

just out

The IN publication for the OUT population

FOUNDED 1983 • JAY BROWN AND RENÉE LACHANCE

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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

Judgment day

Lon, protect me from your followers

I was privileged to have been able to claw and elbow my way into the Feb. 20 Multnomah County Courthouse hearing that ended with Lon Mabon being hauled off in handcuffs. This was a remarkable experience.

It was my first time seeing the real, live, actual Lon Mabon up close and personal. Although he isn't at all remarkable in his demeanor, one can't help but notice his pack of followers. To be polite, they appear to be a very, um, "colorful" bunch.

Is that description less polite than "well-funded sodomites?" That's how they fondly refer to us.

I left that courtroom feeling the Oregon Citizens Alliance was less to be feared as a political nemesis but far more to be concerned about as a religious cult. The people in that room appear more interested in the tenets of Scripture than they do in upholding the constitution and enacting legislation. But they are followers and Mabon is a leader preying on religious fervor, and these people are not to be taken lightly.

Bonnie Mabon, in her own right, is one tough cookie. Although she has perfected her "stand by your man" routine, I have no doubt this woman is capable of perpetuating some serious trouble all on her own.

She's tough, she's controlled, and she's pissed. She also apparently was not willing to join her husband in martyrdom and has avoided serving actual jail time. That's too bad now, isn't it?

In the housecleaning department, Roma Virginia Hanvey is taking issue with an item about the Lesbian Community Project that appeared in the Feb. 1 issue. She disagrees with my perception of the events as described in the newsbrief.

I am standing by the account but do acknowledge one error. During the latter part of January, I was the recipient of many, many e-mails and even one handwritten fax from Hanvey and fellow activist Judith Applegate—missives in which they clearly identified themselves as "the real LCP."

However, in the "unauthorized"—and I stand by my usage of that word—letter that they mailed to the general LCP membership, they did not use the words "the real LCP" in reference to themselves or their cause. They later claimed their usage of "the real LCP" in communicating with me was meant to be tongue-in-cheek.

The lesson here, ladies: Be careful where you stick your tongues-in-cheek. As will I.

As a rule, I don't specifically address statements made in letters to the editor. This is a forum that is provided to our readers as a means for them express their opinions, and it's not intended as a place for me to square off in argument.

Thus said, I'm now going to do so anyway. I take serious exception to the accusatory question put forth by Max Horn in a letter published in this issue.

And let me tell you all here and now: What follows is the much-edited version of my response to his query—a self-edited version, mind you. My initial thoughts poured down this page like a riverbank after a cloudburst in August. Here now comes the toned-down, semiprofessional version.

DEAR MR. HORN:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding *Just Out's* coverage of the Damon Woodcock story. As you no doubt know, this series of events has been going on for several years now.

And as time goes on, so does the complexity of the issues involved in Woodcock's "saga." *Willamette Week* did an excellent job of providing coverage of his travails.

But please note: Woodcock deliberately chose that paper to tell his story. By bypassing the gay press, would that then make him "gayphobic"?

Should you be so interested, please note also *Just Out* has a total editorial staff of two people. We do not have a news reporter.

What I have is one damn fine employee, Jim Radosta, who acts as News Editor/Reporter/Copy Editor. He does a fine job of providing coverage of area activities.

Will we always be all things to all people? Hell no. Would I love to have a reporter? You bet.


But guess what? Working part time for the gay and

lesbian press is not a big draw to freshly graduated journalism students with a degree in one hand and a bucket of student loans in the other.

Try as we might, *Just Out* now and then falls prey to time, budget and staffing restraints. Combine these elements with the fact that Woodcock has not talked once to us "on the record" up to and including the day the settlement was approved, and you have the true reason for the limited yet adequate coverage his story received.

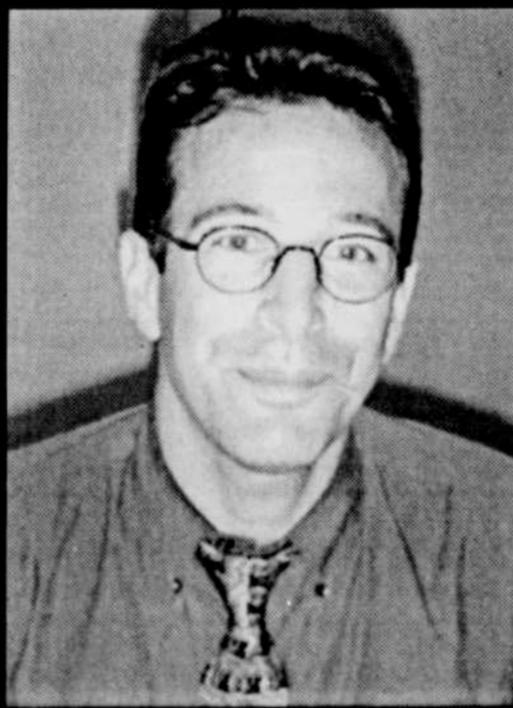
Granted, this scenario is not nearly as provocative, inflammatory, self-serving, inaccurate, hostile and incorrect as your accusations of transphobia and fear of the police bureau, but you know, that's just the way it is. Have a good day, and we hope you continue reading.

In the last bit of unfinished business, work is progressing on organizing gay, lesbian, bi and trans day at the Oregon Food Bank. Thanks to all of you who expressed interest. I should have some real details by the next issue.

It's also time to be thinking about the second annual *Just Out* Amateur Photography Contest, and during the next few months you'll be hearing a lot from me about the Creating Change conference coming to town in November. There's a lot going on around here. Stay tuned. 

Bonnie Mabon, in her own right, is one tough cookie. Although she has perfected her "stand by your man" routine, I have no doubt this woman is capable of perpetuating some serious trouble all on her own.

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Daniel Pearl
1963—2002

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