

# just out

The IN publication for the OUT population

FOUNDED 1983 • JAY BROWN AND RENÉE LACHANCE  
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**The submission of written and graphic materials is welcomed.** Written material should be typed and double-spaced. Just Out reserves the right to edit for grammar, punctuation, style, liability concerns and length. We will reject or edit articles or advertisements that are offensive, demeaning or may result in legal action.

**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.

**Classified ads** must be received at the Just Out office by 4 p.m. on the Thursday eight days before the next publication date, along with payment. Ads may be placed by telephone or via the Internet with Visa or MasterCard payment.

**Ad policy:** Just Out reserves the right to reject or edit any advertisement. Compensation for errors in, or cancellation of, advertising will be made with credit toward future advertising. Advertising rates are available upon request.

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**Subscriptions** are \$22.50 for 12 issues. First Class (in an envelope) is \$40 for 12 issues.

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## COMMENTARY

BY MARTY DAVIS

# A tale of unrequited love

Eugene, are you there?

The first signs of spring have arrived in the Pacific Northwest. Daffodils are in full bloom, hail and thunderstorms abound, and the voice personal ad lines busily are humming to the tunes of "Let's Get Together"—or whatever that thing is people have on their mind in the spring. Softball jocks happily take to muddy fields and rained-out practices, and lesbians and dogs abound at Kelley Point Park.

As the seasonally unpredictable storm fronts approach, business owners across our region also are assessing and taking stock of the damage caused by the effect of harsh activities of the similarly punitive economic fronts. Like evaluating damage after a windstorm, many small-business owners are pondering where they are, where they would rather be and what it will take to stay afloat.

Just Out is no exception to those businesses that struggle to provide jobs for employees, pay bills in a timely fashion and, in our specific case, offer a valuable asset for the community. Although we have managed to hold out fairly well during the past six months of turbulent times in the advertising industry, daily decisions still must be made as to how to achieve and maintain viability as a business. How do we best serve our readers and our advertisers while observing at least the most minimal rules of common sense in good business practices?

Which brings me right smack dab to the question of Eugene, that fair city 100 or so miles south of Portland. Eugene, Eugene, Eugene, the enigmatic city—Eugene, are you there?

In a nutshell, here is my dilemma. Just Out spends in excess of \$15,000 a year to distribute a free paper to Eugene. In business parlance, my return on investment in this venture is zero. Zero as in nada, none, zilch.

Just Out has no advertising base in Eugene. We receive no support from businesses, presumably some of which are gay-owned or gay-friendly. After the Register-Guard and Eugene Weekly, my guess is that Just Out is the third most distributed paper in the Eugene area—but to what avail?

We have worked diligently to increase distribution and make our publication available. We are aware Eugene has no other gay paper. We are attempting to fill this void.

But are you reading Just Out in Eugene? We receive no letters to the editor. We can't get anyone there to submit a voice personal ad. Are there no single people in Eugene?

Doesn't anyone sell houses, rent rooms, look for dates, organize events, plan meetings or hire employees? Is there a gay, lesbian, bi and trans community in Eugene?

In January, Eugene Weekly columnist Jerry Harris compared Eugene to San Francisco: "Even the gays and lesbians are different from our community. In Eugene they seem to be afraid of parading

it—but not in San Francisco. I sat in a gay bar in Castro Valley and they were the most open people I met in the Gay City. Here? They seem like Mormons."

Eugene, are you cloistered like Mormons, or even more puzzling, how do you justify calling yourself "Provincetown of the West" (as noted on a recent e-mail notice from Soromundi, the Lesbian Chorus of Eugene)? Where's your energy, your vibrancy, your organization, your heart, your soul—and why are you keeping it hidden from Just Out?

Are we dismissed as being "Portland's paper"? Are we being ignored without even effort on your part to work together?

In the past few months Just Out has made a concerted effort to increase our coverage of Willamette Valley events, leaders, groups and organizations. We haven't received one iota of acknowledgment that this has been appreciated or even noticed by Eugeniensians.

So, why am I spending my money to haul a free paper clear down to the other end of the damn valley? For the money I spend on printing and delivery I could hire a part-time reporter and increase my depth of coverage in Portland. For that same amount of money I could sponsor more events and activities and increase efforts to be a positive force in the community. For that money I could invest in a sustained and viable future for Just Out.

Portlanders, this affects you, too. What do you think about this dilemma of mine? It's Portland

advertisers who are subsidizing the costs of distributing Just Out in Eugene.

Do you see value in reading about people and events outside our immediate area? Is Just Out on the right track in trying to be "all things to all people" statewide, or would Portland advertisers and readers be better served by maintaining focus on the Rose City? This is our "Just Asking" question for this issue, and I really would like to hear what you might have to say on this topic.

Financial implications aside, I know the from-my-heart-and-not-the-balance-sheet answer to my own question. The answer lies within those like the young student who spent an afternoon recently job shadowing with us. A high school senior whose parents rejected her upon learning she was gay. A young woman who now lives away from home and family because she had the courage to be honest.

This teen-ager and others like her must always know they can find help, friends and support in the pages of Just Out—and that's why we continue to take the paper to Eugene. It's for all those who are hurting and searching and questioning. And although it might sometimes seem many others don't care about or need us, we want to be there for those who do. ☐

PLEASE NOTE: March has five Fridays, so the next issue of Just Out won't hit the streets until April 5—an interval of three weeks rather than two.

*Where's your energy, your vibrancy, your organization, your heart, your soul—and why are you keeping it hidden from Just Out?*

## REFLECTIONS

5 years ago in just out... VOL. 14 NO. 10, MARCH 21, 1997



• An effort is under way to breathe life back into the foundering Lesbian Community Project, a Portland-based organization saddled with a \$25,000 debt. Come April 1, longtime activist and author Suzanne Pharr will become a staff member.

• Longtime activist Jean Harris has been named the new executive director of Basic Rights Oregon, the successor organization to the No on 13 Campaign. Citing a need for more "balance" in her life, former head Julie Davis officially stepped down from the post Dec. 31 and since has moved to San Francisco.

• Oregon Sen. Marylin Shannon, R-Salem, has introduced a second measure designed to prohibit equal marriage rights for same-sex couples. The legislation, Senate Joint Resolution 17, is a proposed state constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union between a man and woman. It also says same-sex marriages performed elsewhere will not be recognized in Oregon.

• Donations for Cabbage Lane Land Trust needed to make the final land payment to secure Cabbage Lane, 80 acres of forested wilderness near Wolf Creek in southern Oregon, the Land Trust needs 100 women to donate at least \$13 each. The end is in sight!

• The Portland Gay Men's Chorus performs *Prayers for Bobby* at its spring concert March 21 featuring soloist Margie Boule.

• Portland Bisexual Alliance meets March 28 to plan Bi 2000, a project to bring together 2,000 bisexuals in the year 2000.

• First Tuesday Coffeehouse on April 1 features Portland favorites Gwen Thomas and Terri Grayum plus Karen Harding.

• A series of three Portland gatherings titled "Community Convocations" kicked off March 4 with a presentation by Yale law professor Harlon Dalton, author of *Radical Healing: Confronting the Fear Between Blacks and Whites*.

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