Center Board Member and summer AVA Artist-in-residence, shows an eclectic mix of pieces that incorporate aspects of light, and will be displayed in two rooms – one featuring sunlight and the other blacklight.

PRIDE DANCE PARTY
Astoria Arts and Movement Center
342 10th Street (3rd floor) • Free • 21+ • Sat, June 9 • 9pm-Midnight
 From George Michael to Cher Lloyd, we're jamming to anthems that make us bounce and light our souls aflame! Come flame with us as we tear up the dance floor to DJ IMCODEFOUR's rainbow shooting turntable.

SUNDAY • JUNE 10



Pacific Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Service

Performing Arts Center (588 16th St, Astoria)
Sun, June 10 • 11am
Featuring The LCQC Choir.

PRIDE Picnic in the Park

Tapiola Park
(900 W. Marine Drive, Astoria)
Sunday, June 10 • 11am-3pm

Chill potluck, picnic and games in the park. Family-friendly slip and slide, corn holing and good ole' catch. Bring your favorite dish and share with the family!



- 3 - Table 360 Bakery / Bistro
- 4 - Bouy Beer Co.
- 5 - Fort George Brewery
- 6 - Holly McHone Jewelers
- 7 - El Tapatio Resturant
- 8 - Frite and Scoop
- 9 - Columbia Memorial Hospital
- 10 - Columbia Veterinary Hosp.
- 11 - Clatsop Community College
- 12 - Bridgewater Bistro
- 13 - Street 14 Cafe
- 14 - Coffee Girl
- 15 - Columbia River Coffee Roasters
- 16 - T. Pauls
- 17 - Hipfish / KALA

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PRIDE Performers



Daylight Cums

The Cum's Family Dancers

Daylight and her children, "The Cum's Family Dancers," made their debut with Dragalution in January 2013 at the Columbian Theater in Astoria. It began as a drag revolution – an invitation to take the inner secret and beauty of oneself and dress it up and express it. With the birth of the Lower Columbia Q Center's Astoria Pride, Daylight and the Family have turned Dragalution into a Gayla at the Liberty Theater and welcomed the evolution of expression and the incredible talents our region has to offer with this amazing variety show!

LIZA!

In the world of female impersonation there are many Liza Minnelli lookalikes. This Liza, however, has not only captured the looks and the mannerisms of the legendary diva, but also embraces the power and magnitude of her incredible charisma. Performing for over 20 years at the famed Darcelle XV Showplace, you will see why to know Liza! is to love Liza!



LIZA!



Sofonda Peters

Sofonda Peters

Sofonda Peters is a true icon in the Seattle Gay Community. She has devoted her life's work to the continuation and prosperity of the Imperial Sovereign Court System – a fundraising organization that has been recognized internationally over its almost 50 year history. Sofonda has been Empress Emeritus to the Court of Tacoma, Empress 16 to the Court of Seattle, and was recently entered into the International Royal Hall of Fame by Empress Nicole the Great Queen Mother I of the Americas, USA, Canada, and Mexico. Undeniably a career to be proud of!

Sofonda travels roughly 20 times a year to various coronations of newly Crowned Royalty around the States, ensuring that

our community is treated with the respect and dignity it has earned and deserves.

Please welcome Sofonda as she performs on our big stage at the Liberty Gayla, and perhaps catch her shimmying her way through a fabulous performance at the Block Party along the River's Edge.

Meesha Peru

Meesha Peru (originally from Lima, Peru), was the first Miss Gay Latino in Oregon, the first Latino Portland La Femme Magnifique and Rose Princess XXXII. She has been performing for almost 30 years and is involved with different charities around Portland.



Meesha Peru



Poison Waters

Poison Waters

For three decades, Poison Waters (aka Kevin Cook), has entertained on countless stages throughout the Pacific Northwest and beyond. Poison is not just a personality, she is an experience!

Waters coordinates and hosts an endless docket of benefits, revues and shows for various local, regional and national charities, and has been recognized and rewarded for her community service of raising awareness and providing entertainment for such charities as Cascade AIDS Project, Dress for Success Oregon, the Make a Wish Foundation, Human Dignity Coalition, Oregon Humane Society and the American Heart Association.

Poison received the Ray C. Snively Award, Oregon Bears President's Award, a Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Court System, a Hero of HIV Award and the Red Ribbon Award from the Coalition for AIDS Awareness just to name a few. www.poisonwaters.com



Deeva Devareaux

Deeva Devareaux

Deeva Devareaux was Empress 21 and 24 of Tacoma and former President of the Board there. She has been an active participant in the Court System and enjoys performing and giving back to the communities of the Northwest.

