

# Speak Out

ture an opportunity to repudiate the recent advances made by sexual minorities? If he truly wants to help, why not introduce legislation to extend protection to subjects the judicial system hasn't addressed, like housing discrimination and public accommodations?

MARGARET DEIRDRE O'HARTIGAN  
Portland

## Never fear

TO THE EDITOR:

I was very moved by Michael Wayne Keck's article "My Own Private Idaho" [April 6]. The feelings of being alone and having nobody in my life who really could understand me came flooding back.

I have been in the process of coming out of the closet for many years now. Being from Salem as well and having family in Idaho, I could relate to Michael's fears.

Although my parents have been extremely understanding, loving and supportive, it still has been a long, rocky path. Even with all my close friends understanding and accepting my homosexuality, it is still hard.

Now that I live in Portland, finding friends and support has gotten somewhat easier, but I often find myself feeling very much alone. At a time when I'm not really sure where this life is taking me or what is ahead, Michael's article gave me extreme hope and confidence that there are people who have gone through the same things I have.

I know that when I completely come out to the rest of the world, those who truly care about who I am never will leave. And if they do leave, they never loved me to begin with.

There was one line in Michael's article I can't get out of my head: "Denial is a strong force, and so is fear." Thank you for no longer being afraid and letting fear run your life. It has shown me that I, too, can do the same.

RYAN SCHULTZ  
Portland

## Brother's keeper

TO THE EDITOR:

We greatly enjoyed reading Michael Wayne Keck's personal essay about being gay and in a fraternity.

Many gay men thinking about joining a fraternity (or wishing they'd done so while in college) might wish to consider Delta Lambda Phi, the national social and service fraternity for gay, bisexual and progressive men. Information may be obtained through our Internet site, www.dlp.org, or by writing to us at outreach@dlp.org or vpar@dlp.org.

The bond of fraternal brotherhood can be a valuable, lifelong experience for many men, both gay and straight, and we appreciate *Just Out* granting Mr. Keck the opportunity to share that experience with your readers.

PETER COLOHAN  
Delta Lambda Phi Vice President for Outreach  
JOEL CORCORAN  
Delta Lambda Phi Vice President for Alumni Relations

## Dutch courage

TO THE EDITOR:

This is to say "thank you" to *Just Out* for printing the article "Dutch Treat" [April 6]. I am very joyful that the Netherlands legalized same-sex marriage.

The photo of the happy couple is very uplifting to me. I have been looking for confirmation of love and civil rights in the United States of America.

I feel the people of the Netherlands are honest and strive for equality in all spheres of life. I hope now that all countries follow suit in legalizing same-sex marriage worldwide.

I only wish I lived in the Netherlands. Peace.

TANNE JONSON  
Vancouver, Wash.

## Pet cemetery

TO THE EDITOR:

Flipping through the pages of *Just Out*, the first thing to catch my eye was the "Pet Project" letter [April 6]. Give me a break! There is all kinds of crap I wade through, am offended by or simply am uninterested in to get to the stories of interest.

Pets offer people compassion and unconditional love that most people are incapable of. The loss of a pet is often as profound or more so than the loss of the humans in our lives. So I'll ask Mr. Tucker to simply do as all the rest of us do and don't read what doesn't interest you.

JENNIFER MAGEE  
Salem

## Look closer

TO THE EDITOR:

Sure, it is easy to show that Hood River is a great place for the childless, the self-employed or the financially independent gay man or lesbian who lives within "the box" ["Take Me to the River," March 16]. And yes, I write this with the realization that many of your readers fall into one of those categories. Your article, however optimistic and well-written, failed to explore the impact that the rural conservative element has on those of us who are trying to bring up children or who are traditionally employed.

I challenge your newspaper to approach this and other rural communities from a more critical perspective in the future. The story about gay, lesbian, bi and trans life in Hood River is certainly more than a travel feature, and it is one worth a closer look!

NOT OUT JUST YET  
Hood River

## Take out the trash

TO THE EDITOR:

You dropped a column by a respected *real* writer—Lee Lynch—but can find the space to publish vulgar drivel by Michael Wayne Keck ["Bottoms Up!" March 16]. You may have behaved a lot like him when you were 22, but not everyone has such dreary skeletons in the closet.

Young and stupid are not synonymous; neither are diversity and vulgarity. Are you determined to make *Just Out* just one more piece of garbage in the gay press trash bin?

LORRAINE A. JEITNER  
Waldport



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