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## PUBLISHER & MANAGING EDITOR

Marty Davis

## NEWS EDITOR

Jaymee R. Cuti

## ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR

Jim Radosta

## STAFF WRITER

Malka Geffen

## ART DIRECTOR

Anabel Ramirez

## PRODUCTION & AD DESIGNER

Cat Cheng

## ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

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## ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVES

Melissa Morales, Kari Tate, Cshea Walker

## CONTRIBUTORS

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Meryl Cohn, Joy Ellison, John Esther,

Timothy Krause, Andy Mangels, Gary

Morris, Jenny Nguyen, John Polly, Rebecca

Ragain, Julie Sabatier, Floyd Sklaver, Marty

Smith, Glenn Scofield Williams, Rex

Wockner, Dan Young

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Lisa Benson, Harry Bonfill, Jose Cruz, Youme

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**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](mailto:justout@justout.com).  
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# letters

## Get Involved or Move Along

TO THE EDITOR:

I just finished reading "The Summer of Hate" by Marty Davis [Aug. 4]. First let me say that I am surprised that the esteemed publisher of *Just Out* would even give notice to such screed as is foisted off on the public by the arrogant, self-important and mean-spirited columnist Byron Beck. Secondly, I hope the mainstream population of our community does not consider him representative of our collective attitude. Thirdly, even if *Just Out* is more lesbian oriented than gay male oriented, how does that affect the excellent journalism that graces the pages of this paper?

And finally, I will say that when I first moved to Portland eight years ago, I did notice that it did seem to be a predominantly lesbian city and that most of the political activity, organizations and such were either headed by lesbians or lesbian driven. Upon inquiry and notation of that to a fellow homo, I was told: "It's great, isn't it? They do all the work, and we can party!"

Therefore, I say to all who have this attitude: Cease your complaining, get involved, or move along. I am certain there is a party somewhere else you can attend while you let your lesbian sisters do all the work. (By the way, how male chauvinist is that?) Lest I seem unduly critical of the male faction of our community, I am quite aware of all the many men as well as women who work diligently to move this community forward. I think it would be much better if we all set aside our differences for a moment, shouldered the wheel and got this buggy out of the mud. Then if we want to complain and party...go for it. We earned it. Otherwise, putting it ever so politely...*please shut up!*

And to those few who doggedly push the buggy forward, a heartfelt thank you. There would be no parties if it were not for those who work to provide a safe place to have them. And another thank you for a paper that allows us to air those complaints and bears us no ill will in the doing.

And perhaps off the subject a bit, what happened to our sense of humor? They don't call us gay for nothing.

G THORNTON HUNTER

Portland

## To Be Clear

TO THE EDITOR:

Thank you for the story on Terry Bean, who is truly the Oregon LGBT community's national treasure ["Strong Brew," Aug. 4]. Certainly no one has done more for the LGBT political community in Oregon and nationally than Terry.

However, in attempting to list all of Terry's credits and to graciously include me, the article got a bit confusing. Let me quickly try to clear up the national organizations we both were committed to.

Terry and I were both founding board members of Gay Rights National Lobby. I served three terms as co-chairman of the board. Additionally, Terry was a founding board member of the Fairness Fund and the Victory Fund. Gay Rights National Lobby and the Fairness Fund ended up being incorporated by the Human Rights Campaign, of which I was a co-founding board member. Terry has been probably the most long-standing and best board member HRC has had.

To learn more about the birth of our national movement, I suggest reading the just-published autobiography of the late Steve Endean, who was

truly the one founder of the above organizations. His book is titled *Bringing Lesbian and Gay Rights into the Mainstream: Twenty Years of Progress*. Endean tells the story of the founding of the national organizations and of the successes and failures we had. He tells of the role individuals played and of the tremendous national in-fighting that almost destroyed Endean and his organizations. Terry and I were right there fighting alongside Endean and enjoying our early successes.

Terry Bean has kept active after many, like myself, moved to the sidelines, and Oregon owes him a tremendous amount of gratitude.

JERRY WELLER

Portland

## Don't Exploit Suicide

TO THE EDITOR:

Terry Bean is certainly deserving of the Aug. 4 *Just Out* profile.

I will always remember Bean for helping with the passage of the 1977 Eugene City Council ordinance that outlawed discrimination against homosexuals in employment. Unfortunately, the next year voters overturned it and similar laws in Wichita, Kan., and St. Paul, Minn.

Bean's personal story of suicidal thoughts as a teen is poignant.

However, Cornell University professor Ritch C. Savin-Williams has spent decades studying gay adolescents, and his 2005 Harvard University Press book, *The New Gay Teenager*, argues that older gay activists such as Terry Bean are counterproductive when they promote the gay teen suicide issue for political gain.

Savin-Williams fears the "suicidal script" for gay teens causes some to give up prematurely, especially when they hear their life is inevitably distraught from both gay activists and anti-gay religious leaders. Savin-Williams' book proposes a better way.

The author was careful to point out that nothing in his book justifies the "neglect of gay young people who suffer and entertain thoughts of suicide."

Savin-Williams' book made me realize how out of touch I am with gay youth, despite living in a college town. I urge Bean to also read this thoughtful book.

THOMAS KRAEMER

Corvallis

## Gays Just Wanna Have Fun

TO THE EDITOR:

After reading *Willamette Week's* recent "Queer Window" column, I was shocked by Pat Lanagan's accusation of *Just Out's* lesbian slant. I have followed the inception of *Just Out*, under the guiding hands of Renee LaChance and Jay Brown, since the beginning.

Before the first issue was printed, I had been rather disinterested in the gay rags. *Just Out* was the first newspaper that came close to fulfilling that gap.

Even now, as I have passed the dreaded age of 50, I still look to *Just Out* for keeping me informed, educated, entertained and abreast of the local social happenings. Not every article appeals to me, but rarely does any other publication.

I don't find many things in *Just Out* for men my age, but you don't hear me complaining about