

page 3

by Marty Davis

Good News, Bad News

At the same time that our community celebrates one victory, we carry also the burden of loss

The presidential race that often seemed to be never-ending has finally reached conclusion.

America voted.

John McCain and Sarah Palin will not be returning next week. They were our bottom two.

Barack Obama, overcoming incredible odds, accomplished what he set out to do. Now the eyes of the entire world are upon him. Millions upon millions of people are now waiting to watch—and test—his decision-making mettle. What will be the defining moment of this man's character? Exactly what kind of puppy will this world leader's daughters get? The future of America lies in this man's hands, in his decision. Choose wisely, Obama. Choose wisely.

America celebrates the election of a new president and turns hopeful eyes toward a brighter future. But at the same time that our community celebrates one victory, we carry also the burden of loss. When the final ballots were counted, three states—Florida, Arizona and California—passed same-sex marriage bans. The California passage seems extra punitive and harsh, as it snatches away hard-fought-for rights—rights that were presumed to have been finally freed from legal and societal captivity. In Arkansas—in 2008, mind you—voters barred unmarried couples, gay or straight, from adopting children. What kind of people vote for something like this?

The progress and the movement continue—victory here, loss there. Slowly—painfully slowly, for many—we inch our way forward.

President-elect Obama's election night speech was eloquent and meaningful. I stood among a large, lively and emotional crowd at the Oregon Convention Center and relished sharing the moment with so many people who were so intently listening and so emotionally vested in the words.

About halfway through his message I was especially taken by this call: "Let us summon a new spirit of patriotism; of service and responsibility where each of us resolves to pitch in and *work harder and look after not only ourselves, but each other*. Let us remember that if this financial crisis taught us anything, it's that we cannot have a thriving Wall Street while Main Street suffers—in this country, we rise or fall as one nation; as one people."

This is where our new president spoke to me. This is where I see those of us who aren't political activists, leaders and organizers finding our place in the new society. As members of the sexual minorities community, I have felt for some time that we could and should take on the task of working harder to help those among us who need our help.

"Work harder and look after not only ourselves, but each other." This now becomes our call to action.

You might be asking, "What can I do?" Many of us are struggling to make

ends meet financially. It can be hard to think about helping others when you wonder how you're going to take care of yourself. Money is short, time is short. How do we look after each other?

Find a cause, a purpose and a position that mean something to you. In my case it's hunger, specifically the lack of food available for many who find themselves in need. The organization I've chosen to support and to look after is Esther's Pantry, a food bank that serves people affected by HIV/AIDS. I can feel that I'm doing my part by working with others to increase awareness. You can help by making small donations of food. For a bit of effort—and, yes, a bit of your hard-earned money—you can help us look after each other. If this is not a cause that resonates with you, let's find one that will.


The work of the sexual minorities community continues. We all should be excited about what the future holds. The election of progressive and good men like Jeff Merkley to the U.S. Senate should give us hope and heart. At the same time, we must also recognize that our battles are largely ours to be fought and won.

With good allies and supporters to help, we must still look to our own community leaders to lead the charge. And as we work to mature as a movement, it is crucial that we recognize that our diverse and bountiful community will never be of one mindset. We will never be of one opinion, we will never be of one voice. We absolutely must allow ourselves the freedom to express opinion and dissenting voice from within our own ranks. We must demand that our leadership be open to questioning and scrutiny at all times. We must not close ourselves off into a place where we accept only like-minded people. As a community, and as individuals, we must move beyond acceptance of only those who validate our own beliefs. Finally, to continue to grow and persevere, we must recognize and accept that we will not always be in agreement and that there is value in contradiction.

Our 25th anniversary party is getting closer and closer. I now live in fear that someone will not get invited and feel left out or ignored.

Please, *everyone*, you are invited to attend the *Just Out* 25th anniversary party Nov. 22. Complete details are on the back cover. I really do hope to see you all there.

Finally, as the publisher of a small newspaper, I am only too aware of how rotten things are in the media business now. Therefore, I must give a shout-out to a local fella who has the nerves of steel to start up a new publication in these harsh financial times. Kudos and good luck to Cory Murphy and *Fierce!NW*, which he promotes as "the Northwest premier monthly men's magazine."

Good luck, Cory and staff. Hope to see you on your 25th anniversary. 

reflections

15 Years Ago In *Just Out*... volume 6 number 1, october 15, 1993

- Veteran lesbian and gay rights activist Holly Hart was presented with the Humanitarian Award at the seventh annual Lucille Hart dinner Oct. 1. For almost three decades, she has been publicly involved in the struggle for equal rights for gays and lesbians. In the mid-'70s, Hart served as chairwoman of a state task force on sexual orientation during the administration of Gov. Bob Straub. Since 1980, she has been the owner of Old Wives' Tales, a popular restaurant in Portland.

- Calling all lesbians! Read Leviticus 18:22—you're home free.

- Bring a candle to the north end of the South Park Blocks and walk to City Hall in remembrance

of the 10th anniversary of Harvey Milk's death Nov. 27. Gays and Lesbians United and others will assemble at 5:30 p.m. Join people in cities across the country in paying tribute to Milk.

- The November/December issue of *Futurist* magazine predicts that AIDS could claim 50 million lives throughout the world in the 1990s, exceeding the toll of the Black Plague in the Middle Ages.

- The Portland Gay Men's Chorus opens its ninth season with *Strike the Harp and Join the*



Chorus featuring guest harpist J. Scott Grimes.

- Portland's Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee announces the 1989 Pride Celebration logo contest, which uses the national theme "Stonewall-20, A Generation of Pride." The Oregon artist submitting the chosen logo will receive \$50.

- The Portland Lesbian Choir rehearses weekly and welcomes instrumentalists, arrangers and production people. New singing members will be accepted in March 1989.

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NEWSMAGAZINE

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FEATURE

20 THE MILK MAN

Gus Van Sant returns with highly anticipated portrait of an American hero

NEWS

7-17 NORTHWEST

Former nonprofit director under suspicion; lesbian duo fight E. coli with benefit; pioneering lawmaker gives boost to young activists; Trans Remembrance Day is Nov. 20; SMYRC hires new program director; Pride Foundation groups grant applications; SMYRC launches podcast; HIV Day Center benefits from Give Guide; queer photographer launches worldwide erotic mag; election 2008 roundup; Concerned Oregonians group plots and plans for anti-gay ballot measures

12 NATIONAL

Obama wins presidency; gay candidates make history; Arizona, Florida voters pass marriage bans again; Arkansas adoption ban passes; California's Prop 8 passes

ARTS & CULTURE

34-35 FILM

Gwen Haworth documents her transition in *She's a Boy I Knew*

38

NIGHTLIFE

Ex-Sissyboy launches club night for HIV-positive men

39 BOOKS

Wordstock author writes about gay Arab American

COLUMNS

19 SASSY GARDENER

Raining Gold

32 OUT GOING

Back to the Future

33 EPIQUEEREAN

The Division of Our City

37 CORNER VIEW

Sweet Bird of (Dying) Youth

41 JIM'S CLOSET

Back to School

50 MS. BEHAVIOR

Three's a Crowd

