



PAGE 3 by Marty Davis

Two Years, Two Mayors, Two Letters

A public conversation continues

On July 15 *Just Out* received a letter to the editor from former Portland Mayor Tom Potter. The letter, found on page 5 of this issue, states the reasons why the former mayor is now an advocate for the recall of the current one. Potter's letter was published on our Web site the day it was received, setting off a small firestorm of media activity. Why did Potter send the letter to *Just Out* and not another media outlet?

Ask him.

Just Out encourages letters to the editor. Letters are an important forum for sharing opinions within our community. Letters promote dialogue and open doorways for dissenting opinion. Letters must be signed; no anonymous letters will be published. There are plenty of blogs and newspaper Web pages available for those inclined to spew, spout and cower with false bravado under the shield of anonymity. The Letters to the Editor page isn't one of them.

With over two months remaining in signature gathering for the Adams recall movement there is ample time for everyone to share their opinions. The best way to submit yours is via our Web site, www.justout.com.

Staying silent on an important issue is the same as agreeing with the other point of view.

Potter's letter on page 5 is not the first statement to the community concerning the Adams turmoil. Looking back to September 2007, the beginning of our city's long journey into madness, then City Commissioner Sam Adams also wrote a letter to the community. In this letter he expressed outrage over accusations of a relationship with the much younger Beau Breedlove. That letter, reprinted again, follows in its entirety.

"Dear Portlander,

As you have probably seen in the media, I have been the target of a nasty smear by a would-be political opponent. I will not dignify the substance of this smear by repeating it – if you read the accounts you will see there is no foundation to it. The reason is simple: it is untrue.

This kind of ugly politicking may be commonplace in other cities and at the national level, but Portland and Oregon largely has been blessedly free of it. It saddens me that it has been introduced here, and I have faith that Portlanders' rejection of it will mean that this incident is an anomaly.

About this attempted smear, here is what I want to say.

I have in the past, and I will in the future, respond to people who reach out to me for help and advice. This is especially true when it comes to young people.

Growing up in Newport and Eugene, Oregon I remember when I was a teenager and I had nobody who I felt I could talk to at a time I desperately needed someone to give me advice and perspective about coming to terms with being gay. I came through it. Not everyone does.

Gay youth suicide rates, homelessness and depression are still too high. And, adequate services have been lacking: Reasons why I co-founded Portland's Q Center, served on the Boards of Cascade AIDS Project, Basic Rights Oregon and lobbied the state legislature in support of statewide non-discrimination laws.

I didn't get into public life to allow my instinct to help others to be snuffed out by fear of sleazy misrep-

resentations or political manipulation. I understand the need for good judgment, and I work very hard to keep within the bounds of propriety – as I did in this case.

I'm glad that people consider me as a person they could come to for help, understanding and support. I work at it. And I hope that you do too. Local programs needing mentors have long waiting lists.

About my political future: this attempted smear will not deter me from serving Portland in the best way I know how. Soon I will be sharing with you my future political plans."

This letter from Sam Adams, two years ago, led to the letter from Potter printed now. Two years, two mayors, two letters.

Who knows where this all will end?

The cover of this issue features artwork from a local queer artist, Devon Berrong. It is the first of what will hopefully become many as *Just Out* creates a highly visible space for showcasing local artists. If you are a queer artist who would like to see your work on the cover, please contact creative director Laura Atkinson at production@justout.com. We're open and receptive to your suggestions. We seek the colorful, the provocative, the original and the eye-catching. If this is you, and your work – we should talk.

July has five Fridays and that means a week of summer vacation for *Just Out*. We'll be back in print on August 7. Breaking news and daily updates are found, as always, at www.justout.com.

Stay cool. Share your opinions. Write us a letter. **JO**

just out

VOL. 26 NO. 18

JULY 17, 2009

INSIDE »

» FEATURE

16 ONE GIANT STEP

Q Center's New Location Builds an Even Bigger Vision

» NEWS

8 NORTHWEST BRIEFS

14 THRIVING, DYING, AND SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN

Checking in with local MCC churches

15 FORUMS FOR AFTERMATH OF BLOW PONY VIOLENCE

» ARTS & CULTURE

27 PRIDE OF THE SOUTH

Eugene Shows Its Colors

28 SUDDENLY, THIS SUMMER

Catching up with now-Oregonian Martha Davis of The Motels

30 ALL LEATHERED UP

Oregon Leather Pride 2009

33 ART: PNCA QUEER SHOW

34 FILM: BRUNO & BOY SHORTS

» COLUMNISTS

26 LIVING OUT LOUD

31 SASSY GARDENER

35 REMEMBER TO BREATHE

41 MS. BEHAVIOR

OUR COVER: ABOUT THE ARTIST



Devon Yan Berrong was born in South China in 1982 and cannot recall a time when he wasn't interested in art. He is a self-taught artist who found his early inspirations from classic movies and music, along with his imagination. Creating his own style and always trying to achieve a realistic image, Devon has never looked back as he reaches every day for his dream of being an artist. Devon moved to Portland in 2006, finding new inspiration and building confidence in his unique vision.

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