

just out

The IN publication for the OUT population

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COMMENTARY

BY MARTY DAVIS

Three days that never end...

Traumatic events make this a holiday season to remember

Dec. 7, the publication date of this issue, is my friend Esther's birthday. Because of the date's historical significance, hers is about the only birthday—other than my own, of course—I'm ever able to remember.

Now if I just could motivate myself to do something about the happy event, once remembered, things would be just dandy. Until that time: Happy birthday, Esther, hope you had a great day.

As a child growing up in rural northern California, Dec. 7 was a momentous day in the newspapers, textbooks, classrooms and television news. It was the significant day to remember in terms of political history. I was far too young to understand what really had happened in 1941, but there's no doubt the date forever was etched in my mind.

As a teen-ager, a second black day joined this eventual trinity of horrific dates: Nov. 22, 1963. It's what now, almost 40 years since that awful day?

Until recently, of course, this was the monumental memory of many lifetimes. Yet it wasn't until I sat down to start writing this column that I realized Nov. 22 came and went this year with little or no notice.

Nowhere did I read, "On this date in Dallas, Texas, a lone gunman..." No radio announcer intoned, "38 years ago today, tragedy struck the United States..." This year, memories of Nov. 22 were yet another casualty of Sept. 11.

Maybe because I'm older now, maybe because I'm more cynical, maybe because youthful memories have more lasting impact—whatever the reason—so far I don't seem to have been as personally moved by the events of Sept. 11 as I was by the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. That day—when one death brought a nation to its knees—still carries the weight of Sept. 11 with its tremendous thousands of deaths.

I'm not sure why this all is coming to mind now. The holiday season can do that—bring back memories and create nostalgia. I only can begin to wonder at the emotional upheaval being felt by the thousands of survivors and families of those lost and touched by Sept. 11.

The trauma is going to be with us for a long, long time. In this issue of Just Out we bring to you an overview of the longer-range impact of

economic, legal and emotional issues being dealt with by members of our own gay and lesbian community. I imagine these follow-ups will continue for a long, long time.

In some way or another all of us will feel the impact of terrorist attacks this holiday season. Undoubtedly there will be fewer trips home to families and friends; surely there will be more people with money woes, and many others will be troubled by what yet might lie ahead as the nation battles terrorist activities—and continues with war.

On a brighter note, let's consider the potential positive implications of the season. We all have borne witness to the powerful, awesome and sudden way life can be affected.

Would it not seem, then, this should be the holiday season to set aside old wounds and let go? If ever there was to be a time to be the best we can be, now is it.

*This year,
memories of Nov. 22
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Brazened by this uncharacteristic and highly naive concept, I now throw caution to the wind and admit to taking exception to the "Clog the Kettles" campaign being promoted by Basic Rights Oregon and other activist organizations across the country.

I respect the situation with the Salvation Army. I appreciate the problem. I understand the desire to create change. I admire the motivation behind the plan.

That said, I don't agree with it. Simply put, it's not the time. Creating adversaries is not going to garner domestic partner benefits for anyone. This plan does not fit the season, the mood of the nation and the spirit that all should be striving for at this time.

It's mean-spirited and does not reflect well upon who we are. The losers in this battle will be the cold, the hungry and the downtrodden.

Depositing fake dollars at a time when so many are hurting and needy is not going to win converts in the battle for civil rights. If you feel the need to make a political statement, donate a real dollar with a note attached indicating this money was given in the spirit of sharing by a caring individual who also happens to be gay, lesbian, bi or trans.

It's not always about us, and combat is not the only way to win wars. Let's show our good side this holiday season. Give as generously as you can of your money, your time and your positive gay energy. ☐

REFLECTIONS

15 years ago in just out...

VOL. 4 NO. 2, NOVEMBER 1986



• Banks in Chicago are learning gay men and lesbians are a force to be reckoned with. After a meeting with "Gay \$" backers, two banks with branches in neighborhoods containing large gay populations agreed to recirculate currency stamped with "Gay \$." The banks had sorted out the stamped currency because it was "mutilated."

• Drew Davis and Gordon Shadburne, fundamentalist politicians and homophobes, now have something else in common. Neither man was able to convince voters he deserves to be returned to public office. Both candidates came in fourth in their respective races.

• In case you haven't heard, Portland's first lesbian conference Nov. 8 and 9 was a phenomenal success. Nearly 600 lesbians gathered together for a weekend of speeches, workshops and proposal sessions.

• In an effort to further reduce risk of AIDS transmission through the blood supply, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration last month issued new recommendations expanding the list of those who should not include blood to include prostitutes and their heterosexual customers.

• The Lesbian Variety Hour, benefiting Lesbians Wishing Welcome and Women Musicians Network,

takes place Dec. 6 at Northwest Service Center. Talented lesbians will band together for an evening of fun and bring art, music, comedy, theater and satire to the community.

• Phoenix Rising presents Star Watch on Dec. 14 at Darcelle XV. The variety show will be studded with stars: the Fallen Angel Choir, the Michael Allen Harrison Trio, Lady Elaine Peacock, Joe Anderson, Joan Larson, Keira O'Hara, Tim Bowman and a special surprise guest.

• Barb Sussex and veteran Project LUCK volunteer Pat Lynch will outline some of the unique service needs of gay and lesbian street youth Dec. 16.

• The Snowball Dance is Dec. 21. Celebrate happy holidays, Winter Solstice, Hanukkah and Christmas with this benefit for the Lesbian Aging Project. See the Lesbian Virgin Manger Scene, sit on Hanukkah's lap and tell her your deepest desires.

• Help Metropolitan Community Church raise the \$50,000 needed to meet the final balloon payment and to restore the building. MCC, the only church building in the state of Oregon to be dedicated by an in-office president, serves as a center for human rights and religious freedom. We invite you to help MCC in our endeavor to make this historic landmark the first lesbian/gay-owned property in the community.

PUBLISHER AND MANAGING EDITOR • Marty Davis
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR • Oriana Green
NEWS EDITOR • Jim Radosta
CONTRIBUTORS • Marc Acito, Kronda Adair, Kristan Aspen, Lisa Bradshaw, Meryl Cohn, Susan Detroy, Heron, Sarah Leimert, Andy Mangels, Christopher McQuain,

Kelly Reilly, Tom Stevenson, Lynn Thomas, Rex Wockner
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR • Meg Grace
ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVES • Markie Acevedo, Larry Lewis
NATIONAL ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE • Rivendell Marketing Company Inc., 212-242-6863

PRODUCTION DIRECTOR • Kevin Moore
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT • Melissa Saylor
OFFICE MANAGER • Melissa Saylor
DISTRIBUTION • Ian Drake, Kelly Keigwin, Bonita Mattinson, Becky Sawyer, Merid Schwartz, Melissa Weigand, Carla Wright, John Yoakum