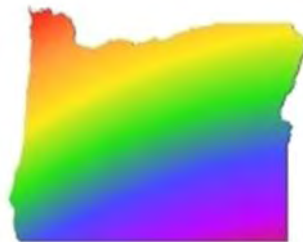


# Some Major Dates in Oregon LGBT Movement History

By George T. Nicola

The following are a few dates and events that were important in the quest for Oregon LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) equality and dignity. These are certainly not all the events, but a few major ones which we know for certain occurred on a specific date.

*For questions, please contact the Gay & Lesbian Archives of the Pacific Northwest (GLAPN) at [info@glapn.org](mailto:info@glapn.org)*





John Wilkinson  
and Holly Hart

## February 7, 1970

**John Wilkinson, a gay staff member of the Willamette Bridge newspaper, writes an article that leads him and lesbian staff member Holly Hart to start the Portland Gay Liberation Front.**

***It would be Oregon's first politically oriented LGBT organization.***

## Some Major Dates in Oregon LGBT Movement History



Stevie Remington was Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Oregon when her group lobbied the state legislature for the sodomy law reform.



Republican Governor Tom McCall who signed into law Oregon's sodomy law reform

**January 1, 1972**

**Oregon's sodomy law reform takes effect, eliminating provisions that have criminalized most types of adult, private, consensual, non-commercial homosexual conduct.**



Peggy Burton

## January 18, 1973

**The U.S. District Court rules that the firing of Oregon public school teacher Peggy Burton based on her lesbianism was "wrongful".**

*It awards her \$10,000 in damages, plus a modest amount of attorney fees. However, the court refuses to reinstate her to her old position, on the grounds that reinstatement "would not work" in the small town where she had taught.*

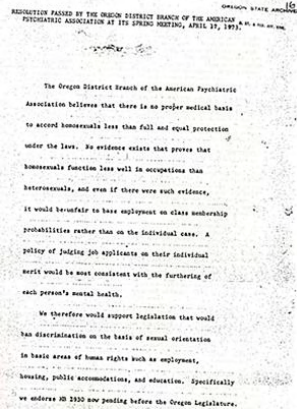


Burton's attorney, gay  
activist  
Charlie Hinkle

# April 17, 1973

The Oregon District Branch of the American Psychiatric Association issues a statement supporting an equal employment law for gay people, stating that it is in the best interest of mental health.

*“No evidence exists that proves that homosexuals function less well in occupations than heterosexuals.” Thus, “A policy of judging job applicants on their individual merit would be most consistent with the furthering of each person’s mental health.”*



The Oregon psychiatric group’s statement of support for gay civil rights

## Some Major Dates in Oregon LGBT Movement History



Rita and Charles Knapp, who with Ann and Bill Shepherd cofounded PFLAG Portland. On the right is their daughter, pioneer lesbian activist Kristan Knapp. In 1973, Rita gave an eloquent testimony to an Oregon House committee in support of Oregon's first gay civil rights bill.

# May 2, 1973

**An Oregon House committee holds an historic hearing on HB 2930, Oregon's first bill that would have banned job and housing discrimination based on sexual orientation.**



**Democrat Vera Katz, primary House cosponsor of HB 2930**



**Democrat Stephen Kafoury, primary House cosponsor of HB 2930**





Commissioner Connie McCready sponsored the City of Portland resolution banning discrimination based on sexual orientation in city employment.

## December 18, 1974

The City of Portland passes a resolution which bans discrimination based on sexual orientation in municipal employment, the first gay civil rights victory in Oregon.





## **October 24, 1977**

**The City of Eugene passes an ordinance banning discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations based on sexual orientation. It is the first legal measure in Oregon banning discrimination in an area other than city employment.**



**Terry Bean was a Eugene gay activist who worked to defeat Measure 51.**

**He later moved to Portland and became involved in the statewide LGBT movement. On a national level, he was cofounder of the Human Rights Campaign and the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund.**

## **May 23, 1978**

**Eugene voters approve a Ballot Measure 51, overturning the gay civil rights ordinance their city council passed the previous year.**



The Oregon State  
Capitol

**October 14, 1987**

**Governor Neil Goldschmidt issues an executive order banning discrimination in state employment based on sexual orientation.**

## Some Major Dates in Oregon LGBT Movement History

# November 8, 1988

## Voters approve Ballot Measure 8, overturning Governor Goldschmidt's executive order in state employment based on sexual orientation.

