

The Fallout

The mayor's actions ripple beyond himself.
A glance at some collateral damage from the scandal.

by Jaymee R. Cuti

WINNERS

• **Bob Ball:** Despite Adams' assertion that Ball spread an untrue rumor for self-interest, the developer's concerns were legitimate. Portlanders do not yet know if Beau Breedlove was of legal age to give consent when he and Adams first had sex. Oregon Attorney General John Kroger will ascertain that through an investigation. But Ball's original concern—that Adams engaged in an inappropriate sexual relationship with Breedlove—was founded.

LOSERS

• **Amy Ruiz:** The *Portland Mercury* news editor resigned to serve as planning and sustainability policy adviser on Adams' mayoral staff. In addition to some who are questioning her qualifications, her job is no longer secure as her boss faces resignation demands.

• **Q Center:** Portland's queer community center was selected as beneficiary of the Jan. 31 Mayor's Winter Gala, a glitzy night to celebrate Adams' victory.

The Q Center board decided Jan. 22 to broaden the event's focus to a Portland celebration and dropped "mayor" from the title. Executive director Kendall Clawson said she hoped the newly renamed Winter Gala would become Q Center's annual signature event.

The event is anticipated to raise a significant portion of the center's 2009 operating budget. By press time, less than half of the 800 general admission tickets remained unsold.

TOUGH CALL

• **Beau Breedlove:** It is unclear whether Breedlove will emerge as a rock star among Portland's hormonally amped barflies or a serious young professional with the baggage of a scandal. Despite his time at the Oregon Legislature, in September 2007 he told *Just Out* he is not pursuing a career politics. After a stint in Michigan's restaurant industry, Breedlove returned to Portland. He is a leasing agent at The Wyatt luxury apartments and owns an events promotion business.

• **Queer Portlanders:** Many in queer Portland recoiled when Adams referred to himself as a leader in the gay community at a Jan. 20 press conference.

Will this scandal give unenlightened (read: homophobic) Oregonians ammunition to resurrect the stereotype that gay men are sexual predators?

"It's too early to tell what kind of an impact there might be on our ability to do our job," said Jeana Frazzini, executive director of Basic Rights Oregon. "People are primarily looking at this as the story of a politician that didn't tell the truth, not a gay or straight story."

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Portlanders first heard rumors of the relationship in a September 2007 *Willamette Week* article. Portland developer and Q Center benefactor Bob Ball, who was considering a mayoral run, told *Just Out* that he heard Adams had sex with a minor from a "credible source close to Sam." Ball took the rumor to Adams' mentor, former Mayor Vera

The story's explosion into national media is painful for many queer Portlanders who worry that even the association between an openly gay elected official and a handsome, much younger legislative intern plays on tabloid-style sexual sensationalism. Some argue Adams' personal life should be off limits; others say the issue has nothing to do with his sex life or orientation but rather with lying to the public and coercing a young man to do the same.

Even gays as far afield as Irrigon are concerned about the repercussions of Adams' admission. Frank Roa, director of the human rights group Umatilla-Morrow Alternatives in eastern Oregon, says he's worried about how conservatives in his community might twist the story to find another way to point out older gays' lecherous behavior toward younger gays. But he also believes Adams deserves to stay



Sam Adams cuts the ribbon at the opening of the Cascade AIDS Project Men's Wellness Center.

Katz, and City Commissioner Randy Leonard.

Adams responded to the allegations with vitriol. He said in September 2007, "This is a smear campaign, and for him to try to now pretty it up and characterize it as anything else is just untrue."

Oregon Attorney General John Kroger is investigating whether the pair had sex before Breedlove turned 18, the state's age of consent.

in office. "He didn't break any laws. It was his personal life, and he wanted to keep it private," he said by phone. "You can't really fault him for being human."

So what's next for Adams? *Just Out* has yet to speak with him since the admission. Calls for his resignation, for a voter recall and for support of the mayor are increasing on all sides. 10

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