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Hook & Anchor

Hook & Anchor is a story of lost songs finding a home. After a busy five years of touring with Portland-based band Blind Pilot, Kati Claborn was sitting on a steadily growing pile of tunes. As chance would have it, long-time friend and collaborator Erik Clampitt was looking for material and musicians to play a handful of gigs culminating in a show at the San Francisco Old-time and Bluegrass Festival. Songs were dusted off, friends were gathered, and the music that emerged had a voice and cohesion that immediately resonated with audiences and demanded to be more than a mere one-off.



Hook & Anchor

The project quickly became a vessel for other member's back-pocket tunes, giving the music breadth and variety. The band consists of Claborn (banjo, guitar), Clampitt (electric guitar, pedal steel), old-time music veteran Gabrielle Macrae (fiddle, banjo, guitar), and fellow Blind Pilots Luke Ydstie (bass, piano), and Ryan Dobrowski (drums).



The Loungettes

The Loungettes

The Loungettes came together in late summer 2017. Taking cues from moody 60's girl groups, Phil Spector, wall of sound atmospheric, David Lynchian tropes and dreamy 80's dance, three lush genderphobes coalesced into a draggy troupe. Weaving topical parody songs with gothic George Michael passages spliced with dancey Velvet Underground, The Loungettes will draw you in with smooth southern comfort, then spit you out like a

drunken Venus flytrap at a carnivorous plant-farm soirée.

Established crooner Champagne Larry (Christian Swacker aka Princess Charming) gave birth to the troupe with the help of his gal-pals Mae Flood (Garrett Vance) & Lazy Susan (Cody Volk). Mae has a background in film scoring (her work has been featured in drag performer Jinx Monsoon's documentary "Drag Becomes Him" and on a David Lynch Foundation record release as well as in many bands, including an early incarnation of Perfume Genius. Incorporating cooky Cassanova and crafty cat-portraiteer Lazy Susan to the mix, their collective chemistry was quantified.

Priscilla Blackstone



Priscilla, aka Maurice, grew up doing theater and sees the transformation of gender through drag as the ultimate role. Maurice is thrilled at the opportunity to use something

he is passionate about – theatre and drag – to raise money for charities and causes that benefit the community.



Work Dance Company

Eugene-based Work Dance Company is a dynamic Hip Hop and Jazz/Funk group directed and choreographed by Nate Boozer. Leave your problems at the door and enjoy the FULL OUT, RAW, HONEST dancing performed by the multi-talented dancers of Work. They bring FRESH STYLE and HIGH ENERGY performances to the stage. Work Dance Company received the Best of Eugene Award the past two years for 'Best Show/Concert' for their over-the-top production of Wonderland & Animal Instinct!

Lucy Barna

Songwriter; Lucy Barna, recently relocated to Astoria from Santa Fe and finds roots in lyric, storytelling and tales from the road. Best known for her airy vocals and poignant lyrics, Lucy has earned

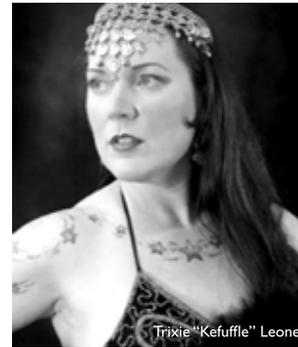


Lucy Barna

regional and national attention for her solo work and performances with award-winning Hot Honey – a band she formed in 2012. Bringing their Appalachian-Sass sounds to the Southwest, Hot Honey was named Best New Band, Best Alt/ Country Band, and Best Rock Band in Santa Fe 2013.

Lucy's solo work features self-taught guitar and banjo paired with an understated lyrical sense, cultivated winsomely in songs about the heart and the emotions "less spoke of." www.lucybarna.com