Measure No. 8 STATE OF OREGON	
EXPLANATION	ARGUMENT IN FAVOR
<p>Ballot Measure 8 would revoke the Governor's Executive Order banning discrimination based on sexual orientation. That order prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation in employment in Executive Branch agencies and in the provision of services by those agencies.</p> <p>Ballot Measure 8 would also prohibit any state official in the future from requiring non-discrimination against state employees based on sexual orientation.</p> <p>Ballot Measure 8 would not limit the authority of any state official to forbid generally the taking of personnel action against state employees based on non-job-related factors.</p> <p>This measure defines "sexual orientation" to mean heterosexuality, homosexuality or bisexuality.</p> <p>Ballot Measure 8 specifies that if any part of the measure is declared unconstitutional, the remaining provisions are not affected.</p> <p><b>Committee Members:</b>            Mr. John Wilson            Mr. John Baker            Thomas J. Staley            Mike A. Wiley            Mr. Alan Davidson</p> <p><b>Appointed by:</b>            Secretary of State            Secretary of State            Chief Petitioner            Chief Petitioner            Members of the Committee</p> <p><small>(This Committee appointed to provide an impartial explanation of the ballot measure pursuant to ORS 251.226.)</small></p>	<p><b>STOP SPECIAL RIGHTS FOR HOMOSEXUALS</b>            VOTE YES ON MEASURE 8</p> <p>Gov. Neil Goldschmidt's Executive Order 87-20 has the effect of giving special preferences and special protections, SPECIAL RIGHTS, to homosexuals.</p> <p><b>HOMOSEXUALS ARE ALREADY PROTECTED BY STATE LAW.</b></p> <p>ORC Section 263A states that personnel decisions in state employment cannot be made based on non-job-related factors. Sexual orientation is a non-job-related factor unless an employee discriminates on the basis of sexual orientation in a way that disrupts the work place.</p> <p><b>Q. WILL MEASURE 8 ALLOW DISCRIMINATION BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION?</b></p> <p>A. Absolutely not. This claim is an attempt by opponents of Ballot Measure 8 to divert attention away from the real issue, which is the fact that Executive Order 87-20 gives special protections to homosexuals. However, not all Oregonians are already protected by existing state law. Additionally, they are protected from discrimination by Oregon State Constitution Article I, Section 26, and by the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Oregon State Constitution, Section 26 states that it does not limit the authority of state officials to forbid discrimination based on non-job factors generally.</p> <p>The Oregon Chapter of the ACLU, which claims to be a non-partisan legal group, but is actually in the legal attack arm of left-wing causes, attempted to draw before both the Oregon Supreme Court in a challenge to the Measure 8 Ballot Title and the five member State Fairness/Empowerment Committee that Measure 8 would allow discrimination. Both the Oregon Supreme Court, by denying the Ballot Title, and the Ballot Measure 8 Explanatory Committee declined to agree that Measure 8 would allow arbitrary discrimination against homosexuals or any other group.</p> <p>In conducting research with legal counsel, Oregon Citizens Alliance has determined that Measure 8 will in no way allow arbitrary discrimination based on sexual orientation. In plain, non-legalistic terms, Ballot Measure 8 simply revokes the Governor's Executive Order and says that he can't do it again. It would be foolish to revoke the Executive Order and then allow it to be reinstated the very next day.</p> <p>Ballot Measure 8 will not allow discrimination, it simply returns state policy to the way it was prior to Executive Order being issued last October. How discriminatory was state policy against homosexuals prior to the Governor's Order? There was not even one claim of discrimination against homosexuals.</p> <p><b>STOP SPECIAL RIGHTS FOR HOMOSEXUALS</b>            VOTE YES ON MEASURE 8</p> <p><b>Submitted by: Oregon Citizens Alliance</b>            Leo T. Mahan            P.O. Box 77000, Portland, OR 97277</p> <p><small>(This space purchased for \$200 in accordance with ORS 251.226.)</small></p>

Voters' Pamphlet entry explaining Measure 8



Portland City Commissioner Mike Lindberg, pictured above, sponsored the City of Portland ordinance banning discrimination based on sexual orientation in employment, housing, and public accommodations. Helping Lindberg was his openly gay assistant, the late Keeston Lowery, pictured below.



## October 3, 1991

**The City of Portland passes an ordinance that bans discrimination based on sexual orientation in employment, housing, and public accommodations.**

*This is the first gay civil rights law in Oregon that was not repealed by a ballot measure.*



Transgender activist Lori Buckwalter, Executive Director of It's Time, Oregon! served as consultant to the City of Portland on the drafting of gender identity protective language.

**December 13, 2000**  
**The Portland City Council votes to ban discrimination based on gender identity in employment, housing, and public accommodations.**

# November 3, 1992

**Oregon voters defeat Ballot Measure 9 which would have banned gay civil rights laws and required public schools to teach that homosexuality is “abnormal, wrong, unnatural, and perverse”.**

***That same day, lesbian Gail Shibley is elected to the Oregon House, becoming the first openly LGBT person elected to public office in Oregon.***



Voters' Pamphlet entry explaining Measure 9



Lesbian activist Kathleen Saadat campaigned tirelessly against Ballot Measure 9.



