



PAGE 3 by Marty Davis

It's Business Time

As Summer Starts to Wind Down. Big Ups to Our Small

Businesses

Hey look, Bill Dickey is on the cover of *Just Out*. What's he doing there? Well, why not? From the day I bought this paper I've heard again and again that readers, certain readers, want to see more hot men on the cover. With that thought in mind, I happily defy anyone to tell me who is hotter, more valued and more important to this community than Bill Dickey.

His overall hotness, however, is not why Dickey's on this particular cover. He's here because he represents—and represents well—the endurance, the fortitude, the generosity and the stamina of the gay and lesbian small business owner.

Small business owners provide the majority of jobs in Oregon. Small business owners work long and hard to provide wages, pay taxes, provide health insurance and improve the viability and well-being of our neighborhoods.

Small business owners improve previously unloved buildings and bring personality to neighborhoods. Small business owners place brightly colored flowerpots on the street and serve you your morning coffee and pastry. Small business owners prepare your tasty meals and hire charming and friendly servers with whom we flirt and smile.

Small business owners must compete in pricing with large out-of-state corporations with massive buying power. While cutting costs and overhead to remain on par with product pricing, small business owners strive to excel in customer service goals.

Small business owners, especially in the gay, lesbian, bi and trans community, contribute over and over to community causes and events. They sponsor, they give, they donate; the next day they are asked by another group or organization to do it all over again. Auctions, dinners, walks, runs—if an event represents a cause, chances are good that a small

business owner helped fund the endeavor.

Small business owners, contrary to what the Oregon legislature might have you believe, pay above and beyond their share of taxes. They pay into employees' social security and unemployment insurance funds. Small business owners pay city, county and state taxes and fees. In Portland there are even Tri-Met taxes that fall upon the shoulders of the small business owner. In good economic times, and in tough economic times, small business owners fill the state tax coffers.

And that brings us back to Bill Dickey, and why he's on the cover of *Just Out*.

Because he deserves to be.

Now a moment for introductions, please. I'd like everyone to meet the newest addition to the *Just Out* staff, Maria Council. Many of you know Maria as Empress Maria XXXVI. Many more of you will come to know her as "the woman at *Just Out* who takes care of things." Maria will be wearing many hats—or perhaps I should say wigs—at *Just Out*. One very important aspect of her position is reflected in the title shown on her business card: Calendar Editor. As might be expected from a calendar editor, Maria is in charge of the calendar, both the print and Web site versions.

Just Out maintains the most comprehensive calendar of events in the gay, lesbian, bi and trans community. We publicize your events, at no charge, in our print edition calendar as well as on the Web site. Entries received too late for the paper are added daily to the Web site calendar. In addition, community events are often blogged about at justout.com. In order to do all of this we need to hear from you first. This brings us back to Maria. You need to know her. Call her, write, email her, Facebook her. Let *Just Out* help you grow and promote your events and activities.

Maria's responsibilities do not end with

the calendar. She'll be the voice that answers the phone and, often, your inquiries. She'll become a resource to our advertisers; she'll be the one who answers the questions and provides assistance when your advertising representative is out helping another client. Maria will send you billing invoices and gently remind you when they are due. Maria will become your best friend. You're going to enjoy working with her. For those who will learn that currying her favor is important—chocolates are recommended.

As we were finishing up the August 7 issue, word came that the downtown Eagle was closing. Speculation was that Casey's would likely follow. The closure of the Eagle came as no surprise; to nearly all patrons the once-revered Eagle was gone the day the curtain fell on the upper West Burnside location. Sure enough, word soon came that Casey's, too, would indeed close; in its place, perhaps an underage bar. On the heels of the Casey's-Eagle departure we now know that The Dirty Duck is closing, likely gone by the time most of you read this.

Sadly the closure of these two bars will garner a largely "so what" shrug from most folks. Casey's never drew an identity crowd and there are few to miss that club. The Dirty Duck, however, was home to generations of bears, bikers, leather folk and all their assorted friends and fans. This was headquarters to a great many people and it will be missed.

Knowingly or not, we all suffer a bit of a loss when we lose a gay bar, book store, coffee shop or other venue that we call our own. The loss of these two bars is one more chip, chip, and chip away at our uniqueness, our identity, our culture and our community.

Just Out publishes next on September 4, the Friday of Labor Day weekend. Hard to imagine, isn't it? Summer is on the wane. Enjoy the remaining weeks ahead and we'll see you Out & About soon. ☺

just out

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