

by Marty Davis

Hot Stuff

Our hard-earned rights are secure, at least for the moment

As Portland and the Pacific Northwest head into the hottest days of the past few years, even "hotter" good news comes from the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. The court issued an opinion Aug. 14 upholding an earlier U.S. District Court decision in the Lemons vs. Bradbury case. The short version of the victory: Oregon's recently enacted domestic partnerships will not be voted on this November. Our hard-earned rights, although not complete, are secure, at least for the moment.

This is significant for a couple of reasons. First, when looking back at the history of Oregon's anti-gay ballot measures, 2008 will be only the second presidential election since 1984 that doesn't include an anti-gay measure on the Oregon ballot. Secondly, this decision now frees up our time and resources to focus on electing the local, state and federal candidates who need our help. The presidential race will be the top priority for many, but other races are also very significant. Chief among these priorities: the election of Jeff Merkley to the U.S. Senate. My personal involvement level in this campaign includes hosting a house party to which many, if not all, of you will be invited. I understand that there are those (i.e., the Human Rights Campaign) who list compelling reasons why we need Gordon Smith as a Republican ally. I also know that I'm supposed to eat five servings of fresh fruits and vegetables each day and drink a few gallons of water. That doesn't work for me, either.

Save for one—the first-ever Iris Festival next month in Lincoln City—the Pride celebrations across our state are done for the year. Most recently I attended events in Salem and Eugene, both of which, I'm happy to report, were well-organized and well-attended. Salem's 30th annual Capitol Pride took a big step forward by moving to a prime downtown waterfront park. The visibility to the greater community was vastly increased. To my mind, one of the compelling reasons for having Pride events is to showcase ourselves to those who don't know who we are. We have to be accessible, inviting and welcoming.

Eugene Pride did a bang-up job with its event. I drove down Interstate 5 with the anticipation of standing around talking to myself for a few hours. This paper, and myself personally, are not connected to the Eugene community. There's no history of problems or ill will. It simply seems to be that they are there and we are here. Opportunities to span the distance are few and far between. But the day turned out great. Folks were friendly and chatty; as I handed out copies of *Just Out*, I must have said "JustOut.com" about 3 million times.

One conversation stood out more than others did. A middle-aged lesbian couple who had recently moved to Eugene from California approached me looking for advice. They were troubled by their lack of successful efforts to gain access into any Eugene social circles. They simply could not find the

door to any existing groups or organizations. I gave them all the hints that I carry around with me—*Just Out*, Craigslist, Lavender Women—combined with the strong belief that if you don't find the group you're looking for, start one yourself. Often there are more followers than there are leaders. If you organize Bunco, they will come.

However, it is unfortunate—often in the lesbian community, at least—that it is harder to get in than it is to come out. Are we, as lesbians, as women, as welcoming and inviting as we could be? Do we set up barriers and structures and group ourselves off in closed circles? Do gay men encounter these same obstacles to social acceptance?

Thoughts on the value of life have been sitting on my shoulders this week. The *Just Out* offices were a half-block from a police action that took place Aug. 13 because of the self-inflicted and fatal gunshot of a stranger, a person-down-the-street, someone I never knew and likely never would have met. This person killed himself, and that makes me ask a lot of questions. How can anyone do that? How does someone get to the point where they take their own life? How bad can things be that death becomes your solution? I've had a bad day or two in my life, but never, never could I see suicide as a problem-solving action.

This action comes in stark contrast to other sad news I received a few days earlier. My friend, longtime AIDS activist and Our House of Portland icon Judith Rizzio, lost her 25-year-old son after a valiant six-year struggle with liver cancer. I never met Daniel myself, but from Judith I knew that this young man valued his life and was determined to fight every day, every hour, every minute for it. He fought long and he fought hard, and he might well have lived more life in that process than many others ever will.

The family requests that remembrances be made in the name of Daniel Clark-Rizzio to DeLiver a Cure, an organization researching cures for fibrolamellar hepatocellular carcinoma. Details can be found at www.deliveracure.org/donations.php. Judith, your friends in this community are standing with you, right at your side.

