

by Marty Davis

Bruises Heal

Losing elections is an occupational hazard for politicians

A few weeks ago I was meandering about the beach, searching for agates, when suddenly I slipped on the rocks and went down with a mighty crash. I landed hard and painfully. My first thought was that surely I was dead. Then came the realization that it hurt so much that obviously I was still alive. I sadly admit that this acknowledgment came as somewhat of a disappointment, as I was now left to deal with extraditing myself from this awkward quandary. As it turned out, my injuries were ultimately more dramatic than life-threatening. For several days I looked, and felt, like I'd gone one on one with a MAX train. I was covered in bruises the likes of which I'd never seen before. Fortunately the bruises, in all their glory, faded nearly as quickly as they appeared. No scars, no pain. No permanent damage. Soon all that remained was the mental note to myself to be more careful on the rocks next time. That, too, will fade.

On May 16, the night of the primary election, Multnomah County Chair Diane Linn was toppled with a mighty crash. The fall that she took is going to leave her bruised and pained for some time. And then she, too, will be fine. Linn is still young and resilient and showed grace and professionalism as she surveyed the damage from the election results. Losing elections, even losing them badly, is an occupational hazard for politicians and bureaucrats. You pick yourself up, learn what you need to learn and get on with it. Bruises do heal, even the really nasty, ugly ones.

There was much bruising and battering going on during the campaign for this seat. Much was made of the bickering, battling and strife that exists between Linn and the other women on the board of commissioners. Because of Linn's role as chair, the onus for this dysfunction, rightfully or not, seemed to fall on her shoulders. No doubt this played a role in her defeat. Before the other commissioners make plans to fly a "mission accomplished" banner from the rooftop of the Multnomah Building, I propose that they consider that voters will recall all the players in this nastiness and that other careers could be affected by the bad behaviors we've seen in the past months. Diane Linn was not the only causality of this war. Lost also among the fighting was a good amount of trust and respect. Some bruises might take longer to heal than others.

Election night found me trekking up Northeast 33rd Avenue to congratulate Ted Wheeler on his victory. Wheeler is an affable fellow and was gracious and friendly as I offered congratulations on his accomplishment. I have no doubt as to his commitment to stand with us going forward. I wish him well with his new job and look forward to working with him in the future.

There's likely no working together, however, with Oregon House Speaker

Karen Minnis. This will be a general election race that will require some creativity and innovation to ensure a loss for the speaker. Students of Oregon history might recall the bizarre events of the 1980s when the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and his followers moved to central Oregon and took over an entire community in an effort to overtake and control local government. Fortunately the fact that they were all lunatics ultimately hindered their success and led to the demise of their movement.

I am not, of course, suggesting that supporters of change emulate the Rajneeshi movement. Soaring fuel costs make a fleet of Rolls-Royces prohibitive, poisoning salad bars is neither politically correct nor nice, and red is not a good color for many overweight lesbians. However, we are a mobile society and always looking for the next up-and-coming neighborhood. I'm sure that Wood Village offers delightful neighborhoods, good schools, traffic-free shopping and access to mountain and gorge recreational activities. Who wouldn't want to live there? People relocate for career opportunities all the time. How about we relocate for Minnis' career?

I often hear from *Just Out* readers how important it is to them that they see a reflection of themselves in the pages of this paper. This desire for validation and recognition carries over to needing a place at the table in the greater community. We all know and understand the need to be able to see ourselves as an integral part of the whole. This factor makes it even more imperative that we seize the opportunity to send Tina Kotek to represent her district in Salem. It has been far too long since we've had the opportunity for visible representation of ourselves in the state Capitol. Now we have the opportunity.

This does not mean we're going to label her the "gay" candidate. She is a very qualified individual who happens to be lesbian-identified. For the November general election, this is the race that we must target to win. Over the summer, details will be worked out and brought forth with a call to help. If you live in the district, you vote; if you're outside it, you volunteer and write checks. Everyone works to ensure this victory.

As this column is being written, the battle is heating up in Washington, D.C., over the Federal Marriage Amendment. Lines are being drawn, sides are being taken. Loyalties are being set aside. "This shameful election-year ploy puts the Senate one step closer to a vote that threatens to write discrimination into the U.S. Constitution," said Human Rights Campaign president Joe Solmonese. Check with us at www.justout.com for updates as they occur. Is it time for us to take to the streets? **jo**

reflections

15 Years Ago in *Just Out*... volume 8 number 7, may 1991

- The Oregon Legislature has been confronted with the issue of gay and lesbian rights since 1973. Each session a bill has been put before the governing body; many times it never got so much as a hearing. This session a major advocate for Oregon's gay and lesbian civil rights bill, Stevie Remington, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon, claims there is enough Senate backing to pass the anti-discrimination measure in that chamber.

- Hart's Movie Arcade at 330 S.W. Third Ave. was bombed soon after opening in April. Owners Lynn Gillis and Dillard Hart said after the bombing, "Our arcade is designed to please the gay community, [and] we think this is the reason we were assaulted." They went on to say that they are taking steps to prevent any future problems and to keep Hart's open to the gay community.

- Radical Activist Truth Squad (RATS) joined forces April 10 with Queer Nation, the Lesbian Community Project and the Portland State University Women's Union to protest Moonie Richard Cohen in his rampage against gays and lesbians. Although he claims to be on an apolitical mission to



recruit gays into heterosexuality, he is strongly suspected to be working with the Oregon Citizens Alliance.

- Soromundi, Lesbian Chorus of Eugene, presents a Mother's Day concert May 12 at the Hult Center in Eugene. This is Soromundi's first full-length performance. A 40-voice choir, its repertoire includes western, spiritual, rock 'n' roll, international and women's music.

- The Rose City Soberfaire '91 is hosted by recovering members of Portland's gay and lesbian community through May 26.

- Triangle Productions is dedicating the production of *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom* to the memory of Jerry Leith, who was a founding member of the troupe and was a major director and actor with the Portland theater scene for more than 20 years.

- When Sally Sheklow performs her one-woman show, *The Sound of Lesbians*, she is celebrating her own liberations, and she wants her audience to feel liberated, too. That's why it's important to her that people know the humor in the show is sexual before they buy their tickets.

- Portland Lesbian Hotel offers safe, low-cost lodging for women.

FEATURE

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Portland celebrates Pride Month with a milestone art exhibit



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NEWS

8-19 NORTHWEST

Newspaper policy sparks rally; rock camp sued; *Newsweek* observes "AIDS at 25"; celebrate Pride at Q Center; grants made to queer advocacy groups; protesters oppose military recruitment abuses; new life for LifeLine; convention will outline youth rights; mayor speaks to queer business community; roundup benefits Gertrude Press; primary election results; touched by cancer; Ainsworth House summer arts festival; protecting Oregon's students

20-21 NATIONAL

Marriage amendment tanks at polls; Cheney's daughter opposes Bush on marriage; NGLTF rebukes DNC chair over platform gaffe; everyone should get AIDS test, says CDC

22-23 WORLD

Planned Moscow Pride banned; Polish gay march attacked; British group documents Iran's execution of gays; Belgium OKs gay adoption; Cameroonian gays held despite acquittal; police raid Buenos Aires gay bar

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Gay Latino community celebrates diversity during Cinco de Mayo weekend

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Recent releases feature bitchy queens, questioning teens, hustling hunks and queer punks

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As moviegoers try to crack *The Da Vinci Code*, the Renaissance man's sexuality remains the real mystery



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