

# Seattle GAY NEWS

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## Ted Kennedy to speak at No on 35 event

Senator Ted Kennedy will be the featured speaker at a Democratic Unity Rally Saturday, October 27, from 2-4pm at Union Station, 401 South Jackson in Seattle. The Democratic Unity Rally, organized by Senator Brock Adams' office, is a fund-raising event for local Democratic party candidates and the No on 35 campaign.

Tickets for the event are \$25. All tickets purchased from the No on 35 campaign will benefit No on 35. No on 35 will receive \$20 for its campaign for each \$25 ticket it sells.

To purchase tickets from No on 35, mail a check payable to "Democratic Unity Rally" to the No on 35 office, Attn: Rick McKinnon, 1011 Western Avenue, Suite 900, Seattle, WA 98104. Be sure to include your name, address, telephone number and name of your employer (for campaign contribution reporting purposes).

Tickets will be mailed out on all orders received by Wednesday, October 24. Tickets will be at the will call table at Union Station on Saturday, October 27, the day of the event, on all orders received in the mail Thursday or Friday. Ticket orders received after Friday will be returned to sender. Tickets will be available at the door, but their purchase at that time may not be able to benefit the No on 35 campaign, but please ask at time of purchase.

Don't miss this opportunity to hear Ted Kennedy speak! ■

## Queer Nation proliferates nationwide

by Carrie Wofford  
Special to the SGN

"Queer Nation ring lower bell" the half-inch tall lettering directs the newcomer. Upon ringing, one is admitted to a dimly-lit, unrenovated basement room where twenty-eight people sit on chairs and pieces of wood in a circle not larger than fourteen feet in diameter. This is the fifth meeting of the Queer Nation of Philadelphia.

On the other side of the country, a member of the 300 person-strong Queer Nation of San Francisco announces she's tired of making the trip from Oakland to sit through a strict and confusing meeting structure, and wants to start a Queer Nation of Berkeley/Oakland. The room is loud with applause, and others flock around her to plan their first meeting.

Just as ACTUP spread like wildfire through the country, groups of young Lesbians, Gays, and Bisexuals, calling themselves the "Queer Nation," are now cropping up in major cities throughout the United States and Canada, just five months after Queer Nation was founded in New York City. The last twelve days in July witnessed the simultaneous (though not coordinated) emergence of Queer Nation groups in Boston, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Providence, Philadelphia, and Toronto.

Sporting "Queers Bash Back" T-shirts and bright fluorescent stickers proclaiming "Keep America Queer" and "Dykes Demand Action" while they chant "We're Here, We're Queer, We're Fabulous, Get Used To It," members of these Queer Nations are staging kisses and marching through downtown and neighborhood districts across the country, garnering mainstream media attention along the way. Queer Nation was featured in the *Village Voice* last month, and the Metro Section of the *New York Times*' focus on the Pink Panther anti-violence vigilante patrol of Queer Nation/NY. Similarly, TV news shows and mainstream newspapers carry reports of the group's actions in its many locales.

### A new militancy

Characterized as "more radical than ACTUP, if you can believe it" by former NY Mayor Ed Koch, Queer Nation is the first group since the 1960s Stonewall Riots to espouse violence — in the form of the slogan "Queers Bash Back!"

In San Francisco, it has become commonplace for the home addresses of Gay-bashers to be announced at Queer Nation meetings. Boston member Gregg Gonsalves threatens, "You bash us, we are going to bash back. We are out to show our anger and our rage." Given the militancy, some may wonder why Queer Nation is so popular around the country.

Providence organizer Padric Meagher described the impetus for the group as stemming from "a militancy promoted at pride." "I think protesting is



unusual[here]," member Greg Gross offered. "People are used to seeing the Gay pride march, but this kind of activism is new."

Gross attributes the new militancy to a number of recent homophobic incidents which "radicalized people."

In many cities, an increase in Gay-bashings, as well as an increase in the awareness and publicity of those Gay-bashings, have served to anger people, who then may be more open to the radical tactics of New York.

Following a rash of Gay-bashings in

Boston's Gay neighborhoods this spring and last summer, Boston activists attending New York's Gay and Lesbian Pride Parade found the Queer Nation Take Back the Night March "tremendously powerful," explained organizer, Michael Cronin. "A lot of people were talking about it. We saw an idea that was working." Similar Gay-bashings, and the proximity to New York inspired Philadelphia's Queer Nation.

Gross joined Queer Nation after his lover was spit at. "You hear about

homophobic people, but you don't realize the effect until you see it face to face."

Similarly, Mike Snell, the individual currently trying to drum up support for a Queer Nation of Detroit, became politically involved this year when he found a lack of support for his Gay marriage (or "union") with his lover of seven years.

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