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Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month preceding publication.

Out About Town is compiled as a courtesy to our readers. Performers, clubs, individuals or groups wishing 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 over the 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.**

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Steppin' Out

Photo by Jay Brown



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P A G E T W O

Grief, hope and luck

I'd probably even pray if that was something I believed in

BY CHAR BRESHGOLD

I wonder if anyone really needs another sad story. And do I need to tell one? I don't know anymore. I look at pictures of myself from last summer, just five months ago, and I think I was more hopeful then. I look at pictures from *The Quilt*, and I think "how could I have been hopeful?" Maybe I was just distracted.

A friend died last month. My friend, my girlfriend's best friend from college, one of those friends you meet when you are twenty and full of angst and optimism and silliness. I knew Larry for nine years. It's still hard to write that in the past tense. It should be: I've known, he is, he will, as in, "he will get well," "when he gets well." But he won't. He had a good life I think, although 30 years is a ridiculously short one. His sister said at the memorial service, "He really loved his life and his friends." He did and there was a lot of love around him in his year of fighting this disease. And he did fight. He was angry and at times very hard on the people who loved and cared for him. He listened to Louise Hay and went to self-healing workshops and tried to be positive. But he was sick, capital "S," sick. He was nauseous and in pain and had little energy.

Here I am with this damn cold I've had for weeks and I'm ready to slit my wrists; when will I get well? Then I think of others for whom it goes on and on and on. That's where I get stuck. I get depressed because I have a cold, or I'm sick of my job, or I have writer's block, and then I'm around someone who hasn't gone out of the house for three months except to go to the doctor and I think, "Oh yeah, I remember how lucky you are. Your cold will go away, you will write again, at least you have the energy to go to work."

Then I really do feel lucky for about five minutes, then I get depressed again and then I feel guilty for not feeling lucky. Talk about *mishuggenah*.

I'm grieving for me who has lost someone to argue and shop and laugh with, for my girlfriend



who lost her oldest friend, for Larry's family and friends who cared for him so lovingly even when it was hard and he wasn't very nice to them. So many people were affected by Larry's death — hundreds, friends and families and co-workers and hospital workers and friends of theirs. I multiply that by the thousands who are sick, will get sick, will die, and I try to be optimistic. I say "PWA," and "Living with AIDS." I send money and volunteer and demonstrate, and I'd probably even pray if that was something I believed in.

It was six o'clock on a Saturday night when we got the call that Larry had died. At six-thirty, we were expecting seven people over for dinner.

We held each other and cried and then wondered if we should cancel this evening. Can we do this, we wondered. We didn't cancel. We had a wonderful sad evening of stories and jokes and hugs and good food and wine. It was a special group of people made even more special because of the circumstances. Larry would have fit right in.

Tears still come at least once a day, when I iron a shirt, or see a man in two-toned cowboy boots. Then I look at the photos on the refrigerator or hanging in the hall — Larry laughing — and they make me smile and then I really do feel lucky.