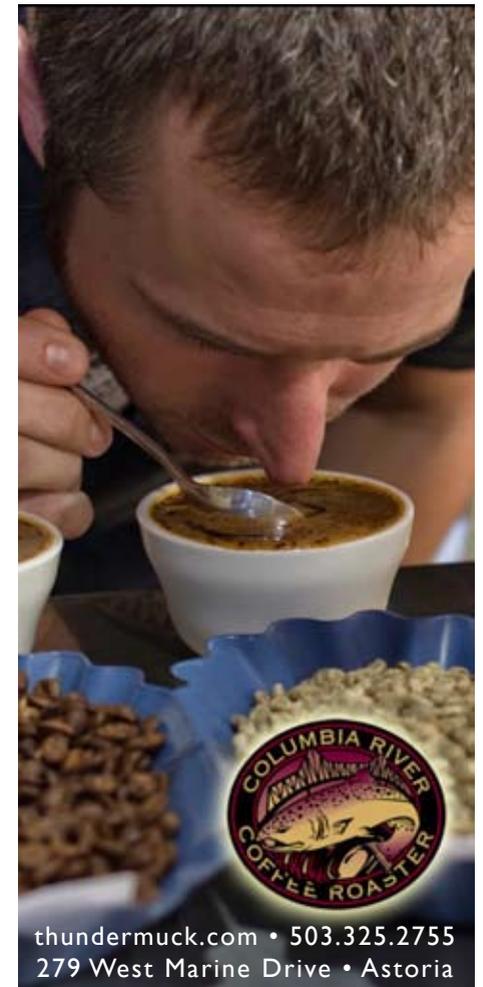
Trixie "Kerfuffle" Leone



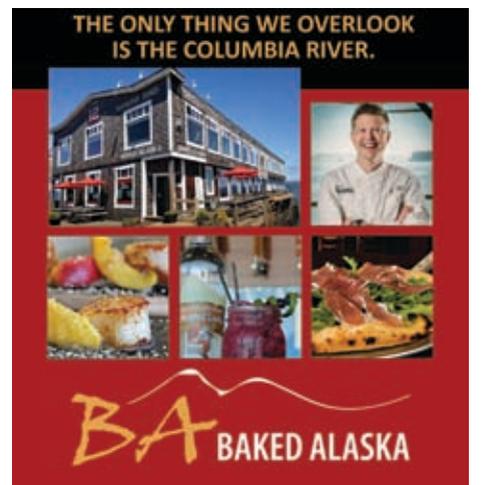
Trixie "Kerfuffle" Leone

Trixie grew up backstage and in the ballet studios and theatres of Los Angeles. A teacher, director, choreographer, dramaturg, playwright, and performer

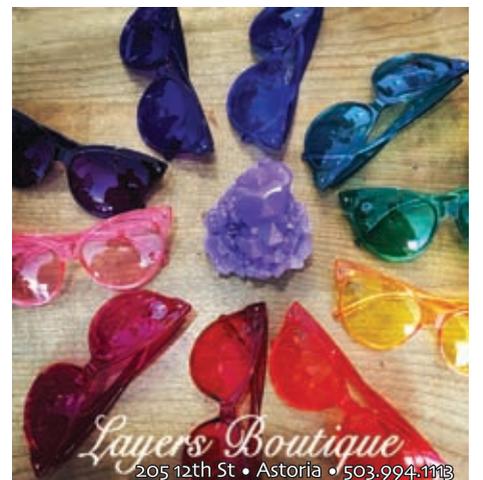
since age three, Trixie has enjoyed performing in countless theatres and various productions throughout Southern California. Though her roots are based in Classical Cecchetti Ballet, she specializes in Broadway Jazz and Burlesque, focusing on a unique blend of classical technique, style, character work and showmanship.



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QUEER FAMILY UNITE: FOLLOW THE RAINBOW

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OUR FAMILY is fractured. Our naming, LGBTQAI+, in the spirit of inclusion and visibility begins to give way to individual political agenda. Each identity experiences its own issues. Being a proud B or T or A and finding camaraderie in our cohort of Bs or Ts or As is not a bad thing; finding community is our prerogative. While our fellow Bs and Ts may be our siblings, they are certainly not the only members in our queer family. And the family level is where we need to prioritize our community building, our politics, and our values. To do this, we must de-atomize – we have

“...we have to get to know each other, which will involve stepping outside of our comfort zones....”

to get to know each other, which will involve stepping outside of our comfort zones (yes, gay men and lesbian moms need to hang out, etc.). We must further transcend the limitations of our own experiences. Too often our understanding of the world is limited to our own perspective, when, in fact, that perspective inhibits us from seeing the world in other illuminating ways. We can achieve our greatest aspirations if we build broad coalitions for sustainable change. And to build strong external coalitions we must first build strong internal ones.

