



THE PERFECT PARTY

HERE'S WHO WE'D INVITE TO OUR TABLE THIS MONTH ...

1 Mark Parker: Nike's new CEO should just ignore that "swoosh" sound. It's merely his predecessor Bill Perez flying out the door.

2 Queen Noor: Born-in-the-USA Mideast royal, in town for the Simon Benson Awards Dinner (Mar 1), could help Parker parse the term "Jordanesque."

3 Bryan Cross: Resourceful teen survived a chill night lost off the trails at Mt Hood Skibowl by staying put and eating snow.

4 Cheryl Strayed: Local writer, published in the *New York Times* and *Best American Essays*, catches fire with her first novel, *Torch* (Houghton Mifflin).

5 Jerry "The Ice Man" Butler: The man who sang "For Your Precious Love" has been a Cook County commissioner since the mid-'90s (Schnitz, Mar 18-20).

6 Ginny Burdick: State senator and PR diva has her eyes fixed on Erik Sten's seat. Take a picture, Ginny; it'll last longer!

7 Steve Blake: Scrappy point guard has helped keep the Blazers somewhat respectable during their sometimes exasperating youth renaissance.

8 Scout Niblett: Giddy English songstress announced she was relocating to Portland during a recent Doug Fir show—while dressed in a baggy skeleton costume.

9 Tom Roberts: Aka Pig Champion. Recently deceased guitar behemoth from legendary punk band Poison Idea will absolutely rock the great beyond.

10 Azar Nafisi: Author of *Reading Lolita in Tehran* is at the Schnitz Mar 1, but her book's not yet available in Iran. Azar, ayatollah you so!

11 Ted Wheeler: Right after the county commissioner candidate gets caught spamming, his computer gets stolen. Are we on the cusp of Wheelergate?

12 Lucky: The irrepressible Lucky Charms leprechaun has been peddling cereal and reinforcing ludicrous Irish stereotypes for over 40 years. *Erin go bragh!*

The Stiffer Picker-Upper

Jordan Sage takes his job dead seriously. He keeps a fleet of seven GPS-equipped vans and 14 employees on call, each packing two-way radios and cell phones. His Blackberry is on and his earpiece is in, 24/7. Binoculars, chemicals and plastic gloves are tools of the trade.

International spy?
Disaster relief worker?
Celebrity bodyguard?

None of the above. Sage carts corpses. He's been knee-deep in them since he founded Portland First Call in May 2005, but apparently the 12-to-24-hour days aren't enough. Portland First Call is on its way to becoming a self-titled reality show, and Sage's memoir has already been written: *Pushing 40 in the Death Car*.

Just how does one end up in death care? For starters, not everyone in the industry is creepy anymore. "The days of the Lurch-type funeral director are gone," Sage says. "Most of these guys you'd see at a Jimmy Buffet concert." A former funeral director in Colorado, Sage now serves as the grim reaper's gofer—ferrying the deceased from hospitals, hospices and crime scenes to morgues and organ and tissue banks. Sage says working with the expired comes naturally.

"People tell me

that there's a sense of calm they feel from me," he reports. "I'm not sure how to describe it, maybe an energy or an aura."

Composure is certainly required in some of the situations Sage gets himself into. He once fielded a house call for a



body that was found five days after death in a 90-degree house, which caused him to "gag just a bit." And Portland First Call had to place a call themselves for one case, summoning a hospital transport team for assistance in moving a 655-pound cadaver. Sage had the proper stretcher, "but we had a hard time getting this guy through the doors."

These tidbits and other death dish will presumably be served in Sage's tell-all confessional. Maybe Northwest indie rockers Death Cab for Cutie will play the book release party. —*Jessica Wallenfels*



PLAYING DEAD

I play one of two corpses in CoHo's production of Tom Stoppard's murderously sharp comedy *The Real Inspector Hound* (see "On the Town," p. 153). In other shows, I've played ghosts. I've played shades of memory. I've played action heroes as well as messengers of death, even one who briefly feigned his own demise. But I've never played a character that was simply dead.

Like most corpses I do not move, and I have no lines. Mine is a minor, but not insignificant, role; from time to time, I am the center of attention. Offstage, I am not exactly renowned for my economy of movement. In fact, I'm an inveterate fidgeter. Yet during the show, I'm not allowed to even scratch my face. And I must not smile: This is the most difficult part of all.

The absurd brilliance of this play defies the notion that death is not funny. When you're only playing possum, the reaper is not so grim; from a prone position, lines that are only mildly amusing become worthy of a guffaw. Though I maintain a grave expression throughout it all, secretly I'm having the time of my life. —*Brad Bolchunos*



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Here's who we'd like at our table this month ...

