

Animal Instincts

"We're trying to create a sense of community among dog people, to be an open forum and facilitate communication."
— Laurie Morton

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vating for useful information—tips for house-breaking, new menu ideas and the latest info on chew toy technology.

"One of the things I want the newspaper to be is as congenial as dogs are in the park," Morton says. (Clearly, she isn't referring to my 12-pound terror, who herds herding dogs round and round at our favorite park.) "We're trying to create a sense of community among dog people, to be an open forum and facilitate communication," she adds.

"We're working our way through the services and facilities in the area," Morton says, explaining one regular feature will be "Meet the Trainer." Other stories will cover fly ball teams, how to pick the right puppy, taking Phideaux skiing and whether your Bichon needs insurance. And a Web site is up and woofing where each issue will be archived.

But the paper won't be all bark and no bite. Morton plans to tackle the messy issue of public off-leash areas. Her premise is that because 35 percent of taxpayers own dogs, either 35 percent of all parks ought to have dog running areas or else 35 percent of each park's area should be so equipped.

She's also going to discuss animal shelters and no-kill policies. "Do we think animals are disposable?" she asks.

Dog Nose News seems to be off to a good

start—16,500 copies of the first issue were printed, an astounding beginning for an untried commodity. Morton has had great success placing her paper in pet stores, vets'

offices and anywhere dogs and their people congregate.

"Fans of the paper who live near Gabriel Park requested a distribution box be placed near there," Morton says, clearly thrilled. "The response has been tremendous—10 to 12 calls and e-mails a day. We've even had requests for subscriptions," she exclaims, amazed at how quickly her paper has been fetched.

Morton has good reason to be proud. The first two issues are a fun mix of hard-nosed news and wet, sloppy kisses.

But starting a successful business is not as easy as she makes it sound. "I think lesbians have to be more independent," she admits. "We have to accept that no one else is going to support us."

She does, however, have the full emotional support of her partner. And what brought Morton to Portland 13 years ago? "Same old story—a woman—Marcia," she laughs.

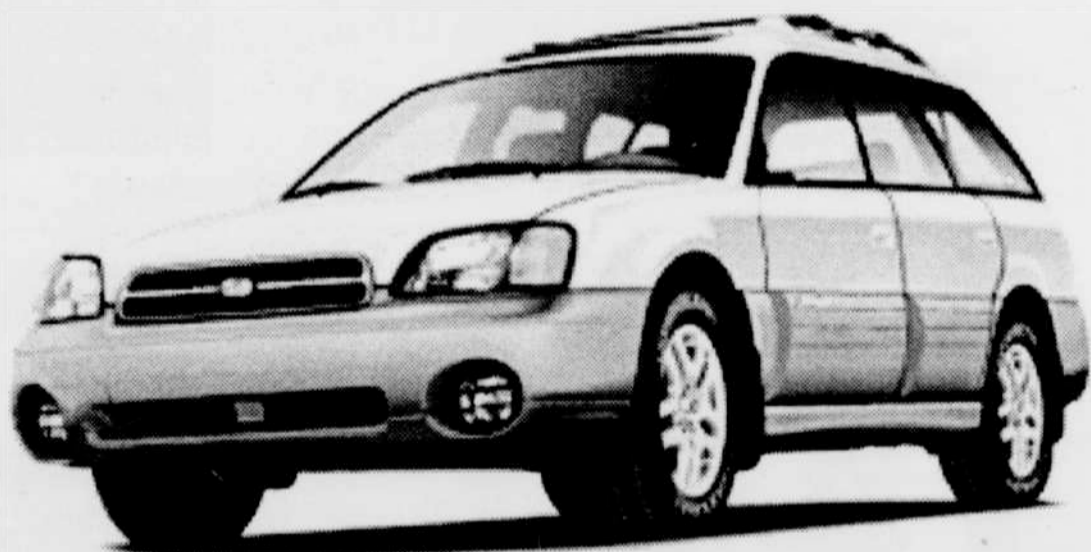
So it's a good thing Hank has a new assignment. "I used to say I used my dog for reconnaissance," Morton admits, laughing at what is still a surefire way to meet other lesbians. **JT**

ORIANA GREEN is not above using her dog, Rose, for her alluring qualities. She is the Entertainment Editor of Just Out and can be reached at oriana@justout.com.



Laurie Morton and her receptionist, Hank

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