Reformists would ask, “Can we add another letter to give your identity group voice?” which is not a terrible thing to do, to recognize a previously silenced group. But is that victory the one we should be spending our energies on? Perfecting the reforms. Or, are we asking the wrong questions? On a deeper register of the same vein, a changemaker would ask, “what word can we use that includes everyone who wants to be included under it?” To a rowdy response of QUEER. Queer is an umbrella term used to describe all of us gender and sexual identity minorities and comes from a reclaimed defamation.

Our values, our histories, our stories are told or silenced or whitewashed in schools. We observe how governments and societies regard their futures in how they treat their young. The seeds of future's hope are cultivated in cramped, underfunded, industrialized education pens regulated by strict schedules and stifling standardization. Unfortunately in America, we represent a pipelines-to-prison model of education in which our schools are highly authoritarian, restrictive, and resemble detention facilities. The vast majority of human bodies in the United States serve no purpose to the ruling class beyond providing labor that will be exploited for profits. Humans also serve as consumers, debtors, indentured servants, etc., to be exploited for profits.

A reformist asks, “What can we do to make the working classes feel better about their lot in life?” which shares a root with using religion to pacify slave resistance; neither questions the fundamental struggle and only addresses symptoms of the struggle. A changemaker might question, “Why is the ruling class's opinion the one that determines everyone's lives?” which is a question we should all think about quietly for a while. And then we should think about it together. Then we should demand changes to rectify it.



When we look at schools we must ask the question, “What do we want a young person who leaves this place to know, be able to do, feel, and care about?” If we ask that question about American public schools, then we see that we are preparing learners to follow rules, listen to authority figures speak “truths” for enduring amounts of time, study hard for examinations that test regurgitation never creativity or dexterity with knowledge, follow a schedule of bells obediently, swarm with group think and endless pushes to conformity, and ignore ignoble, unflattering historical truths. The extinguishing of imagination in schools is a queer issue.

When we look at this, we see that governments serve a very particular purpose in purporting education of this cruddy caliber in such suffocating environments, and those interests are based on control and profit (and controlling profits), but that's for another essay. Our futures are in jeopardy, the train is running away, and we're tethered to the caboose. And we see it in our schools. Yet the schools are just symptomatic of our greater

cultural decay.

“I recently attended a city council meeting where the police chief and a city councilor both spoke about safety in our schools. Nothing in their remarks resembled anything to do with violence reduction in our culture.”

I recently attended a city council meeting where the police chief and a city councilor both spoke about safety in our schools. Nothing in their remarks resembled anything to do with violence reduction in our culture. They spoke of enhanced security measures at elementary schools and unexpounded tactical response plans—plans for armed state-paid, which means citizen-paid, militarily appointed officers to storm and take over classrooms and active shooters. No one said anything about gun sales. Or about violence as masculine sexy. Or about the biggest elephant in the country, white male self-loathing and mental wellness. A representative from the school board did reassure everyone that there is a new counselor coming on soon. If we think about school counselors, there is a way in which they resemble the forced Christianization of the plantationed slaves of the American south. The counselors are there to convince students into feeling safe in these spaces in which we cannot assure their safety. The religious promise for a great afterlife once this one of dutiful slavery has been endured smells of the same manipulative manure. We will turn their school into a prison to prove to the students and to ourselves how willing we are to protect them. We will lock them in and make sure no one can visit. Metal detectors and armed guards. Schools look like prisons. And propositions to make schools “safer” include making them look ever more like prisons. Our imaginations of safety are as constrained as our understandings of the role education serves in our society.

Queer Family Unite continued

The reformist asks, "What can we do to make sure our schools are prepared for an active shooter?" which is a question asked too commonly. A changemaker asks, "Why are our schools and neighborhoods and concerts and venues and homes plagued by gun violence?" The answer seems to be principally profit, though there is an argument for there being a certain amount of fear that is mustered up in the population knowing there exist armed militia and no where in public is safe. It's a type of domestic terrorism that makes people feel constantly anxious and unsafe. And when people feel this way, it is easier to control their thoughts, to get them to comply with arrangements (wars, usually, but also stripping of rights, like the Patriot Act, and inequitable economic policies), they otherwise would not, and to mold their thoughts. Thought control stems from weakened, attacked psyches. Weakened, attacked psyches result from constant violence and unsafety throughout American life. And thus the system maintains itself, for if we are too weak to fight back then we maintain our consumerist habits and debtor habits and gambling habits and numbing habits. Trauma makes us think short-term, which often leads to self-interested, fear-motivated choices and outlooks. We are all in survival mode.

