

just out

The IN publication for the OUT population

FOUNDED 1983 • JAY BROWN AND RENÉE LA CHANCE

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FEATURE

THE LEARNING CURVE: As students return to classrooms, will sexual minority issues make the grade—or be expelled?

p 24

NEWS

NORTHWEST • Nonprofit crosses the barrier between deaf and hearing

pp 7-16

NATIONAL • Federal Marriage Amendment prospects dim

pp 19-21

WORLD • Hamburg, Germany, mayor comes out

pp 22-23

ARTS AND CULTURE

MUSIC • The Hidden Cameras click

p 37

BOOKS • New editions of queer sex classics

p 39

CULTURE • Garden Party at the Oregon Women's Land Trust

pp 40-41

FILM • Fassbinder flicks on DVD; new chilling AIDS documentary

p 43

THEATER • Master Puppeteer: the best job on the planet

p 49

WHAT'S POPPIN'? • Real people inspire great films this month

p 45

DIVERSIONS • Soundvision closes with provocative new exhibit; 30th and final Womansource; homos go yo-yo in drag extravaganza

p 47

COLUMNS

MS. BEHAVIOR • All the straight guys at work think I want to fuck them

p 35

EPIQUEEREAN • Crazy for crêpes

p 38

OUT WITH IT! • Goodbye Skervy, hello Breakdown

p 47

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARC • Don't sing me your wedding bell blues

p 50

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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

Passing the baton

Mark Kroeker ends his embattled reign as Portland's police chief

On Aug. 29 Mark Kroeker's troubled term as Portland's chief of police came to an abrupt conclusion. My first thought was that there'd probably be a lot of happy gay activists in Portland. My second thought was that there really aren't that many gay activists in Portland anymore. Nonetheless, those so inclined to participate, lead or even provide a watchful eye during the past three years were probably pleased by the news of his resignation.

There's not much point in further debating the merits, or perceived lack thereof, of the beleaguered expatriate from Los Angeles. Now is the time to turn our attention and our focus to the new leader, Derrick Foxworth. To start evenly and cleanly, I have extended an invitation to him to address and be queried by the Just Out editorial staff. I have indicated that I'd like this meeting to be held in an open, informal, public setting and that all members of the Portland gay community would be invited to attend. I would hope, and suspect, that there are no "tapes in the closet" for this chief, and I feel confident that our conversation will show that our community has a strong ally in the man sworn to protect and defend us all.

The new chief is no stranger to our community and our quirks and our concerns. For the past several months he has been the police bureau's liaison to the Sexual Minorities Roundtable. One of the topics that I will pose to the chief questions the viability and purpose of this group.

As it sits currently—admittedly, I haven't been to any meetings for several months—the roundtable is without sound purpose or meaning. Actually, I stopped going to the meetings because it had become an embarrassment at worse and a waste of good intention and energy at best. If the chief decides to keep the roundtable functioning, I would ask him, and us, to make the group effective—or to dismantle it. When something is broken, you should try to fix it. The Sexual Minorities Roundtable is broken and needs fixing.

I suspect the new chief will have a more than busy schedule for many weeks and months to come. Nonetheless, we are an important and significant part of the greater community and as such merit attention. My goal will be to push for a two-hour meeting sometime prior to the end of the year. The time, date and location will be announced as soon as available.

Earl Blumenauer's decision not to run for mayor of Portland muddled further the already murky waters for more than one officeholder wannabe. Just Out is keeping an inquisitive eye on former mayoral chief of staff Sam Adams.

Our informal office poll suggests he should run for mayor. Is Portland ready for an openly gay mayor? Common sense dictates you don't support a candidate simply because he's gay; he also has to be strong, viable and eminently qualified for the office. What do you think? Is Sam Adams ready to be mayor?

Just Out staff had a week off in August, and we scattered to the winds. I had a thirst for adventure, a quest for geographic and economic diversity and a yen for sightseeing. I wanted to observe different cultures and philosophies and walk upon a different land. The globe offered vast choices.

I went to Utah.

And found all of the above.

When you hear 2003 referred to as the "Year of the Gay," guess what, that's a reference to people living in states bordering oceans. It is not applicable to Utah and Wyoming and Idaho and other places that time forgot. Southwest Utah is a geological miracle that contains the most beautiful natural wonders that one could ever hope to see. It will fill you with awe and wonder.

