

just out

The IN publication for the OUT population

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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.

The **display advertising deadline** is the Monday 12 days before the next publication date.

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COMMENTARY

BY MARTY DAVIS

Tip of the iceberg?

Looking beyond Derry Jackson's dilemma, it's clear we've got trouble in River City

Much has been written recently in the mainstream media about the remarks and ensuing flap created by Portland Public Schools board member Derry Jackson. Many people called for his resignation, and emotions ran high.

Calm now seems to have descended, and Jackson might be enjoying a moment of respite. I doubt this lull will last beyond the next scheduled school board meeting.

I attended the "apology" press conference. I witnessed the entire botched affair, the refusal to answer questions, the shouts from detractors, the anger of supporters.

I know what was reported on television and in the press, and I know what was not reported. At this news conference I was witness to a surprising and disturbing moment that I think was potentially of greater significance than anything said or not said by Jackson.

What I consider to be a crucial component of the event was not seen or heard by the cameras. After Jackson spent a brief time stumbling over his apology and then a few more minutes avoiding questions, he basically bolted from the room and headed for his car.

This created a mini melee as the reporters and camera crews grabbed their equipment and literally chased the man through the parking lot. Many others remaining in the room, including myself, then followed those pursuing Jackson, who was doing his very best to act as though he was the only person present, seemingly oblivious to the fact that a dozen microphones were surrounding him.

By this time his supporters also were gathering. Walking across the parking lot was a man I recognized as Bruce Broussard, an African American activist involved with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Police Accountability Campaign. He was also one of 15 candidates who challenged Mayor Vera Katz in her most recent bid for re-election. Broussard is, by all accounts, a respected leader of the African American community and a person with a political following. A man with clout.

Broussard also appeared to be an angry man. His anger apparently stemmed from the treatment being accorded Jackson by the press.

And so as the cameras and microphones scurried after the embattled board member, Broussard stood in the parking lot and shouted to the reporters, in a loud and hostile voice, "It's the gays...it's the gays."

Apparently, in the eyes of Broussard, it was not Jackson who had created his own problems; rather, the blame was to be placed on the "gays."

His spewing of the word clearly made it, in his usage, an obscenity.

I then engaged in a brief "dialogue" of absolutely no value with Broussard. I identified myself as gay and advised him that his remarks had been noted and that I was with *Just Out*, the gay newspaper.

His attitude was derisive, and he indicated he wanted it clearly understood he wasn't gay. Admittedly, this was not something I felt confused about, but it seemed important to him to have it acknowledged.

Therefore, let it officially be known that Bruce Broussard is not gay. Neither is he, apparently, clear on accountability and the role Jackson is playing in his own political demise.

My concern now is that there is some serious bridge-building that needs to be done between gay men and lesbians and the African American community. And I am really unclear who might be willing to take

on the task of orchestrating this dialogue, mediation or politically correct phrase du jour. In politically incorrect terms, it seems to me some people are pissed off for the wrong reasons, and we need to sit our butts down and work out our differences. The debate concerning military recruiting in schools has created a need for dialogue that has not occurred.

Pat clichés and phrases are being spouted in print and on camera. This creates further problems, stress and misunderstandings.

It is very apparent that resentment and anger are building and growing and that we are perched on a potential time bomb of emotions, miseducation and ramifications from the simple lack of knowing each other.

I would like to suggest perhaps there is a role here for Basic Rights Oregon. Let's use that leadership to broaden our focus and perspective and look to other areas where we need to build infrastructure by linking our community to others. Let's divert some time, energy and even money, if necessary, away from the tedious Lon Mabon and his remaining minions and look toward other troubled areas.

Broussard is a man with followers. If he is a wise leader he will want to speak of truth and honesty to those who rely upon him for direction and guidance. Right now these people are getting the wrong message.

What are we going to do about this? What are Jackson and Broussard willing to do?

Jackson probably is finished with the school board. His political career is likely not salvageable. What's left now is for us to salvage the relationship between the gay and lesbian and the African American communities.

Any ideas, Mr. Broussard—or would you rather just toss blame about? [J]

*It seems to me
some people are pissed off
for the wrong reasons,
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REFLECTIONS

10 years ago in *just out*...

VOL. 8 NO. 10, AUGUST 1991



• Philip Anderson became the 25th member of the Portland Gay Men's Chorus to die of AIDS-related causes July 21.

• Portland police officials say they expect reports of bias crimes to "double or triple" during the next year due to the creation of the bureau's Bias/Hate Crime Unit.

• Anita Marie Lacy and Mary Ellen (Meg) Grace were united as life partners in a commitment ceremony June 30. Both women's parents participated in the wedding, which took place along the Sandy River in Oxbow Park.

• Scott Lively, communication director for the Oregon Citizens Alliance, spoke at Portland State University recently at the request of the Conservative Student Alliance. More than 150 lesbians and gays showed up to hear and respond to what Lively had to say. Wearing gags and holding up "He's lying" signs, the protesters made a powerful visual statement without being disruptive.

• Right to Privacy PAC's Garden Party was a huge success. "More people than ever before," approximately 350, attended, according to executive director Linda Welch. Lots of politicians were present, among them Gov. Barbara Roberts, Secretary of State Phil Keisling, Commissioners Mike Lindberg and Earl Blumenauer, Reps. Vera Katz and Gail Shibley, and representatives from the office of the other city commissioners. Most notably missing was Mayor Bud Clark.

• Demi-Monde Productions is an independent feature film company dedicated to women and lesbian filmmaking. Nicole Conn is in the process of producing *Claire of the Moon*, a low-budget 16-millimeter feature.

• Gay Atheists discuss Aug. 20 how their realization that Gods and supernatural forces do not exist affected their feelings about their sexual orientation.

• Labor Day weekend, Aug. 30 to Sept. 1, athletes from Washington, Idaho, California and British Columbia are joining Oregon athletes to hit, stroke, lift and run their way through the Portland Gay and Lesbian Sports Festival.

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