“Queer family cultivates love and connectedness, both human needs. Born of sometimes-tragic circumstances, though not always, queer families find each other in the heterosexual world and carve space out for queer ribaldry and authenticity...”

Our community is stratified: along money spectrums and religious peplums. Across race divides and hue divides and tribal sides. Our lives look so different; the queer family unites through difference. A rainbow is not one way, there are a multiplicity of possibilities. If there were a heterosexual flag, it would just be white. That ain't us, squirrel friends! But in the modern, global world, it is too easy for queers to lose touch with our connection to queer family. Queer family cultivates love and connectedness, both human needs. Born of sometimes-tragic circumstances, though not always, queer families find each other in the heterosexual world and carve space out for queer ribaldry and authenticity; for queer spaces free of violence, pregnant whimsy and compassion. Hearts soaring in skies of supportive thermals. Queer wings connect us to each other by freeing us from the shackles of land-boundedness. We must remember the queer family, known and unknown, when we invoke our public politic.



Police brutality against queer communities is not a distant memory, though the memories go back distantly. L G B T Q A I, everyone in the bars was in trouble during the random police raids, though most violence often fell on the heads of the gender non-conforming. Our own bars, our sanctuaries from the hatred and vitriol of the heteropatriarchy, heteronormative white-dominant bourgeoisie garbage culture were invaded by the state to terrorize us. Until we organized and fought back. From Harry Hay to Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, our grandparents stepped into the streets and flapped their beautiful faerie wings and made the world radically more safe for each of us to live today. But that mostly pertains to white, middle and upper class gay men, bisexuals, and lesbians who enjoy the trappings of the new nuclear imperatives. To conform begets increased safety. The more we look and act like the oppressors' wishes, the less likely we are to be persecuted. It is too easy to indulge in privilege and abandon the queer family's struggle. Though safety in our community is an absolute priority, the guise of security obtained through conformity presents appealing and dangerous trappings. Short-term security for fidelity to the heteropatriarchy presses only harder on the necks of the least enfranchised among us.

A reformist asks, "When can I get gay married?" and the answer came much sooner, at least in the United States, than many anticipated. But a changemaker would ask: "if marriage has such a high failure rate,

around 50% in the United States, why do we use it as the organizing principle of society? And how can queers reimagine the possibilities for organizing family and community without heteropatriarchal impositions and sectarian proactive priorities?" We deserve to see the answers to these questions fully funded and realized.

Black trans women are the most often attacked, assaulted, harassed, and murdered in our community. (Trans) women of color endure violence in an intersectional complexity of ways; her intersectional oppression demonstrates a nexus of racist, transphobic, possibly homophobic, misogynist, classist violence. All of those prejudices are connected to larger systems of oppression, embedded in the global capitalist culture that includes all of us at all times. Trans women are attacked because their attackers disapprove of their bodies. We cannot stand for any attack on the body. Violence against the body has been used to oppress gender and sexual identity minorities for millennia. The current white macho man culture that treats trans people with disdain, dismissal, detention, also traps and tortures all of us exposed to its toxic masculinity. Trans women take our community's heat and are the targets of violence that, in a way, shields the assimilationist, middle-class conformists from the shared pain of our queer family. We need to fight for our trans families' lives, happiness, and security.

What does her life feel like? How is violence experienced? How is hope maintained? What does a cat call mean? Why does the heart race? And the terribly hard part for our conscience isn't to realize that her experience of the world is perhaps a disadvantaged one to our own, but to recognize the ways her experience is maintained at disadvantage because of our own actions. The same police that keep white people feeling safe are the ones that enact the state's violence against people of color; against the criminalized poor; against the created impoverished, the maintained illiterate, and the so-called sexually deviant. Violence in our culture can never reduce while our state apparatus continues to upscale its violence capabilities. We are asking the wrong questions. And accepting the wrong solutions.

“Climate change is a queer issue, because it's a human issue, and like the earth, the queers of the world have been treated terribly for far too long.”

Our queer community should be asking how we can stand with our trans family and bring an end to violence, harassment, assault, and murder for everyone. How do we link arms with immigrants and say, "I got you because I know what it's like for someone not to want me to be here, too?" How do we recognize and learn from the ways the indigenous movement undertakes human-level issues, like water protection #WaterIsLife? How can the queer umbrella provide sanctuary and courage to a broader community of allies that we have yet to imagine?

Queers stand with #BlackLivesMatter, because they do, and we know they do, and the world is changing to reflect this proclamation. Black is beautiful. Gay is good. Silence is death. Which happens to be true before and after the bullets ring fury. #Enough.