The local newspapers, however, will fill you with trepidation and concern. Sitting among all this splendor, I read an Associated Press report in which Mormon leader and Elder M. Russell Ballard said, "Same-sex marriage threatens God's plan of happiness for his children here and in eternity." Got that? Not just the here and now—nope, for eternity. Talk about empowerment. The article continues by noting that the Mormon Church has spent millions of dollars campaigning against gay marriage and reiterating the single most important reason for marriage: to produce children.

An additional news story in Utah at the time concerned parents who had kidnapped their own son to prevent the state from intervening with cancer treatments designed to save the child's life. The parents' concern was that the treatments would render their son sterile. His ability to produce children was more valuable than his very life.

As mentioned above, I went in search of a foreign land. I found it all in Utah.

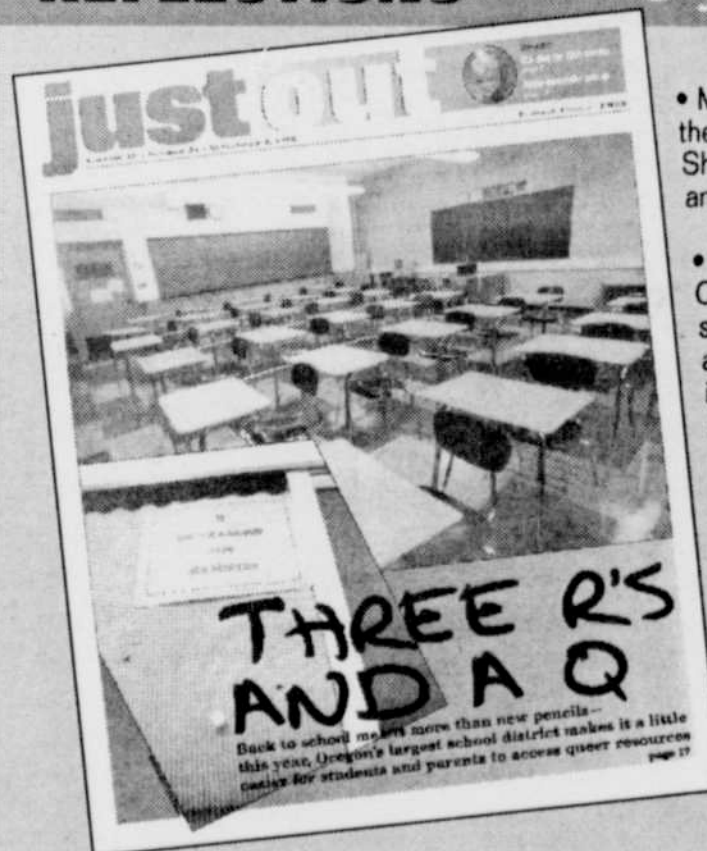
November of this year will mark the 20th anniversary of Just Out. A grand celebration is being planned, and we'd like community participation.

If you have a special story about Just Out, please send me an e-mail or give me a call. For our special anniversary issue we'd like to share stories of how people's lives have been affected, changed or touched by the paper. For 20 years we've worked to be a meaningful part of the community. Tell us what we've done for you. **JO**

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REFLECTIONS

5 years ago in just out... VOL. 15 No. 21, SEPT. 4, 1998



• Multnomah Playschool's logo contains the phrase, "Welcoming Families of All Shapes and Colors," and that includes gay and lesbian families.

• Just six weeks after the Oregon Citizens Alliance failed to gather sufficient signatures to place either an anti-gay rights or restrictive abortion initiative on this November's general election ballot, the organization filed an anti-gay initiative Aug. 20 poised for the 2000 general election.

• Gov. John Kitzhaber has proclaimed October as Lesbian and Gay History Month. This proclamation acknowledges the contributions gay, lesbian, bi and trans people have made to society throughout Oregon history.

• Got excess stuff? Need more stuff? Come to Phoenix Rising Foundation's garage sale Sept. 5. Quality donations welcome.

• The Central City Concern celebrates the grand opening of the Rose Wood Apartments, long-term housing for low-income and homeless people living with HIV/AIDS, Sept. 11.

• Her reign as La Femme Magnifique International is coming to an end, but the name Misha Rockafeller will remain a household word.

• Lesbian comic Shann Carr remembers working the crowd years ago at Darcelle XV during a Mr. and Miss Gay Portland show. At 34, she's making a sort of homecoming with a show Sept. 13 at Darcelle XV.

• Howie Bagdadonutz presents, for two days only, *June Bride*, starring Sara Felder as one of the two brides-to-be. The play, set in the context of a traditional Jewish lesbian wedding, has received stellar reviews from across the country.

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