



PAGE 3 by Marty Davis

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A fresh start to an already tough year

Even though it's only the beginning of April and we're mere months into 2009, I'm ready to write this column as a year-in-review piece. I say let's shut tight the door on the first quarter of this lousy year and start all over again. Put on the hats, blow the horns and kiss the cute girls: Happy New Year 2009!

Before packing away the mini-version of the year, let's touch briefly on the highs and lows of the past 90 days.

The lows: Portland's mayor admitted he lied to the city: I objected to the falsehood. He's still mayor; I was nearly run out of town. Good times.

It's been cold, wet, dreary and gray for about 700 days. Anyone who hasn't been stricken with the cold and flu likely will be soon. The combined net worth of Portland is about \$12 and nobody likes the new Facebook redesign.

On a positive note, we all have soccer games to look forward to. The homeless people living along Burnside will have Commissioner Randy Leonard's pretty new sign to look up at from the sidewalks directly below. If it's well lighted perhaps some warmth will trickle down to the cardboard-bedded sleeping below. Let's cherish our city priorities. Soccer, signs and silliness.

The recession hit many small business owners with the force of an economic Arctic blast. Having a job yesterday doesn't mean you'll have one tomorrow. As the used-to-being-comfortable face the reality of changing situations, we all see indications that the worst of times do not always bring out the best in people.

Yup, Portland, we're cold, sick, broke and cranky. But, for this, we did get an award. As you might recall, Portland was recently noted by *Businessweek* as the Unhappiest City in America. We labor not in vain.

As a newspaper publisher, my industry

gets the extra bonus of being assaulted daily with notice that our collective demise lies immediately ahead. As we wrap up these dismal first days of 2009, I'm addressing this issue for the last time. It's not productive to mire down in denials. *Just Out* is moving ahead. It's undeniably true; in these dour days, some newspapers will fail. Most won't.

America's history and culture is steeped in the lore that that which is new destroys what came before. Movies-talking movies-were predicted to be the death of theater and Broadway. A television in every home surely meant the end of movies. The arrival of pay television was heralded as the end for home viewers. Who would ever pay for television, the folly of it all? And now, the Internet, in turn, is going to put newspapers out of business. But will it? Movies still flourish and are a billion-dollar industry. In Portland and across America, theatergoers flock to see the likes of *Wicked* and *The Color Purple*. A generation of Americans has no idea that television once came with three channels and no monthly bill. Movies, theater, television, newspapers. We face change, we adapt, we survive and we thrive. It's the American way.

Yes, Happy New Year 2009, thought you'd never get here. Your unexpected late April arrival was worrisome, but now you're here.

Let's get on with the celebration with the announcement of one of our most popular activities. It's time for everyone to dust off the cameras and prepare entries for the 2009 *Just Out* Amateur Photo Contest. All submissions need to be received by *Just Out* no later than Thursday, May 28. Winning entries will be published in the June 12 issue, distributed at the Portland Pride Waterfront Festival. All entries will be on display at Q Center throughout the month of July. Q Center is a lot bigger now and we'll have room to showcase the talents of all of you. Complete information on rules, categories, prizes and eligibility can be

found at www.justout.com. Please note: This is an amateur photo contest. It's for everyone, and everyone has a chance to win.

This issue of *Just Out* brings another exciting voice to our pages. *Remember to Breathe* is the debut work by dynamic new columnist Nick Mattos. Nick has a lot to say and he knows how to say it well. You are going to want to read every word he writes. He's that good.

I'm also pleased to announce the arrival of the new editor of *Just Out*, Amanda Schurr. Amanda is a passionate writer and editor who brings a multitude of talents to this publication. She has background in news writing as well as arts and culture. She can blog, she can review, she can do it all. I had many fine applicants from which to choose for this position and I'm confident I made the right choice. I look forward to the almost-here upturn in the economy, as it will give me the opportunity to bring another equally talented writer onboard.

Until that time, *Just Out* will rely more than ever on the talents of freelancers to fill our pages with energy, knowledge and skillfully written stories. For the past 25 years we have filled our pages with the talents of the community. Now the call for freelancers goes out again. We'd like to hear from any and all experienced writers who still get a tingle from seeing their bylines in a newspaper. As we strive to increase our coverage of arts and culture, we'd love to hear from talented film, dance and theater reviewers. Tell us what excites you; let's talk. Send an e-mail to marty@justout.com.

The first shot at this year was rough. But we're moving on. New staff, new direction, new energy. Business is on the rebound, for us, and hopefully for you. Pride season is on the horizon. We've all got something to be proud of this year... proud to have made it here. Happy New Year 2009.

just out

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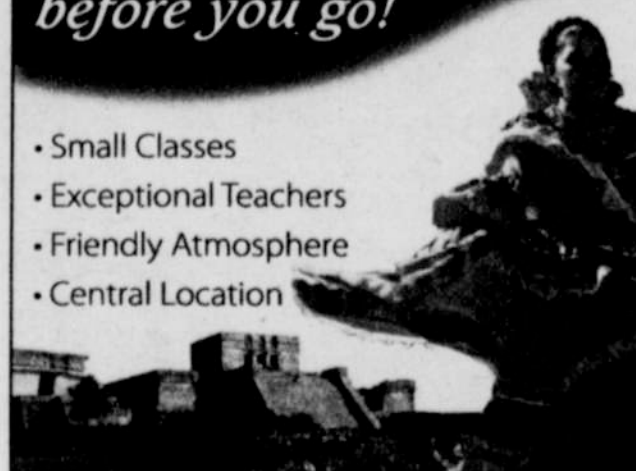
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