

Breathe Free.

OREGON LGBTQ COALITION AGAINST TOBACCO

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Welcome to Breathe Free!

- Our statewide program is supported by funding from the Oregon Department of Human Services.
- Breathe Free is a program of SMYRC (the Sexual Minority Youth Resource Center).

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Oregon PRIDE 2006: Breathe Free Takes Our Survey on the Road – to the Presses and Palm Pilots!

For the second year in a row Breathe Free is surveying LGBTQ Oregonians about smoking and attitudes about tobacco policies. Did you see our survey in *Just Out*? Did you see us at Pride with Palm Pilots in hand?

If you completed our survey last year at the Portland Pride Celebration, you'll have noticed some changes. We're using some new ways of getting the surveys to Oregon residents. Paper surveys went out across the state as an insert in *Just Out*, the free bi-weekly LGBT community paper. Additionally, this year, with the support of the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) Tobacco Prevention and Education Program, we're collecting many of our surveys on palm pilots at Pride events in Portland, Bend and Eugene! It's the same survey as the one on paper, only the responses are quickly downloadable so that we hope we'll be able to report the results sooner.

Additionally, some of the content has changed. We updated the questions with some that are being used in New Mexico as part of their Pride survey. We're still asking about current tobacco use and interest in tobacco policy.

Added questions include: an indicator of past smoking, interest in quitting and the services of the Oregon Tobacco Quit Line, location of most frequent secondhand smoke exposure, and whether respondents identify as transgender, transsexual or gender-queer. These questions will add further insight into the degree that tobacco impacts our communities, how we might better advertise the Quit Line, and tobacco use among transgender and gender variant people.

Last year, with the help of SMYRC youth and adult volunteers, we collected 593 surveys. We reconfirmed results of the DHS survey that about 40% of LGBTQ Oregonians smoke, twice the rate of the general population. Unlike other studies where LGBTQ people of color have shown significantly higher rates of

tobacco use, the rates were similar across race/ethnicity even with a 23% response rate by people of color.

Despite these high rates, 76% of survey respondents reported that they would go out to bars as often or more often if bars were smokefree. Additionally, the majority of survey respondents indicated that they would like bars to be smokefree and support a smoking ban in public places.

We look forward to seeing what the new data adds to our understanding about tobacco use and interest in tobacco policy in our communities.

Thanks to everyone who completed the survey!

Boxxes Goes SmokeFree!

That's right, we've made it onto Stark St. for the 21 & up crowd with a 100% smoke-free venue! (All ages club, The Escape has already been smokefree.)

The week leading up to Portland's Pride Celebration, Boxxes closed the door on

smoking indoors.

Now that's cause for celebrating! Stop in and thank the owners. Who's next?

Oregon Tobacco Quit Line
877-270-STOP (7867)
Spanish: 877-2NO-FUME
TTY: 877-777-6534

Puppet Clears the Air: Producing Smokefree LGBTQ Events in Portland

"After changing Booty to be smokefree, I realized how much support was out there for smokefree venues. It's given me the confidence to make all my events smokefree without having to worry about losing support. ...

More people come out to my events when they know they are smokefree and I feel better the next day for it."

- Puppet

In April the crew of Booty, one of queer Portland's most popular bar nights, declared the event smokefree. Eventually, Puppet, who produces Booty and co-produces other events, decided to request all smokefree events. Here's what Puppet had to say about what that's been like:

R.E.: What made you decide to have Booty go smokefree?

Puppet: We noticed that many of our regulars weren't coming out as often and, when asked, many of them said it was because it was too smoky. The smoke always bothered us (the Booty crew), but we just accepted it as part of the job. Other people mentioning it made us think about changing it. So we asked the owner (Mike Bracco) [of Porky's Pub at the time] and he supported us 100%. It was great.

Did you decide to make your other events smokefree at the same time?

I had been experimenting with some other events. I wanted people to feel like they could dress up to come to my events and no one wants to dress up to go to a smoky bar. It ruins your clothes. I had tried it with one of my nights already.

What influenced your decision to have all of your events go smokefree?

After changing Booty to be smokefree, I realized how much support was out there for smokefree venues. It's given me the confidence to make all my events smokefree without having to worry about losing support.

What were some of the responses you heard from within the community about your decision?

People are extremely grateful for the decision. People still say how much they appreciate it. Sometimes, when people get to drinking, they'll say they wished they could smoke inside. This happens mostly at venues that don't have a patio or a way to take your drink with you when you go outside. Still, it happens very rarely.

If you heard negative responses, what did you say back?

I usually say, "If you could smoke in here then everyone could smoke in here, and you wouldn't like it as much if everyone was smoking." Another response I use is that there are still other bars that let you smoke indoors and if that's what is most important to you, then you should drink there. I really try to produce events that are unique and special and I want as many people to enjoy them as possible.

Since you spend so many hours working in bars, how did you experience the difference between venues that allow smoking and the ones that don't?

Luckily for me, most of my events have been smokefree for the past few months. It has been really nice. However, bars that usually have smoking in them that only go smokefree for our events don't seem as fresh and clean to me anymore. It depends on what you're looking for. Do you want a clean pleasant atmosphere or are you

looking for the dark and dingy sort of feel? I think that the bars that have the dark and dingy feel to them are afraid to go nonsmoking because they think the crowd they are attracting loves to smoke. That's how I felt about our pirate night Booty. The whole night is built around rebellious behavior and I was afraid that going smokefree would harm the event by making it too clean.

How has working in smoke-free venues impacted your djing and event promotion? How has it impacted your health?

It was a hard transition at first. I smoke and I used to smoke a lot when I DJ'd. It has actually helped me cut back on my smoking quite a bit. More people come out to my events when they know they are smokefree and I feel better the next day for it. Who knows? I might have a chance of quitting some day.