Gail Shibley

## November 12, 1992

**The Oregon Court of Appeals rules that Ballot Measure 8, passed in 1988 to undo job protection for gay men and women in state government, is unconstitutional. The ruling states that the Oregon Constitution protects "free and open expression about sexual orientation".**



Harriet Merrick, a lesbian employee of the University of Oregon, was the plaintiff in the law suit that overturned Measure 8





## December 9, 1998



Christine Tanner,  
plaintiff in *Tanner*  
*v. OHSU*

**In *Tanner v. OHSU*, the Oregon Court of Appeals rules that public agencies must provide benefits to the domestic partners of their gay employees if they provide benefits to the spouses of married employees.**

# November 7, 2000



Lesbian activist Kathleen Sullivan, who led the opposition to the second anti-gay Ballot Measure 9

**Oregon voters defeat yet another anti-gay Ballot Measure 9. Its official description was “Prohibits Public School Instruction Encouraging, Promoting, Sanctioning Homosexual, Bisexual Behaviors”. It is the last anti-gay ballot measure to be sponsored by the Oregon Citizens Alliance.**

## Some Major Dates in Oregon LGBT Movement History



**Becky Kennedy and Mary Li (above) were the first Oregon couple to get a Multnomah County same-sex marriage license in 2004.**

# March 3, 2004

**Multnomah County begins granting marriage licenses to same-sex couples. The issuances are discontinued on April 20 by court order.**



**Couples outside of the Multnomah County office where same-sex marriage licenses were being issued in 2004**



## Some Major Dates in Oregon LGBT Movement History



Ad opposing  
Measure 36.



Juan Martinez, lead plaintiff in  
Martinez  
v. Kulongoski, which  
unsuccessfully  
challenged Ballot Measure 36



Oregon Supreme Court Justice  
Rives Kistler

# November 2, 2004

**Oregon voters approve ballot Measure 36, which bans same-sex marriage by constitutional amendment.**

*On the same day, Justice Rives Kistler, an openly gay man, wins a statewide election to retain his Oregon Supreme Court position to which he had been appointed in 2003.*



Oregon governor Ted Kulongoski signs into law a bill banning discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. He also signs a domestic partner bill.

## May 9, 2007

**Governor Ted Kulongoski signs into law a ban on discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations based on sexual orientation and gender identity. He also signs a bill creating a domestic partner registry system allowing same sex couples most of the benefits of marriage.**



Kate Brown



Sam Adams



Stu Rasmussen

# November 4, 2008

**Democrat Kate Brown, who openly identifies as bisexual, is elected Oregon Secretary of State, the second highest state position in Oregon public office. Sam Adams is elected Mayor of Portland, becoming the first openly gay mayor of one of the 40<sup>th</sup> largest U.S. cities. Stu Rasmussen, who is transgender, is elected mayor of Silverton.**

## November 15, 2012



Democrat Tina  
Kotek, Oregon  
House Speaker

**Oregon Representative Tina Kotek is chosen to be House Speaker, becoming the first openly lesbian leader of a state legislative chamber anywhere in the U.S., and the first openly LGBT person to head an Oregon legislative chamber.**





As a BRO employee, transgender activist Sasha Buchert worked to remove healthcare exclusions for transgender Oregonians.

## December 19, 2012

The State of Oregon announces it will prohibit health care providers from discriminating against a policy holder based on their actual or perceived gender identity and expression.

# February 14, 2013

**LGBT rights group Basic Rights Oregon (BRO) announces it will work toward a ballot measure that will legalize same-sex marriage in the state.**

*A coalition creates Oregon United for Marriage to sponsor and promote the measure. The initiative is scheduled for the following year's general election, November 4, 2014.*



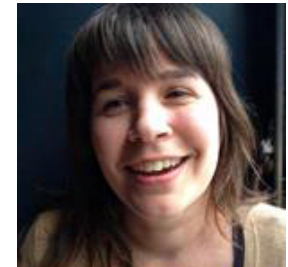
**Jeana Frazzini, BRO  
Executive Director**



**Kyle White, BRO  
Marriage  
Equality Field Manager**



**Peter Zuckerman,  
BRO Media  
Manager**



**Amy Ruiz, BRO  
Communications  
Director**

# August 24, 2013

People from a broad coalition, including a large contingent of LGBT people and allies, marches in Portland to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington. A rally that follows includes an eloquent speech by black gay activist Khalil Edwards.



Khalil Edwards



Marchers from BRO, PFLAG Portland, and PFLAG Portland Black Chapter