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#### **FEATURE**

PHOENIX RISING, 1979-2000: A last goodbye and a final look back

p 24

#### NEWS

NORTHWEST - Deaf student from Portland murdered on D.C. campus; HIV reporting proposal comes under fire; Saltzman connects with community

pp 6-17

**NATIONAL** • Roanoke recovers from shooting; recovering homosexual falls off the wagon

pp 19-21

**WORLD** • Lesbians get loose on Lesbos pp 22-23

### ENTERTAINMENT & CULTURE

**CULTURE** • Ride 'em cowboy

p 34

THEATER • Making it all up

р 35

MUSIC • Jazzy lady

p 37

**BOOKS** • Village Elders looks at aging

pp 38-39

**FILM** • LGBT festival unreels

p 41

p 43

**BOOKS** • Edmund White talks

**DIVERSIONS** • Pick a No on 9 activity or a new Mr. Eagle PDX

pp 44-45

MUSIC . He's mental for Yentl

p 46

#### COLUMNS

M8. BEHAVIOR • Low-fidelity issues p 33

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Letters to the editor should be limited to 500 words. Announcements regarding life transitions (births, deaths, unions, etc.) should be limited to 200 words; photos are welcome. Deadline for submissions to the editorial department and for the Calendar is the Thursday 15 days before the next publication date. Views expressed in letters to the editor, columns and features are not necessarily those of the publisher.

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# COMMENTARY

BY MARTY DAVIS

# Ain't no mountain high enough

Eastern Oregon summit meeting provides clarity amid carnage

t 9,700 feet, the Steens Mountains tower majestically over

the valleys, deserts and lakes of eastern Oregon. Earlier this week, I stood on that summit and viewed with perfect clarity the world below, around and above me. With a relatively gentle wind blowing on a beautifully warm autumn afternoon, the world appears in clear perspective and order. In one direction lie the lakes and marshes, in another the canyons and Aspen-covered rolling hills, while directly below the summit—merely a careless step away—lies the Alvord desert

floor. There is no question as to what is what and what is where. The view is perfect, the vision is unmarred.

From here one can see all sides, all angles, all perspectives. All is clear and certain. The only shadow to mar the perfection of this landscape is the knowledge that I can't bring this clarity of vision and view back home with me.

This clarity of perspective that can be found on mountaintops proves to be ever so elusive when returning to the realities of day-today life at the foot of the mountain. From the narrow ridge at the summit, I easily could see the view from both sides.

weekend of hunting season. From where I live daily, the perspective becomes clouded and clarity becomes shrouded in the haze and maze of daily communications, tasks and endeavors. Efforts to focus clearly and concisely on matters

at hand are not always mountaintop experiences.

So here I sit, nary a mountain in sight, pondering the tasks before me, wondering how to best obtain and share clarity of thought with others. I think of the recent disputes between former and present members of the Pride Northwest board, and I ponder the difficulty of trying to see clearly and present objectively both sides of the story in a nonadversarial and impartial manner.

I remain firm in the conviction that Just Out must bring clearly to the community all sides of a story. It then becomes the task of individual readers to arrive at their own conclusions once presented with clear, concise and factual background information.

Just as on that mountaintop where all sides can be seen, there will always be two or more versions to every dispute or conflict in our community. Presenting both sides does not imply partiality to one side or the other.

Keeping people happy is not the goal; presenting information is. It is a fool's goal to try to please everyone. It is a most worthy Although I saw no goal to strive for accuracy and clarity.

A trip to a mountaintop in eastern Oregon presents more than great hiking experiences. It brings exposure to towns, people and ways of life that aren't quite the same as many of us are used to.

Although I saw no visible support for Measure 9, I also saw no signs of opposition, no lawn signs, no buttons, no billboards. Proving to be more significant than elections, however, was the fact that my journey to the other side coincided with the opening weekend of hunting season. Oh, say it ain't so!

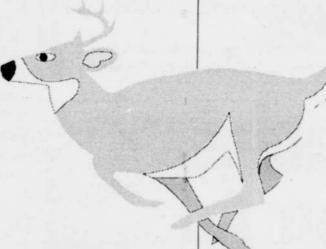
Thusly, any thoughts I might have had about evangelical ballot measure campaigning frankly disappeared when I realized everyone older than 12 was armed and desperately looking for something to shoot. I promise I'll send extra money to

the campaign to make up for my cowardice, but approach-

ing groups of people happily skinning deer and filling body bags and asking their opinion on homosexuality just didn't appear to be the bright thing to do.

Fall brings great outdoor adventures as well as a tremendous indoor adventure: our 2000 general election mail-in ballots. In the Oct. 20 issue of Just Out, you'll find our candidate and ballot measure endorsement lists.

Register to vote, then study to become an educated voter. Your vote is important; use it wisely.



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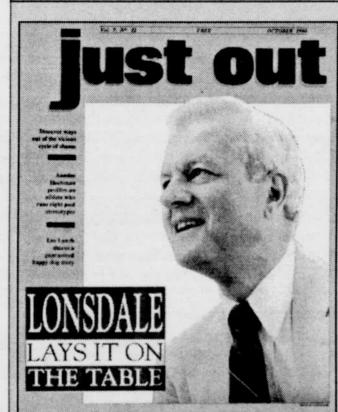
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# REFLECTIONS

## 10 years ago in just out... Vol. 7 No. 12, October 1990



- · Facing funding cuts, the state discontinued distribution of free condoms to community agencies. Kathy Oliver, Outside-In director, said the state had been funneling money to the counties to purchase and distribute the free condoms.
- The U.S. House of Representatives voted to cut funding for "The Dinner Party," an installation by feminist artist Judy Chicago. The move outraged activists from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, which was waging a battle against censorship.
- David H. Souter, the man nominated by President George Bush to replace Associate Justice William J. Brennan on the U.S. Supreme Court, faced criticism for thinking gays should be prohibited from adopting children or serving as foster parents.
- Cascade AIDS Project's "From All Walks of Life" collected pledges totaling \$130,000. Michael Kegley was the winner in the individual category for the second year in a row, with \$7,700 in pledges. The team competition winner was Dr. Thomas Barreto, whose group gathered more than \$10,000.

- · triangle productions! opened the final play in its AIDS trilogy: Martin Sherman's Bent. This show dealt with a little-known historical fact of World War Il and the Nazis' treatment of men in the German concentration camps.
- · Charismatic heartthrob of the a cappella group the Flirtations, lead dancer with the Rachel Lampert Dance Company and organizational whiz kid of the Gay Men's Health Crisis, Terryl Joseph "T.J." Myers died peacefully of AIDS complications
- Rather than allow a Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays chapter to adopt a freeway section, the St. Louis highway department considered trashing the whole program. The agency, which didn't want to allow the words "gay" and "lesbian" to be placed on a highway sign, likened the group to the Ku Klux Klan during a meeting. One commissioner said if PFLAG were allowed to have its name on a sign, the highway department would have to provide a sign for the Nazis.

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