

Just out

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Written and graphic materials are welcomed for submission. All written material should be typed and double-spaced. All graphic material should be black ink on white paper. Material will be edited for spelling and grammar, with the exception of letters to the editor.

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month. **Out About Town** is a courtesy to our readers. Performers, clubs, individuals, or groups wanting to list events in the calendar should mail notices to *Just Out* by the 15th of the month preceding publication. Listings will not be taken by telephone.

Display Advertising will be accepted up to the 17th of each month.

Classified ads must be received at the office of *Just Out* by the 17th of each month, along with payment. Ads will not be taken over the telephone.

Editorial policies allow the rejection or the editing of an article or advertisement that is offensive, demeaning or may result in legal action. *Just Out* consults the Associated Press Stylebook and Label Manual on editorial decisions.

Views expressed in letters to the editor, columns, and features may not be those of the editorial staff of *Just Out*.

Subscriptions to *Just Out* are available for \$12.50 for 12 issues. A free copy of *Just Out* and/or advertising rates are available upon request. First class, (in an envelope) \$20 for 12 issues.

The mailing address and telephone number for *Just Out* are:

P.O. Box 15117
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Steppin' Out

Photo by Jay Brown



Our community is our business

It is incumbent upon the entire community to remember that the future of the lesbian and gay nation depends on a strong free press to continue its ongoing battle for human rights.

B Y D O N L V O L K

For gay and lesbian publications and journalists the slogan "Our Community Is Our Business" represents the media's commitment to the gay and lesbian nation. I believe that we often overlook the impact and traditions that have moved our community forward over the past several decades.

As the lesbian and gay nation has developed in political and social power and recognition, so have our presses and broadcasts grown in professionalism — and in responsibility. No longer is a mimeographed sheet passed among friends and acquaintances sufficient to serve the burgeoning role of gays and lesbians throughout the world.

Journalistically, everything that happens in our communities from Portland, Maine, to Portland, Oregon, is the business of lesbian and gay journalists. The national perspective our community has been forced to develop in response to AIDS is reflected in our publications and broadcasts. We have had to become more proficient as interviewers, commentators and investigators in order to ensure that our com-

munity is protected from attack by those for whom diversity is seditious.

Our community's most vital resource is the gathering and analyzing of information, a process that has grown in excellence and prestige as more and more publications and broadcasts commit themselves to top-quality journalism. Very simply, without the lesbian and gay media, our movement would not have moved forward so rapidly, so confidently, so well.

While newspapers, magazines, radio and television shows continue strengthening their journalistic credentials, there is a flip-side to the slogan "Our Community Is Our Business."

Through the awakening years of the gay and lesbian movement, gay-owned and -operated businesses had few — if any — opportunities to improve the economic strength of the gay and lesbian nation. Advertising generally depended on "word of mouth."

Even in 1988 many non-gay publications and broadcasts still refuse advertisements for gay and lesbian events, organizations, or enterprises. But now gay and lesbian businesses have an advertising vehicle that best serves them: the gay media's clearly targeted market of

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interested consumers.

Although the gay and lesbian media has grown to a \$50-million-a-year industry, publishing and broadcasting in our community is certainly not the road to fortune.

To sustain publishing and broadcasting businesses requires an enormous commitment of finances, energy and resources. Most publications experience at least two or three years of little profit, during which they must support writers, graphic artists, sales representatives, clerical help, photographers and editors. They must also consider supplies, expensive typesetting and photo equipment, telephones, office equipment and postage, among other things.

And the journalists who devote themselves to our community are often underpaid in comparison to their skills and talents. Each of them makes financial sacrifices to work in a still-growing industry because they have made a conscious decision to serve our community with quality journalism.

What the Gay and Lesbian Press Association and its educational foundation, the Media Fund for Human Rights, honor during Gay/Lesbian Media Awareness Month are those individuals who — journalistically and economically — have given the gay and lesbian nation a voice of its own.

Don L. Volk, president of the Gay and Lesbian Press Association, is news editor of Frontiers, based in West Hollywood, California.

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