

by Marty Davis

# Let's Roll

*Just Out's* Gay Skate Night off to a successful start

**T**HANK YOU! This large and sincere "thank you" is for the 150 skaters who showed up for *Just Out's* first Gay Skate Night on Jan. 16. With the evening falling on the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, accompanied by amazingly heavy rains and at a location that's virtually impossible to find, I was not entirely confident that my sponsorship would be a success. But you came and, in doing so, made the evening undoubtedly the best-attended Gay Skate in the history of the event.

The crowd was a good mix of ages and genders. We had Logan, the skating toddler, and we had silver-haired gentlemen skating among energetic 20-somethings. We had beginners sticking close to the wall, and we had those who took to the floor with ease and skill. The music, a mixture of songs from the present to the now-too-far-away '60s, seemed to please all. One tradition of all skating nights at Oaks Park, however, will fall way to the changing culture and needs of our community of the 21st century. Those old favorites, "all-girls skate" and "all-boys skate," are just not quite as encompassing as they used to be. We will now happily find new ways to make sure that everyone feels included at Gay Skate.

Future skate nights will showcase community groups and organizations. March 20 will be softball night with the Rose City Softball Association present and ready to recruit you for summer games. Gay Skate is also a great place for singles to meet and mingle. It's nonsmoking, it's good exercise, and it has a snack bar and game arcade together with a history and sense of grandeur that's darn hard to beat. Please join us Feb. 20 for our next night out.

**E**qually successful was the launch and first weeks of activity at *JustOutPersonals.com*, *Just Out's* new online profile-based dating service. With hundreds of profiles now in place, this site is buzzing with activity. Remember, it's free to use. No cost to post your profile; no cost to browse profiles. Why would I spend thousands of dollars to build such a site and then charge no fees to users? Hmm, that's a damn good question. Here's your answer.

I built the site because I felt that it was very much needed. The era of voice personal ads was past. However, the need for people to meet each other still exists. Online services are the current standard and the expectation. I built the site as a gift to our readers and as a strengthening of the bonds that link together *Just Out*, our readers and our advertisers. The site will, eventually, generate income and pay for itself via banner ad sales. In lieu of monthly fees, you will be asked, as always, to support the advertisers who help maintain the site. Fair enough?

The Internet knows no geographical boundaries, and neither does *JustOutPersonals.com*. I encourage, I urge, posts from all over Oregon and


Washington. Eugene, Corvallis, Salem, Newport, Longview, Centralia, Seattle—this site is for you. Here's an opportunity to meet and develop friendships with like-minded folks in Idaho and eastern Oregon and all points north, south, east and west. Expand your boundaries.

**S**hame on *American Idol*, whose perpetually acerbic judge, Simon Cowell, hit an all-time low on the Jan. 18 show with his rude and insensitive attitude toward a self-identified young man whose gender presentation did not fit Cowell's rigid expectation of masculine identity. Announced by spineless host Ryan Seacrest as "Denver's strangest audition," Zachary, 18, accompanied by his mother and sister, showed poise and composure as Cowell made a complete ass of himself expressing dismay and consternation about Zachary's physical gender presentation. In these times of positive movement and message with successful and powerful big-screen movies such as *Transamerica* and the engaging and informative Showtime series *TransGeneration*, Fox showed deplorable taste by not editing out this extremely insensitive portion of the show.

While I seldom share the way-too-close-to-censorship views of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, I would, in this case, support any efforts that it made to demand an apology and a statement from Fox assuring viewers that Cowell's moronic and puerile behavior is not reflective of the network's overall values.

I would like to briefly respond to a well-written, well-thought-out letter that I received from a male reader who respectfully took issue with a recent profile that *Just Out* wrote about Fat Cobra Video. The gentleman writes, "I am respectfully asking you to consider the possibility that the cycle of depression and self-destructiveness that manifests itself through rampant substance abuse among gay men goes hand in hand with the pervasive influence of pornography in our subculture." The writer goes on to suggest that by profiling the business and the owner, *Just Out* is actively promoting and encouraging pornography among its male readership.

Pages, volumes, could be written on this topic—with no one coming to agreement. It's not my intent or desire to condone nor to condemn the use of pornography. This is, however, my column and my place to express my opinions (but not those of *Just Out* staff). My strongly felt opinion on this topic is that I'll support virtually any place that provides an outlet for men to have sex with men *outside of public parks and spaces*. If the existence of Fat Cobra Video, and similar establishments, keeps even one (or two, I suppose) man from creating an uncomfortable and unsafe environment at Kelly Point Park, then kudos to Pat Lanagan.

