

Northern Exposure

Just Out prepares to move into a new office

Thanks for picking up and reading this issue of *Just Out*. While we cherish and treasure each and every publication that we produce, this one is of special significance to myself and the *Just Out* staff. You see, this issue is the last paper that we write from our Northeast Portland office, a space we have enjoyed for the past 14 years. As this paper heads off to press, we break out the moving boxes and prepare to set up shop in our new North Portland digs.

Even though this move has been imminent for months, it is startling to realize that it is actually, finally happening. I keep waiting for waves of sentimentality to waft over me, but so far the only thing wafting is in the form of dust clouds and piles of paper. This is slightly disheartening to me, as for some time now I had planned to use this column to discuss the emotional aspects, the trauma, the tearful toil of moving. I've waited as late as the editorial staff will tolerate, searching my soul for deep thoughts and teary sentiment, but all I dredge up are to-do lists about phone lines, computer networks, address change forms, paint colors, smoke alarms, locks and keys and spraying the dandelions.

Spraying the dandelions? Yup, we've got grass and yard at the new place. Located at the corner of North Greeley Avenue and Holman Street, the new *Just Out* headquarters is a former medical office that sits on a large corner lot. We've got lawn on two sides, now seasonably brown, with the exception of the dandelions, which thrive in the summer and dot the grass with their unwelcome greenness. Ah, but not for long, my weedy tenants. Trust me, I am not an advocate of chemical warfare as a component of gardening, but I am making an exception for these dandelions. They have got to go.

Our new facility will offer *Just Out* many more opportunities to partner with community groups and organizations than we've had in the past. We'll be able to host myriad outdoor events and fund-raisers. We're in an excellent location

for garage sales, car washes, barbecues and socials. Inside the building there's a large reception area that holds promise for monthly art exhibits and possibly for utilizing as space for meetings and gatherings. The past few years have seen a large migration of gays and lesbians into North Portland, and now *Just Out* is going to be right in the heart of this burgeoning neighborhood community.


While we are, for the most part, excited about the move and our new location, we will miss some of our neighbors here in the Central Eastside. The skateboarders, not so much. Sheridan Fruit Company, a whole lot. But on a bright note, at the new place we'll be right down the street from Interstate New Seasons Market, and that's a very fine thing.

I, for one, will leave this area wondering just how long the couple living in the van across the street will continue to do so. They've been there for weeks now and seem to have found a comfortable home for themselves. The parking situation here, and the idiosyncrasies of the Portland Department of Transportation, will not be missed. On our side of the street it's two-hour-only parking, enforced with absurd enthusiasm by the parking patrol officers. Across the street, 15 feet or so to the other side, you'll find abandoned, stolen vehicles that sit for months with nary a ticket or notice—and, of course, the aforementioned couple who live in their vehicle where, from their windows, they can watch people on the other side of the street be ticketed for overtime parking.

I do know that I will find thoughtful and personal aspects to this move within myself. There will be a last closing of the door and a final look at empty rooms, rooms that hold years of very good and very bad experiences. There will be still-painful memories and hard lessons learned left behind. No need for them in a new place. They had their time, they had their moment. Now let's move on. There will be a sad look down the hall knowing that we're leaving behind Linda Traeger and her staff at Equity Foundation. It would have been a best-case scenario to have found shared space with Equity, but it was not meant to be.

I suspect that I'll glance into my office one last time and recall the day, nine years ago now, when I first walked into here as the new owner of *Just Out*, the very paper that I had recently vowed to never become emotionally attached to. Many gray hairs, many tears, many pounds later, I have never—wait, make that seldom—regretted my late-life decision to finally come out and, of course, buy a gay newspaper. I will tell you, there are still days when I'll say to myself, "I did what?"

Our move comes as *Just Out* approaches our 24th anniversary of publishing in November. From there we enter our milestone 25th year of publishing. While many gay publications across the country flounder and fail in the face of changing technology, cultural mores and the mainstreaming of the gay and lesbian community, *Just Out* continues to grow and change. This is not to say that we take our place for granted. Trust me, we are constantly aware of the nipping at our heels. This striving for survival makes us work harder and work better. You'll hear much more from me on this topic as we draw closer to our anniversary date and reaffirm our desire and need to increase our outreach to all of our community-based groups, organizations and business owners.

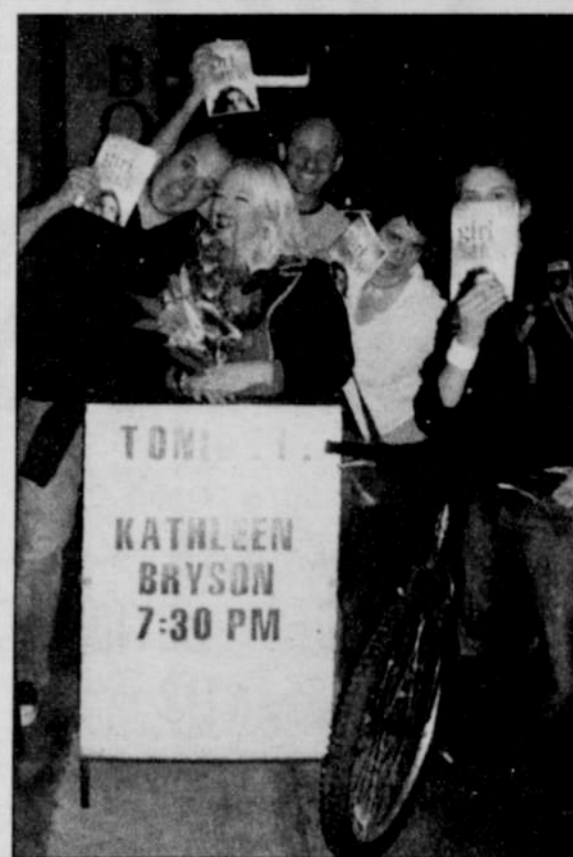
In the meantime, keep your eyes on the paper and the Web site and you'll find an invitation to join us for an open house and tour of our new offices. I don't have a date set yet, but sometime in late September is likely. Come join us in a toast to new beginnings. 

PLEASE NOTE: There will be a change in the date of Gay Skate Night in September. The rink will be closed for resurfacing on our regular third Monday, so for September only we'll move to the fourth Monday, Sept. 24.

August has five Fridays, thus an extra week for us to move. We'll see you back in print Sept. 7.



Blackout Leather Productions crowned its 2007 titleholders, Ben "Bear" Brown Jr. and Coral Mallow, during the 11th annual Mr. & Ms. Oregon State Leather Contest Aug. 4 at Embers Avenue.



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