

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.

Distribution policy: Just Out is available free of charge, one copy per person. Just Out is delivered only to authorized distributors. No person may, without prior written permission from Just Out, take more than one copy. Any person who takes more than one copy may be held liable for theft, including but not limited to civil damages and/or criminal prosecution.

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

Contact Just Out at P.O. Box 14400, Portland, OR 97293-0400; 503-236-1252, advertising 503-236-1253, fax 503-236-1257; e-mail justout@justout.com. Visit our Internet site at www.justout.com.

COMMENTARY

Publishing 101

Just Out needs advertisers, and advertisers need us

Assumptions. People make them all the time. As a result, we operate far too frequently on unnecessarily high levels of miscommunication, misconceptions and misunderstandings. And what joy these can bring to our lives.

A letter to the editor, published in this issue, smacked me in the face with the knowledge that perhaps I've been assuming that people understand more about *Just Out* and its structure and function than they actually do. With *Just Out* now in the 20th year of publication, we do realize that our readership has changed. While many of you have been with us from the start—and we surely do cherish you—there are also many more readers who are newer, younger and less familiar with the workings of the paper. So let me fill you in with some background information—this done with the intent to foster better understanding and communication between us and our audience.

Question: How does *Just Out* generate revenues?

Answer: *Just Out* is funded totally and solely by revenues generated from advertising sales. *Just Out* is not a nonprofit organization. There are no grants, no loans, no endowments, no legacies, no gifts. The ongoing existence of this paper depends entirely on our ability to sell sufficient ads to cover our expenses. Ad sales mark the success or failure of alternative publications. Across the country, gay and lesbian papers are failing at a disheartening rate. The ability of *Just Out* to perpetuate and succeed is a tremendous testament to the loyalty of our readers, the value we bring to advertisers, the quality of our content and, certainly not least, the talents and abilities of my sales staff. These are damn tough times for newspapers, and ad sales and the ability of *Just Out* to grow and prosper should be celebrated as a community victory.

Q: Are there too many ads in *Just Out*?

A: There can never be too many ads. We adhere to a consistent content ratio of ads to copy. By industry standards, we actually produce a relatively low percentage of ads. The amount of ads sold determines the size of the paper. That's why we jump all over the place in size. One issue we're 48 pages, then maybe 52 or 56—this issue we're up to 64 pages. Yes, it's because there are more ads. More ads means a bigger paper. It's always the same. The ratio is constant. And if you're counting ads, don't forget to count all the OutReach pages, which contain no ads and generate no revenue. Your support of advertisers pays for these pages.

Q: What about charging for the paper—and decreasing dependence upon ads?

A: Unfortunately, that's not a practical solution. The cost to produce, including all the administrative hassle and headaches, would push the price to an impractical level. For alternative papers to succeed, they must have free distribution. That's a historic and proven fact.

Q: What are the expenses at *Just Out*?

A: Staff salaries are the single highest expense to the paper. Again, *Just Out* is not a nonprofit entity. We are not staffed by volunteers. My staff consists of eight of the most dedicated, skilled and qualified people who a publish-

er could ever hope to find. These folks work tirelessly to ensure the consistent and overwhelming high quality of this paper, and for this they deserve fair, decent and competitive salaries. Each of them could easily make more money elsewhere. They deserve the very best that I can offer. I am proud to be able to provide my full-time staff with benefits such as paid health insurance and an employer-match retirement fund. Without revenue generated by ad sales there would be no staff. Without this staff there would be no *Just Out*.

After staff salaries, the next highest expense is the cost of printing the paper. Other fixed costs are rent, telephones, insurance, writers, distribution, taxes, bookkeepers, accountants, lawyers, community sponsorships, computers and upkeep on the corporate condos in Aspen and the Bahamas (in my dreams).

Q: Where could expenses be cut?

A: To cut expenses significantly I'd have to cut into the very heart and soul of what this paper is about. But it's true, expenses could be cut. Savings could be immediately realized by eliminating distribution to areas outside Portland. Consider, if you will, how the recent dramatic increase in gas prices is affecting my expenses. These expenses have to be offset by increased ad sales. I mail or ship this paper to libraries, schools, colleges, bookstores, coffee shops, groups and organizations across the state. This is all unnecessary expense? No, this expense is needed for those who rely on *Just Out* for a connection to community, for a link to their world, for a validation of their worth and right to be—this expense guarantees that this connection can be found. What would be the real price of eliminating this cost? Who would actually pay?

Just Out provides thousands of dollars annually in donated ads and sponsorships of community events. I could easily cut expenses by denying all these requests. Is this what you'd have of your community paper?

To lower costs *Just Out* could also eliminate all the free calendar listings and directories of groups and organizations that fill page after page of each issue. These listings generate no income and are expensive and time-consuming to maintain.

To cut expenses I could eliminate the voice personal ads. They do not generate sufficient revenue to warrant their continuation—on the other hand, they are read and enjoyed by many. What should be my priority?

Q: What role do *Just Out* readers play in the continued success of the paper?

A: Every business in this city, every advertiser and every potential advertiser have many options as to where they spend their limited advertising dollars. When an advertiser selects *Just Out*, they're not making a statement of support for the community. No, they're making an investment in their business based on the belief that they'll receive value from their dollars. They expect results. If they don't get them from our readers, they'll take their dollars elsewhere. For *Just Out* to continue, our readers need to support these advertisers and show them that their money was well spent.

Just Out provides quality content to our readers. In return, we depend upon readers to support advertisers. Advertisers pay the staff. The staff writes the paper—it's a circular thing—and we need all of you to be part of the ongoing circle of community and success. ☐

REFLECTIONS

10 years ago in *just out* .. Vol. 10 No. 10, APRIL 1, 1993



• More than 200 protesters, including gay New York City Councilor Thomas Duane, were arrested on St. Patrick's Day for violating a court order barring the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization from the traditional parade on Fifth Avenue.

• The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People board voted unanimously Feb. 20 to endorse the 1993 National March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Transgendered Equal Rights and Liberation.

• Portland Police Chief Tom Potter announced his resignation March 10 at a joint press conference with newly elected Mayor Vera Katz. The shock waves ripped through the Portland community almost as fast as the rumors.

• State Rep. Gail Shibley, D-Portland, recently introduced a bill banning employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation to the Oregon House of Representatives. House Bill 3465 is written to protect gays, lesbians and bisexuals while

keeping conservative panic to a minimum. It provides exemptions for religious organizations and businesses with fewer than 25 employees.

• Help is on the way for lesbians suffering "Breitenbush deprivation." The Women in the Woods event, which hasn't happened since 1991, has been reborn with a new name—Lesbians on the Loose. The next gathering is scheduled for August 1994 at Breitenbush Hot Springs.

• Sparkplugs, a coalition of AIDS activists and service providers, organized Oregon's first AIDS lobby day March 1 at the state Capitol. About 25 people met with 18 legislators.

• Mary Ann Humphrey, author of *My Country, My Right to Serve*, will be the keynote speaker at Right to Privacy's William Sloat Memorial Dinner benefit April 10.

• First Tuesday Coffeehouse for women April 6 features Shug Mauldin, Kristie Chilicote and J.P.

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