



PORTLAND
fellowship

Dear Fellowship Partners,

update october 2004

There was a strange quietness in Fellowship House on the last afternoon before the Labor Day weekend. The finishing touches had been made to the bedrooms, bathrooms, and meeting spaces. Drills, hammers, and the carpet cleaner – all fell silent. We were as ready as we could be.

Then the interns began to arrive. Phillip from Hawaii, then Matt from Missouri, followed by Josh from Texas, Michael who had been working in Florida, and Steve from Alaska. In came suitcases, bedding, huge packages of toilet paper (didn't they trust us?) and, of course, computers. Laura and Sean were already tenants in the house and began to make their adjustment to their five new housemates. The arrivals brought excitement, anticipation, and a bit of nervousness. All were glad to be here.

Our first evening as a group was hosted in my backyard. (Thankfully, we had a couple of rain-free days to show off Oregon's beautiful fall weather.) After an elegantly catered Greek dinner, we huddled in a circle beginning to get to know one another. Darkness fell, so we needed to bring out a lantern to continued our sharing. The next evening, the interns went right to work as they joined with the *Taking Back Ground* leaders for our pre-session training. Our new friends met some of our most-experienced volunteers. Stories of healing were shared, and shared, and shared. I sat in the largest circle of volunteer leaders I can remember.

This is good, because advance applications for *Taking Back Ground* are also at an all-time record. We stand to have one of the largest groups in the history of PF.

So the house has come alive. As I sit here, listening to the stairs squeaking, the phone ringing and smell the... (is that chili?) ...food being prepared for the interns' community meal tonight, I'm excited. Each week on Thursday evenings, an intern takes the "Pot" and creates a meal to share with the other interns, teachers and staff. (I imagine competition will develop in the use of the "Pot".)

We have some very specific goals for this program year. In *Taking Back Ground*, we are striving to have the most engaging teachers, best-trained small group leaders, and the most inspiring worship possible. We are also seeking to develop ways to offer a portion of the *Taking Back Ground* program by electronic extension. It is awesome to realize how many volunteers have offered to teach, guide small groups, and lead the praise and worship.

We are excited to have the book for the second year of *Taking Back Ground* at the printers. Phil Hobizal and Rebecca Wade's work will be used not only by PF, but by other ministries across the country as well.

God has entrusted to us seven gifted interns, full of energy and enthusiasm. Our desire is to use their talents to enlarge PF's ministry, even as they hone their skills by working side-by-side with us.

Another goal for this year is to be all the more available to area churches. This year, we will have additional personnel available to speak at ministry fairs, adult classes, or to meet with pastors who wish to know more about how to minister to those struggling with homosexuality and related issues.



The staff and interns sharing a meal together at the Thompsons' house.

"He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted to proclaim liberty to captives, and freedom to prisoners."

ISAIAH 61 : 1

post office box 14841
portland, oregon 97293
telephone 503_235_6364
fax 503_235_3896
e-mail pf@portlandfellowship.com
portlandfellowship.com



A few Upper Room participants enjoying a hike in the Columbia River Gorge

We hope many of you were able to attend the Open House on October 1. For those who could not make it, please know how very tangible are the results of your prayers, financial support and encouragement. I can hear it all around me. Hey, I can *smell* it!

From all of us with gratitude,

Jason Thompson
Executive Director

As this *Update* was about to go to press, a profound tragedy touched us here at PF. Scott Mitchell, our long-time board chairman, lost his life, apparently at the hands of his son Jonathan. Scott, a pastor at Cedar Mill Bible Church, was very gifted at supporting me and my staff both with the routine business of ministry, and also with those difficult and sensitive issues when a board chairman is so very important. I will miss his friendship and support more than I can tell, and my heart grieves for Connie who has suffered an unimaginable loss.

As we listened to the breaking news, the staff and interns spontaneously gathered with me in the middle of the house to pray that Jonathan's life be spared, that Connie know God's deep consolation, and that our friend be received, as we know he is already, into the fullness of His presence. May God bless us all in this most difficult hour.

TBG Volume II

One of the finest resources offered by PF is our workbook, *Taking Back Ground*, written by our founder Phil Hobizal together with Rebecca Wade assisted by Katie Wood. Program participants read a lesson each week of the program and complete the workbook pages for daily reflection.

Last year, our returning students used photocopied pages, since *Year Two* was still being completed as the year progressed.

We are pleased to announce that *Taking Back Ground—Year Two* is at the printers and should be available soon. Individuals and groups across the country who are awaiting the second volume may place their orders at this time.

Year One covers introductory and general information for the person wishing to overcome homosexual attraction. *Year Two* features more specific topics such as: Boundaries, Emotional Dependency, Addiction; Narcissism, etc.

PF was blessed by having a sponsor cover the printing costs of *Year One*, making the sale of the books an ongoing means of support to the ministry. We have a few who are helping with the cost of *Year Two*. We welcome others as well.

thanks

to Sunburst products for donating the much-needed gas trimmer
.....

for all who came to our Open House and all who support our work
.....

for God's powerful presence in all areas of ministry at PF

prayer

for the family of Scott Mitchell and his friends at Cedar Mill Bible Church. Scott will be greatly missed
.....

for the new participants in the *Taking Back Ground* program. Pray their year will be powerful and purposeful
.....

for the seven interns. Pray they will hear the Lord's leading and walk confidently in the tasks laid before them
.....

for safety, encouragement and direction for the 23 small group leaders, worship leaders, and teachers

portland fellowship is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 nondenominational organization. We are exclusively supported through private donations, support services, and offerings. Thank you for your gifts.

october calender

october 4

Montly Board Meeting

october 5, 12, 19, 26

Taking Back Ground Series
Discipleship program for men, women, and wives impacted by same-sex attraction. 7 p.m.

october 8

Family and Friends Group
If you have a loved one involved in homosexuality and want guidance, encouragement and support,
Second Friday of each month: 7 p.m.

october 16

One-Day Conference with:
Dr. Robert Gagnon
"The Bible and Homosexual practice"
For information: 503.644.9148

october 17

Trinity Fellowship
Jason Thompson will share with the congregation. 9 and 11 a.m.

october 22-23

Jim Thompson and Joanne McBride will share at a Multnomah conference on homosexuality.

Check website for additional updates at www.portlandfellowship.com