



OUT IN THE MOTHER LODE

A PROGRAM OF SIERRA HEALTH RESOURCES, INC.
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News and Views

Of the GLBIT Community

Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual, Intersex and Transgender

NOVEMBER 2010

One Strong Settler

by Brian Dean Gordon

This incredible place we call the Mother Lode offers more than just physical beauty. It also has the historical reputation of calling for strong settlers. Though the famous Gold Rush is long since passed, the region continues to call forth the strong ones.

Russ is fifty and has lived "out" in the Mother Lode with his partner for five years. During a recent checkup, Russ complained of nagging pain. He was referred to a specialist, and soon thereafter was diagnosed with squamous cell carcinoma. This would be his second battle with cancer. He suffered (and beat) Non-Hodgkins lymphoma in 1999.

By his own admission, Russ' hair is more gray than when he arrived in the Mother Lode, and he's a bit more tired than usual, but he is proud to be back to his "fighting weight" of 180 lbs after completing his treatment. So far, his prognosis is good, but it will take time to know for sure. He spoke of his first bout with cancer almost as if it was an adventure.

"I lived in San Francisco for years and had just moved to Crescent City. I started having back pain so intense that I couldn't get out of bed. My family dragged me to the emergency room. After all kinds of tests, machines, and blood draws: Bang! It was cancer."

"It was a tough time. I was in a wheelchair. There was lots of physical therapy, radiation, chemo, the whole deal. I beat it though and have almost 11 years in remission."

With Russ' recent diagnosis, he was told that his current cancer is completely unrelated to the first.

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KATE REID in Sutter Creek

You probably missed Kate Reid when she performed at the Sutter Creek Theater on a Sunday afternoon in November because there were only 14 people in the audience (one of them being her partner), but she's coming back next year, and you don't want to miss her then.



WHY?

Because she is a whipsmart wordsmith with a dynamic stage presence, a singer-songwriter-comedienne who muses on identity and the queer life. Reid, a Canadian entertainer who has graced the stage at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, did not let the small audience diminish her performance enthusiasm. Sporting a punky, red-dyed top-notch, she accompanied herself on guitar and harmonica and belted out tunes that might be described as folk-songs-ala-slam-poetry.

Her songs evoke laughter with lyrics that are in turn irreverent and insightful. There is "Emergency Dyke Project," a wildly metaphoric song addressing homophobia, and "Only Dyke at the Open Mic" which inspires gutsy authenticity. "Uncharted Territory," a song Reid wrote in response to folks who claim she sings too much about being a lesbian, is rife with personal integrity while "I'm Just Doing It for the Chicks" is an hilarious take on weird misconceptions about lesbians in the straight community.

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Kate Reid cont'd

She introduces most songs with a little back story and a gleeful, self-deprecating chuckle that is totally endearing. Oh, and it's worth mentioning that she's pretty delicious eye-candy in her Doc Martins and low-slung, belted jeans.

Considering how infrequently a lesbian entertainer makes it to the Mother Lode (one attendee remarked that the last may have been as far back as the late 70s), such a poor turnout was a crying shame but mostly our loss.

Kate Reid unapologetically flies the flag, providing a voice for the entire GLBT community. Not only does she speak forthrightly about issues dear to our hearts, she makes an audience laugh aloud, tap their feet, and project a shout of solidarity. The next time she comes to the Mother Lode, we'd best emerge from our lairs to make sure she gets due applause from a sizeable crowd.

OML will announce future local performances by Kate Reid

Local Resources

Leaping Lesbians: Monthly pot-luck socials in Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties.
Email: LLPotluck@yahoo.com

Amador County LGBTQ Support Group - Tuesdays 5:30-6:30 at Sierra Winds Wellness Center, 12265 Martell Rd., Martell, CA. (209) 223-1956

Camping Women (lesbian friendly): 6:30 pm, 4th Tuesday at Pine Tree Restaurant, Sonora. Call Cheryl 928-1945.

First Congregational Church UCC Murphys

Located at corner of Algiers and Church Streets,
just one block east of Main St. in Murphys
(209) 728-3141

Sunday, January 9th, 2011
Approximately 11:30 am, following the 10:00 service.

"A Fish Out of Water"

A documentary that explores the impassioned relationship between homosexuality and the Bible. A genre-bending film, "Fish Out of Water" combines animation and academic interviews to dissect the seven verses in the Bible that are used to condemn homosexuality.

Join us with an inquiring mind and bring a pot-luck dish to share during the discussion following the film presentation. Everyone is welcome.

(Strong Settler, cont'd from page 1)

"It's a hard thing to wrap your mind around. I guess lightning struck twice for me. I just wish it had happened at the casino," he chuckled. "But the support I got here in the Mother Lode the second time around has been great," he says more seriously. "There are too many people to thank. I don't want to leave anyone out, so I won't even try to name them all."

The mark of Gold Country settler is apparent in Russ when he adds, "Both times, even after hearing the words 'You have cancer,' it never occurred to me that I wouldn't survive."

Sierra HOPE

Health Opportunities, Programs and Education

- Education and support for HIV/AIDS.
- AIDS Drug Assistance Program
- Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA)
- Hepatitis Education and Support Group
- Community Food Pantry for anyone in need

Call 209-736-6792 for information

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