

by Marty Davis

New Year, New Attitude

Just Out is roaring out of the 2009 starting gate with enthusiasm and pride

Happy new year, 2009, the most eagerly anticipated new year arrival that I can ever recall. Granted, there was that Y2K year, but I remember that as being more "The sky is falling, the sky is falling" than the "Oh thank God it's here" greetings eagerly heaped upon the baby 2009. Yup, we're only a week and a few days into this year, but I like it already. The stormy weather that ended 2008 and ushered in 2009 brought good times and new friends together, creating excellent camaraderie for new beginnings. A winter that has brought us so much snow, rain, wind and the like can only be a doorway to a most beautiful spring ahead. I'm excited and ready—are you?

With our onetime schedule change for this month, this Jan. 9 issue of *Just Out* is our first of the year.

Inside the pages you'll also find many other new firsts that we are excited about. But in order to make room for the new, there's got to be some out-with-the-old. So we're saying goodbye to the old version of "OUTstanding" and the friendly faces of "Just Asking." A more in-depth version, now called "Q & A," has replaced "OUTstanding."

Each issue we'll be checking out the community and finding the person with something important to say. I'm going to think of "Just Asking" as simply being on break. It has a history of taking time off and then being brought back. It is a favorite of mine, so don't be surprised to see it pop back up, at least every now and then. We're all exploring other possibilities, including video clip versions, which would appear on the *Just Out* blog, available 24/7 at www.justout.com.

Debating in this issue you'll also find three new sections. "Comings and Goings" and "On Location" provide reader-friendly and interactive news bytes. "Best of the Blog" is a self-directed attempt to matchmake our traditional print readers with our electronic publication.

There's so much for *Just Out* to report that it requires two publications from us. Yup, we're that good. We have been, and will be, expanding our coverage of local and statewide events. Portland and statewide politics affects us all, gay or straight. What happens at the Capitol in Salem and what happens at City Hall affects each and every one of us. Take pride—you're going to start seeing even more of your gay paper as we step up into a visible and impactful role in the greater community. We'll ask the questions, we'll demand the accountability, and we will represent you.

Political issues are one matter; the economy is another. The message of this paper remains the same; the only change is that it will grow louder

and stronger. We must support our local economy. We must support our neighborhood business owners; we must support each other. Together we remain strong.

I have been chided and scolded by readers, advertisers and *Just Out* staff for being too upfront in my last column about how the current economic downturn is affecting newspapers in general and *Just Out* in specific ["The Best of Times, the Worst of Times," Dec. 19]. It has been suggested that by speaking out, I have disrupted advertiser confidence in *Just Out's* long-term ability to succeed.

Let me tell you what I think about that.

First, be very clear. *Just Out* has been here for 25 years and will be here for a hell of a lot longer. Are the next six months going to be easy? No. Will *Just Out* survive the next six months? Yes.

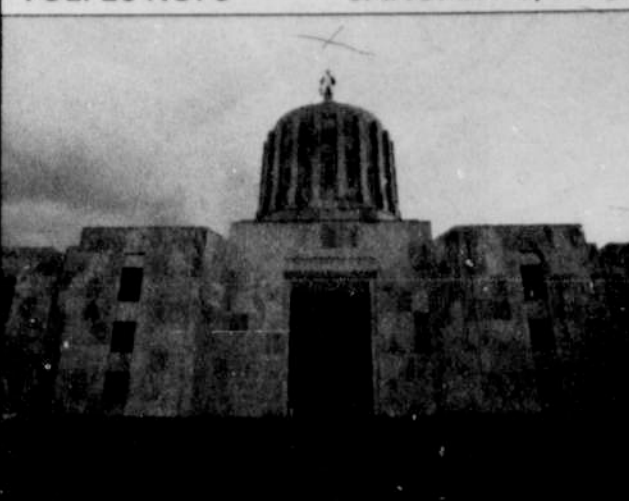
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else? That said, I will continue to respect you by offering you my honesty and candor. In turn, I ask also for your respect and regard. The bottom line of this disclosure is, again, simple. *Just Out* is roaring out of the 2009 starting gate and tackling the new year's challenges with enthusiasm and pride. Yes, we will be hunkered down for the first quarter, just like we have every first quarter for the past 25 years. This is a proven fact of the industry that we are in.

First quarters suck—ask any small-business owner. They often are good for one thing only: planning and preparing for the second quarter. And what a second quarter we have in mind for us and for you. Second quarter means Pride, and Pride means *Just Out*. We will rock Portland and the state with the most comprehensive coverage of events that anyone could ever hope to see. *Just Out* has always been, and will continue to be, the dominant voice and information source for all Pride events. Planning for Pride is what sucky first quarters are all about. We're here working and partnering with our customers, striving to be forthright and honest with each other while finding solutions to the problems we all face. If there's something I can do for you, please let me know. I'll give it my best shot.

A celebratory shout-out and congratulations goes to Harriet Guthrie and her staff at Hobo's. This month marks her 20th year of ownership of my favorite Old Town restaurant. There's a party Jan. 10 at Hobo's. Hope to see you all there. 10



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