What do you think would help more people in the LGBTQ communities support smokefree venues and events?

I think it is great right now that people, promoters and bar-owners have a choice in the matter. They can take the risk and go smokefree and if they do, they'll see that there's a lot of support out there for that decision. If a bar decides not to go smokefree, that's fine. I feel strongly, though, that eventually so many great bars will be smokefree that no one will choose to go to a smoke filled bar.

Arr. Find the pirates at Booty on Thursday nights at Acme (1305 SE 8th).

For more information about events produced by Puppet and friends, check out:

*www.puppdx.com
www.bootypdx.com
www.meetdept.com*

See you on the dance floor!

Why Smokefree?

Are you wondering why we're stuck on 100% smokefree events and venues? Are you talking to your favorite bar or event-planner about going smokefree? The following are some of the reasons why we think that folks in our communities should create 100% smokefree events and venues.

Secondhand smoke is a serious health hazard.

Secondhand smoke contains more than 60 cancer-causing agents and many other toxins, such as formaldehyde, cyanide, carbon monoxide and arsenic. There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Even 30 minutes of exposure to secondhand smoke can be hazardous to your health.

We all deserve the right to breathe clean air.

Approximately 35,000 Oregonians are exposed to secondhand smoke where they work. Many of these people work in bars that allow smoking. People who work in bars that allow smoking are four times more likely to contract lung cancer than people who work in smokefree workplaces.

In March 2006, the American Cancer Society conducted research in bars and restaurants with

bars in Oregon. The level of indoor air pollution they measured was 622% higher in places that allowed smoking. These rates were more than 3 times above what the Environmental Protection Agency considers to be "unhealthy" for outdoor air. (For a full copy of the Oregon Air Monitoring Project report, please contact the American Cancer Society at 0330 SW Curry Street, Portland, OR 97239, 503.295.6424.)

Tobacco companies do NOT support our communities.

Since the early 1990s tobacco companies have openly targeted the LGBTQ communities. They prey on the vulnerabilities we – and other populations – face due to marginalization. Tobacco use is the *leading* cause of preventable death in the United States.

Tobacco companies support politicians who are actively working against gay marriage and for abstinence-only education. Abstinence-only curricula have been linked to: higher rates of verbal harassment on the basis of sexual orientation, higher rates of LGBT students missing school because they felt unsafe, and fewer faculty and school staff who support LGBT students (GLSEN 2006).

"The debate is over. The science is clear. Secondhand smoke is not a mere annoyance but a serious health hazard."

— Surgeon General Richard Carmona
Tuesday, June 27, 2006

Carmona declared that evidence is now "indisputable" on the following issues:

- ☛ Nonsmoking sections do not work.
- ☛ There is no safe level of secondhand smoke.
- ☛ Even brief exposure to secondhand smoke can cause harm.

Why do we support companies that don't support us?

Smokefree spaces support our communities.

Our 2005 Pride Survey Results reconfirm that LGBTQ Oregonians smoke at twice the rate of the general population. Though smoking at high rates, survey respondents indicated that they would prefer bars to go smokefree. 76% of survey respondents reported that they would go out to bars as often or more often if bars were smokefree. The majority of survey respondents indicated that they would like bars to be smokefree and support a smoking ban in public places.

With smoking bans, business in bars in CA and NY has increased.

Support our communities by asking your favorite bar to go smokefree and by working with us for a smokefree Oregon.

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Breathe Free provides education and advocacy around LGBTQ tobacco use with the understanding that we are all (tobacco users and non-users) impacted by tobacco use and by being targeted by the tobacco industry. Our goals are:

- To work in coalition with other groups toward smoke-free bars, clubs and other gathering places for LGBTQ folks;
- To promote safe and smokefree places for LGBTQ people to socialize and connect with each other; and
- To advocate that LGBTQ events and organizations not accept funding from tobacco companies.

Breathe Free is funded by the Oregon Department of Human Services as part of the Multicultural Council of programs that provide tobacco prevention education and advocacy within groups who are disproportionately affected by tobacco use and exposure.

*Written and edited
by R.E. Szego, except where noted.*

A PROGRAM OF SMYRC, THE SEXUAL MINORITY YOUTH RESOURCE CENTER

What's your favorite 100% smokefree LGBTQ event or venue?

Breathe Free has started a list and we're looking for your input. Our list includes only events or venues that are *100% smokefree indoors*. (No, that smoking room doesn't count!)

Right now our events are Portland specific, but it would be great to expand this throughout the state! Then when we're traveling around, we can all know where to kick back and relax.

Here's our list so far:

Acme
Booty
Boxxes
Dingo's
The Escape (all ages)
Gay Skate
Meet Department events
OutDancing
Primal Urge (formerly Porky's Pub)
Wild Card
Wonder Café and Ballroom

**Thanks so much to
these folks for choosing
to be 100% smokefree!
Let's support them!**

Send us your recommendations!!

Join Us in Working Toward A Smokefree Oregon!

We've begun our second year!

Are you interested in working with us to mobilize folks in the LGBTQ communities to back a comprehensive smoking ban in Oregon? We're currently the *only* state on the West Coast without one! Ireland did it. New Zealand, Bhutan, Uruguay and Italy, too—and a number of other *countries* across the world. Oregon can do this!

Here are some examples of how you can help out:

- Becoming a media spokesperson.
- Updating the Smokefree LGBTQ events and bars

list.

- Talking to bar owners and event planners about going 100% smokefree.
- Designing and/or providing educational workshops for healthcare providers and/or community groups.
- Volunteering during community events.
- Other assistance... What skills can you offer?

Please contact R.E. ("Ari") Szego at 503.784.5813 to work with us!

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