My e-mail address is [marty@justout.com](mailto:marty@justout.com). 



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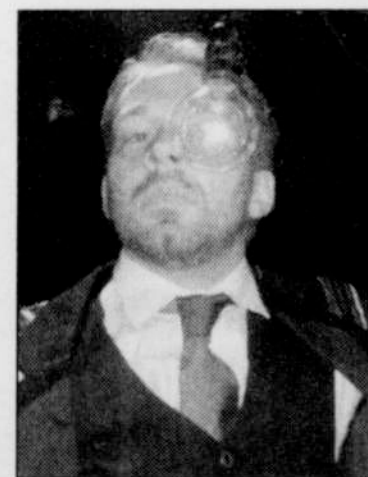
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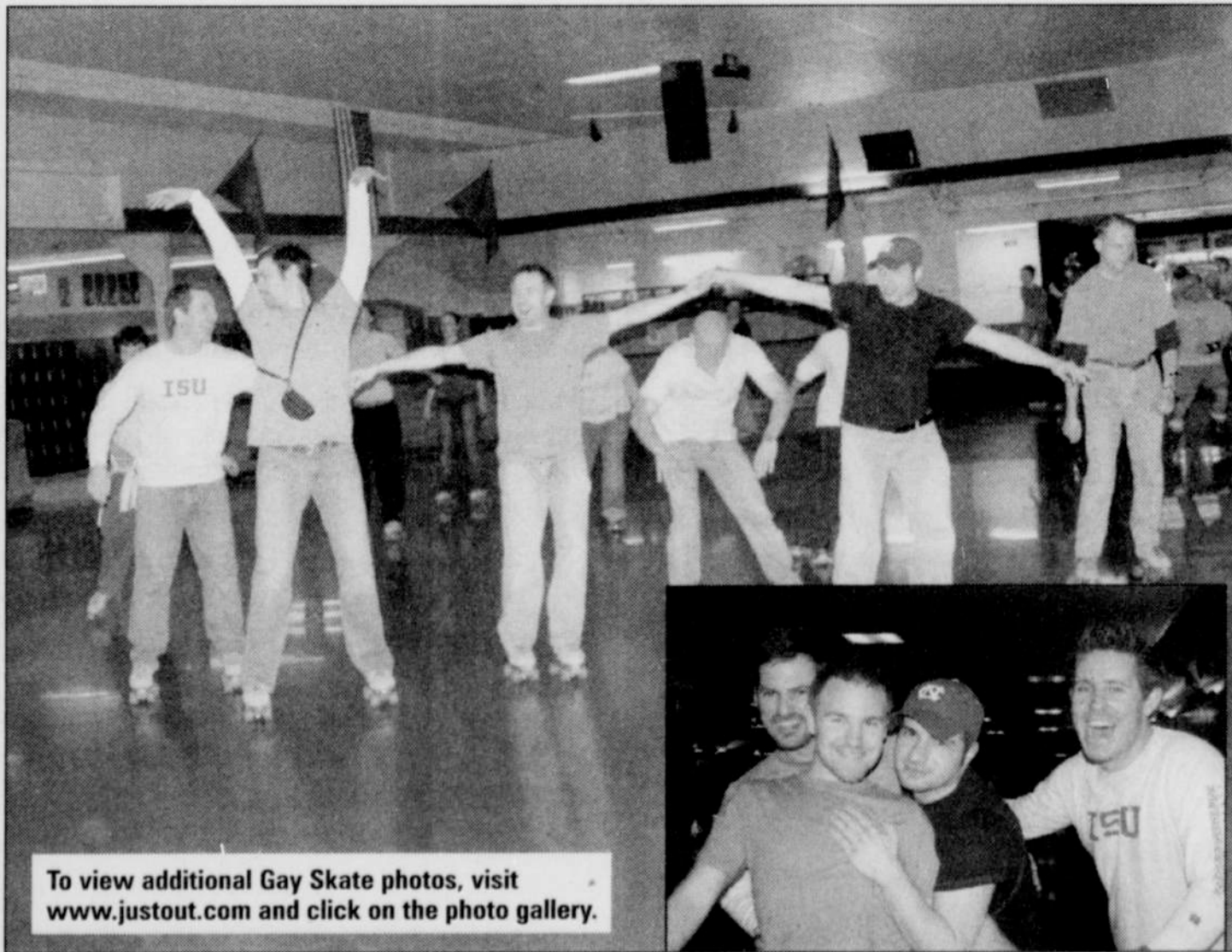
Now Hear This



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MARTY DAVIS



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