



PAGE 3 by Marty Davis

Mea Culpa

Just Out publisher falls behind with payroll

More than a few of you might be asking and wondering, "What's going on at *Just Out*?" *Just Out*, has been severely impacted by the deepening and worsening economic crisis facing our state and our nation. The first signs of a weakening economy popped up late summer, early fall of last year. From there on it only got worse. From most perspectives there simply was no December holiday/retail season in Portland this year. And then it snowed. The city screeched to a halt. From the malls to the restaurants to the Homes for Sale, people simply stopped spending money. To date, they haven't started again.

While income continued to dwindle, expenses remained the same or increased. The result? Since the first of the year there's been more money going out the door than coming in. For a business owner this situation leads to one clear course of action. Cut all the expenses you can. And then cut some more.

At *Just Out*, staff salaries, print bill, health insurance and rent are at the top of fixed costs. Where do you cut back? *Just Out* staff has always been hard-working and dedicated. It has always been my intent to reward these efforts with appropriate compensation. When expected ad sales did not materialize in December I should have done then what other papers and other business owners are doing. I should have immediately slashed staff, and reduced hours and positions in an effort to keep my expenses and my payroll under control.

But I didn't.

Instead I fought frantically to keep my staff intact and to protect everyone's job. I asked for outside advice and then rejected it all when told, over and over that I needed to downsize and lay off key staff. I was convinced that each day would bring better sales and each tomorrow I'd be able to catch up.

During this troubling time there was 100% transparency about the payroll situation with staff.

There was no attempt to deceive anyone and there was no callous disregard for the hardships caused by late pay.

It was always a given that at any time someone might leave their job and opt for more secure positions elsewhere. The payroll situation was stressful. There was tension and frustration. Not being able to pay on time was extremely hard on me emotionally. I absolutely accept my responsibility, then and now, to pay my employees on time. I was not meeting my obligations. I beat

myself up over the situation, and in the process my staff too. For this I am sorry.

The week of March 9, even as we were still planning and discussing the promise of March and April sales improvements, three staff members decided that they were no longer willing to tolerate late pay. And so they left.

Now you might be asking, "If the money situation is so bad that you can't make payroll, how can *Just Out* continue?"

Well, remember that payroll I needed to slash? The very burden which I'd worn myself to a frazzle trying to maintain has been lightened. The approaching start of the second quarter already shows a promising revival in ad sales. Pride season is just around the corner and my sales staff is pumped up and ready to go. With a new president promising to bring economic stimulus down to the bottom levels of the business world I am confident that soon we'll see the early signs of the end of our economic downturn.

Where there were recently three staff writers at *Just Out* there will now be one. The person who joins us to grow and manage the editorial side of the paper will put together a dynamic team of freelance writers, interns and community voices. I am excited at the prospects for the future, excited by the potential for change.

It was a memorable Friday the 13th, I can tell you that. I had more than one bad moment, but then came the realization that I needed to get my paper published, no matter what. My immediate goal was to get the March 20 issue published on time. As you see, that goal was reached. Now we do the next.

Did I accomplish this by myself? Oh hell no. There are more people to thank that I have space for in this column. But they will be thanked, one and all. Special thanks now go out to awesome intern Cliff Li, Kathryn Martini, Linda Vogt, Barbara Morley, Carol Evans, Dale Schiff and a good many others who shall, for now, remain unnamed.

Kathryn Martini deserves acknowledgement, not only for her help, but also because her new column, "Living Out Loud," appears in this issue. Martini has a strong voice with a unique perspective that I am confident is going to appeal to many. In future issues she will be joined by others; new writers with voices and opinions on sexuality, queer identity, gender identity, spirituality, parenting, and all the aspects of our lives that make us rich and meaningful persons.

just out

VOL. 26 NO. 10

MARCH 20, 2009

INSIDE »

» FEATURE

16 TEAM OREGON

Team Oregon is helping to create Gay Games 2010 dreams

» NEWS

9-11 HOUSE BILL 2599.

Anti-bullying bill, passes first hurdle; Portlanders head to Washington D.C for HRC Lobby Day; Equity Foundation and Pride Foundation sponsor second annual QueerCore Youth Awards; Portland State University launches The Spectrum; Washington State Senate passes historic measure; Basic Rights Oregon schedules annual Oregonians Against Discrimination, and more.

14-15 Q & A

Tennis champion, equity champion, Billie Jean King shares life lessons

» ARTS & CULTURE

26 ON VIEW

27 ON STAGE

30 FILM REVIEWS

31 BEEF CAKE WALK 2009

32 BODY VOX CHRISTENS FUTURE HOME BASE WITH COLLABORATIVE SHOW

» COLUMNISTS

13 SASSY GARDENER

Tips for first-time vegetable gardeners

28 LIVING OUT LOUD

Confessions of a 'Latebian'

41 MS BEHAVIOR

Losing Her Marbles

Reflections

15 Years Ago in *Just Out* | Volume II number 9, March 4, 1994

- Stonewall 25's national steering committee has voted to ban organizations like the controversial North American Man-Boy Love Association from the demonstration it is planning for New York City in July. The decision states that the ban will apply to organizations that promote sexual relations with minors or those that favor repeal of age of consent laws.
- Queer Night is alive and well at La Luna. Come and experience the energetic and eclectic DJ Sugar.
- A new magazine aimed at gay and lesbian youth has gone to print as, of January, YOUTH, whose title is an acronym for Young Outspoken Ubiquitous Thinking Homos, will feature a college campus report and columns on health and AIDS, religion, role models, peer advice and national news - all written by young gay men and lesbians.
- Ben Merrill, the attorney who was investigating the financial problems at Cascade AIDS project, is accused of defrauding a client of \$128,000 and trying to hide \$510,000

of the same client's money from the Internal Revenue Service. Merrill resigned as independent investigator for CAP on Feb. 18, the same day that IRS agents seized documents from his Portland law office. So far, Merrill has not been charged with any crimes. He has declined to comment on the situation.

- The Snickers LaBarr Show, with talk for gays, lesbians and bisexuals, features representatives from Gentle Giants and the National Association to Aid Fat Acceptance.
- The Oregon National Guard has promoted Elli Work, who has publicly acknowledged that she is a lesbian, from second to first lieutenant. Work may still be discharged from the Guard because of her sexual orientation. Discharge proceedings are on hold while officials try to clarify President Clinton's policy regarding gay men, lesbians and bisexual people in the military. Work has been in the ONG for 12 years.

