

## Gay rights: Reflecting on Pride weekend

Letters editor

### The Times is promoting gay rights

The Seattle Times' June 27 edition led with two elderly gentlemen on a park bench, lovers for decades ["Diverse fight for equality," page one]. One had a stroke and he and his partner worried about long-term care, finances, etc.

The June 29 Times led with a woman and her partner -- the partner attending Pride festivities for a brief time due to her multiple sclerosis ["Burst of pride, politics," page one]. They, too, were concerned about their partnership and "rights."

Is The Times selling us something?

-- Hubert Smith, Jacksonville, Ore.

### Filled with pride, wary of challenges facing gays

During this weekend's Pride festivities, I was eager to celebrate 40 years since the start of the gay-equality movement. As a gay man, I believe the extraordinary advances of just the past year call for great celebration. After all, five states have legalized same-sex marriage since last summer, and our own state recently passed its expanded, "everything but marriage" domestic-partnership bill.

But the past year has also seen some challenges. President Obama has yet to come through on many promises to the LGBT community.

California voters passed Proposition 8 last November, banning same-sex marriages in that state. And sadly, opponents of gay equality have mounted a statewide push to repeal Washington's domestic-partnership law.

Referendum 71 proponents claim they are protecting Washington families, but the measure protects no one. Indeed, if passed, this referendum will do immeasurable harm to countless loving same-sex couples and their families.

While there is much to celebrate this weekend, I hope the looming threat of Referendum 71 will remind us all that serious challenges still lay ahead. I want to remind all Washingtonians that this measure will hurt thousands of families in our state and encourage everyone to decline to sign the Referendum 71 petition.

-- Dan Thies, Seattle