

by Marty Davis

# The Coming Storm

## It's the end of the world as we know it, and I'm hungry

I am skilled at the art of procrastination. I do it well, I do it frequently, I do it with panache. It is my calling. Which is precisely why Wednesday night found me watching reality television at the exact time that I should have been writing this column. "Ah, but it's local culture, it's my job," I said to myself as I watched Storm Large on *Rock Star: Supernova*. This is need-to-know TV.

Truth be known, I've never seen Storm Large perform live in Portland. I've long been familiar with the name. Wilf's and the Portland Spirit have advertised her shows for years in *Just Out*. I just hadn't quite gotten around to going to see her yet. (See previous paragraph.) Jumping on the local-girl-makes-good bandwagon, I admit that I have been watching the show. I'll also admit I really don't have an appreciation for this genre of music. Ms. Large excluded, of course. Well, except for that "I Will Survive" number. That stunk. That aside, our local chanteuse has made it to the final five, albeit not appearing to be all that happy at still being there; her expression upon not getting the heavenly was more one of blank resignation than joy and relief. I can see how she might feel that way.

Screeching vocal performances were only the appetizer for this night's reality television. Switching channels, I found myself watching a 20/20 presentation titled "The Last Days of Earth." My, what a lighthearted romp this was. With great flair and pomp, this show detailed the seven deadliest threats to humanity. The contestants included black holes, artificial intelligence, supervolcanos, asteroid strikes, nuclear war, disease and climate changes. To the great dismay of Pat Robertson and his ilk, gay marriage was not included.

I didn't make it to the end of this show. Frankly, I was starting to feel a little anxious and depressed, so instead I went and ate all the good stuff in my emergency supply kit. Somehow three days' worth of crackers and cookies seems rather feeble when faced with total annihilation by a black hole. Of course, a black hole might not be what brings us down. This is, after all, the age of reality TV, and that means America gets to vote. Stay tuned next week to see which catastrophic destructions make it to the finals and which are in the bottom three. It's going to be hard to choose. They all seem like such winners.

Prior to total world destruction, the *Just Out* staff needs to choose a new name for our blog. We received many—and I do mean many—suggestions, which

we're sorting through now. The most cynical came from a *Portland Mercury* reader who suggested "Sell Out."

Bite me.

The contest winner will be announced shortly and will be posted on our newly named blog. The aforementioned came in very handy this past week as we followed the trials and tribulations of *Willamette Week* writer Karla Starr. With some very poorly chosen words, Starr maligned local fat activist and author-to-be Stacy Bias, along with every other overweight person on the planet. The lines between clever and edgy and rude and disrespectful can be thin and easily blurred. Such was the case here. Bias and her friends and followers were rightfully offended and organized to make sure that the paper took accountability for its actions. And, to its credit, it did, issuing an apology in the Aug. 30 issue.

We had selected Bias for our "Out Standing" section prior to this incident. Her handling of the matter cemented our regard for her leadership role in the community. And that's why we feature an outstanding person in each issue. We want to acknowledge the commitment, the energy and the efforts put forth by those who strive to make a difference. If you know of someone we should honor, please send me a note at [marty@justout.com](mailto:marty@justout.com).

Earlier in the summer there was a brief bout of frustration and strife as unhappiness was expressed concerning gender parity and balance in the pages of *Just Out*, and perhaps in the community as a whole. No doubt there are improvements that can be made in establishing more harmonious communications between different and diverse segments of our community, but at the same time there are many wonderful ongoing events where everyone simply gets together and gets along. Gay Skate Night is a delightful mixture of ages and genders. Q Center bingo is open and welcoming to all. Women and men come together to play softball and socialize at Rose City Softball Association events. Fall brings about the start of the Portland Community Bowling League's 28th season. This makes it one of the oldest social organizations that we've got—an organization built on a foundation of men and women working and playing together. We've got a lot going for us. Let's end the summer by focusing on the positive.

Enjoy the beautiful weather and the long Labor Day weekend. If anything comes up, we'll be in touch via our Web site and blog, both found at [www.justout.com](http://www.justout.com). jo



### FEATURE

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Who cares about queer youth?

### NEWS

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**16-17 NATIONAL**  
Reservists tapped to replace gay soldiers; new TV season lacks diversity; pension law includes same-sex protections; Victory Fund preserves candidate win; fraudulent signatures quash initiative; gay reality podcast debuts on iTunes

**18-19 WORLD**  
Turkey bans gay magazine, blocks parade; small rally replaces WorldPride parade; Iceland perfects cohabitation laws; Iraqi gays flee death squads; Cayman Islands bans Jamaican singer; Argentina to lift military gay ban; 24,000 attend international AIDS conference

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## reflections

10 Years Ago in *Just Out*... volume 13 number 21, september 6, 1996

• Austrian body-painter Karl Machhammer has invented a liquid condom that is painted onto the penis, reports Reuters. It is ready for use after seven minutes drying time. One bottle of the latex cost about \$8 and will coat an average-sized penis three times, Reuters said.

• South Korea has one out gay activist, according to a profile in the August issue of the Australian gay magazine *Outrage*. Seo Dong-Jin, 32, came out publicly in 1994 and has since appeared regularly in the media, published a gay book and lectured on sexuality at colleges nationwide.

• In Texas, Oct. 6 has been chosen as the second observance of Solidarity Sunday, says Dignity USA. Solidarity Sunday is an invitation for members of the Christian community to show support for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people by wearing a swath of rainbow-colored ribbon pinned to their clothing.

• PlanetOut—a San Francisco company whose ultimate aim is to provide information, products and services via the Internet—has launched its first Web site. Popcorn Q provides movie reviews and information. It is subtitled "the ultimate online home for the queer moving image."



Electric Power Violin, J.R. Pella, Don Bleylioni and DJ Dazy and takes place Sept. 7 at La Luna.