Finally, *Just Out* will be on vacation the week of Aug. 18. During that week we ask that you take some time and look around your house. What shouldn't be there? What really needs to go? Now is the time to gather up all your great used items and set them aside to donate to the Q Center garage sale. This mega garage sale will be held Sept. 7 at *Just Out*. Q Center is working to meet its building fund matching donor gift and needs donations. Books, clothes, all that rainbow crap you've hidden in the garage—dig it out and bring it to *Just Out* during business hours. You'll find us at 6234 N. Greeley Ave. Seriously, you do not need those size 10 jeans. It ain't gonna be happening, darlin'. Come to the sale and buy the size 14 that fits now.

Dump your old stuff, buy some new, build a Q Center. What a deal. See you here. 10

reflections

15 Years Ago In *Just Out*... volume 10 number 19, august 15, 1993

- Bridgetown Realty proudly announces the opening of its second office, located at 21570 Willamette drive (Highway 43) in the city of West Linn. We look forward to providing West Linn, Lake Oswego and the greater Clackamas County area with the courteous, professional service and attention to detail you have come to expect from Bridgetown Realty.

- Some of the most prominent advocates of lifting the ban on gays and lesbians in the military were arrested July 20 outside the White House while participating in civil disobedience.

- Twelve years into the AIDS epidemic, the nation is now beginning to take note of older Americans with HIV and the even older relatives who often care for them. It has been called a

"multigenerational crisis, and we've been slow to realize that."

- Legal activists predict that, because of the May 5 decision handed down by the Hawaii Supreme Court concerning same-sex marriage, gay and lesbian couples may soon be flocking to the Aloha State to seal their vows. In a 3-2 decision, the court ruled that the Hawaii Department of Health could not deny marriage licenses to same-sex couples unless it could prove that it had a "compelling" need to do so.

- Holladay Market at Lloyd Center needs to hear that you'd appreciate finding *Just Out* there. It is in the process of establishing new "criteria" to decide whether *Just Out* can be distributed there.

- The Oregon Senate passed House Bill 3500 by a vote of 19-11 on July 28, and Gov. Barbara Roberts signed the bill into law Aug. 2. The bill went into effect immediately because of an emergency clause added by state Rep. Gail Shibley, D-Portland. The new law blocks the enforcement of local discriminatory ordinances based on sexual orientation that have been pushed through communities by the Oregon Citizens Alliance.



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NEWSMAGAZINE



PAGE 20

FEATURE

20 THE AWAKENING OF MELISSA ETHERIDGE

"The experience of having breast cancer was an incredible gift"

NEWS

8-16 NORTHWEST

Eugene royalty dethroned; CAP names new executive director; volleyball association hosts grass tournament; p:ear reopens with benefit; gay youth becomes Obama advocate; sexual minority delegates represent Oregon at DNC; no lemonade for Lemons case; BRO accepts honoree nominations; live from Hermiston Pride; bathhouse gets McMenamins makeover; interest renewed in saving OWL Farm

18-19 NATIONAL

Bush signs landmark AIDS bill; vigil held for murdered Colorado trans teen; Gay Straight Alliance in Florida wins groundbreaking lawsuit; Peace Corps to stop terminating HIV-positive volunteers

ARTS & CULTURE

35 FILM

Penélope Cruz has a three-way with Scarlett Johanson and Javier Bardem in Woody Allen's *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*



PAGE 30

36-37 FASHION

Fat Fancy creates "speakeasy boutique" for plus-size vintage clothing

38-39 ART

Queer artist observes human nature with bonsai-inspired "plants"

40 NIGHTLIFE

Your guide to queer karaoke

COLUMNS

17 SASSY GARDENER

A Garden of Memories

32 EPIQUEEREAN

Portland is One Lucky Oyster!

33 OUT GOING

L.A. Story: Part Two

41 CORNER VIEW

Bi-shop-ing

50 MS. BEHAVIOR

Where Life Begins