1 Rosa Wigmore: What is it with Rosas and buses? Holocaust survivor banked \$700,000 from TriMet after getting manhandled by a hothead driver.

2 Michael Miller: Goodwill president has agreed to a cut in his much-criticized salary. Don't worry: He can still afford to shop there.

3 Jennifer Gately: PAM looks for a lift from its first curator of Northwest art, who schusses in from Sun Valley.

4 Gibor Basri: Berkeley astronomer heads up a NASA project to search for planets that resemble Earth (Schnitz, Feb 9).

5 Dava Sobel: Her latest book is *The Planets*. She's in town the same night. Hmm. Dava, this is Gibor. Gibor, meet Dava. (First Congregational Church, Feb 9)

6 John Carroll: Pearl District developer snags a Bruner Foundation award for contributing to the city's livability. Now if he could just win one for affordability.

7 Lucy Brennan: Thanks to a recent redesign and captivating cocktails, her Mint/820 got some fresh ink in *Food & Wine*.

8 Jed Wilson: Gladstone High and Juilliard grad returns to tickle the ivories at the Portland Jazz Festival (Feb 17-26).

9 Michael Holton: UP men's hoops coach led Pilots to first sweep of in-state Division I rivals (UO, OSU, PSU) in nearly 50 years. Purple power seems contagious.

10 Junki Yoshida: The saucy Portland businessman and budding restaurateur is named one of the LGBTQ most-respected Japanese by *Newsweek*.

11 Valerie Bickford: *Clean Sweep* designer hits the Portland Home & Garden Show (Expo Center, Feb 22-26) to spruce up our mudrooms.

12 Neil Bryant: Listed "white/male" under disability category in application for ORSU board. Hey, Neil: Next time, under sex, put "Yes, please!"

Adam's Ribbit

I am an emasculator. Actually, that was not the exact label used by Lisa Sasevich, the charismatic workshop leader of Understand Men 101, a \$45 three-hour class held on a recent Thursday evening at the downtown Portland Hilton. What she really said was that I am a Frog Farmer.

You see, every man is both a prince and a frog; whether he evolves into full royalty or tailless amphibian is entirely in a woman's hands. Sadly, my unrealistic expectations and constant interruptions are prime predictors for warts.

Sasevich married her prince, a 6'1" Dutch Adonis who used to pump iron on Venice Beach, a few years ago. He's a doctor. Surgery. *Sigh*. They even have an empowered 2-year-old named Eli.

I admit after a series of relationship failures with a cerebral anthropologist, a Swedish alcoholic and a good-looking pack rat in love with "found objects," Sasevich's life looked enviable indeed. And like the other 50 women in the room, I was eager to know her secrets.

Unfortunately, the evening was only an introduction to four weekend-long workshops (\$395 each) that are being held in Portland for the first time by PAX Programs Incorporated—a California-based business dedicated to "educating women about men." Still, Sasevich did offer a

teaser of handy tips.

First, stop worrying about your rear. According to men surveyed by PAX, whatever the size of your bottom, "some man is digging on it." Second, "run away from men to whom you are overly sexually attracted." You'll start acting inauthentic, and Mr. Comb-over will make you feel a lot better in the long run.

And third, it's time to "take off the castration tool belt." Many women these



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days are just too dang masculine, which wreaks havoc with the neat social order of traditional gender roles. To grow a chivalrous prince, in other words, it may still be necessary to dress him warmly and stock his drawers with plenty of clean, well, drawers. —Jill Davis



SWING AND A MISS. AND A MISTER.

Sexual lingo is certainly shapely: love triangles, pink triangles, square pegs, round holes. Now that "polyamory"—the practice of maintaining multiple sexual relationships simultaneously—is spreading like the clap, the polygon holds sway. But in today's fornication formulae, as documented at www.polyamory.org, does V = MF²?

ARG	Alternate relationship geometries	P-cok	Poly come-on king; often clueless and/or slutty
Triad	A three-person relationship where each is involved with both others	HBB	Hot bi babe—mythical female pursued with a Holy Grail fervor
V	A setup in which one person maintains a relationship with two others who are not involved with each other	NSHBB	Not-so-hot bi babe—nonmythical, annoying rookie who "just doesn't get it" and would be happier swinging
MFM	A triad with a male, female and another male, or a V centering on the female; also MFF, MMF, MMM ...	PWP	Poly wanna potluck, a gathering of polyamorists for food and conversation
Z	Four people in a poly relationship where two are sexual and two are not (compare "V"); also called "N"	BeN	Bright-eyed novice, or a person who has just discovered polyamory; tends to date as if eating at a buffet