Queers stand with #MeToo for the same heteropatriarch who steps on her neck forces our oppression as well. UNWANTED SEXUAL DOMINATION, PENETRATION, COERSION, TOUCH, TASTE, SMELL, LOOK, INNUENDO, COMMENT, OR JOKE ARE NEVER OK. Period. Queers are invested in living in a world that is post-violence, post-harassment, post-oppression. What does that look like, and how do we get there?

Climate change is a queer issue, because it's a human issue, and like the earth, the queers of the world have been treated terribly for far too long.

Housing insecurity is a demonstration of the collapsing heteropatriarchy capitalist mechanism. With nearly 40% of homeless youth identifying as queer, housing security is a queer issue.

It's harder for us to obtain and maintain gainful employment in the heteronormative, bigoted marketplace. Insecure employment is experienced hardest among queer people of color; just like violence and access to preventative, general health care. We must implement queer solutions to these decaying structures, solutions that recognize the intersectionality of oppressions we experience.

May we embrace a queer politics of inclusivity, listening, support, bravery, and of asking better questions. And we must never forget the camp! Organized queers have gotten real shit done in the past; if we work together, we can change the world for everyone.

Follow the rainbow, and you become and magnify its luminance. If you follow the rainbow westward far enough, you may reach Astoria, Oregon, where our queer families welcome you.

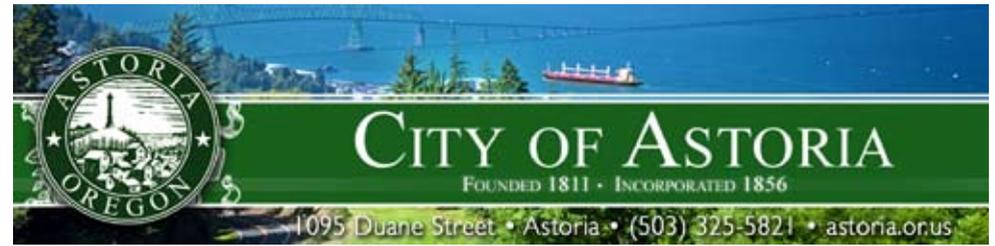
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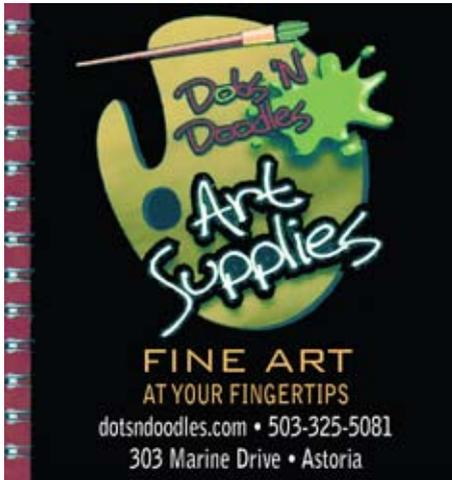


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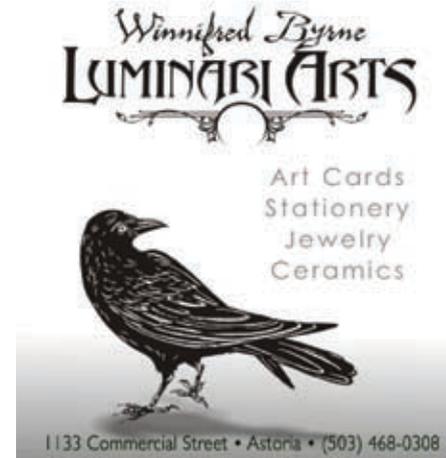
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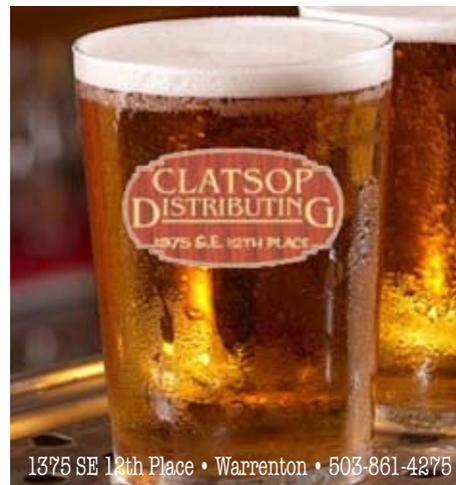
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