



PAGE 3 by Marty Davis

The Pride of Fall

Looking forward at a history-making month

October is Lesbian and Gay History Month. This is not to be confused with June, recognized as Gay Pride Month. Collectively we are now such a strong presence that we are awarded two months in which to celebrate our fabulousness.

LGBT History Month is an acknowledgement of the history of gay rights. Observances were first held in 1994, according to Wikipedia, from which all information floweth. October was selected due to the occurrence of National Coming Out Day, traditionally observed on October 11. Additionally, October 1979 marked the first-ever gay and lesbian march on Washington, D.C.

Each year, 31 gay, lesbian, bi and trans folks of accomplishment are celebrated during LGBT History Month. You can find daily updates highlighting these honorees at www.justout.com.

October 2009 will mark another date of importance to Portland's LGBT community. October 7 is the deadline for the Campaign to Recall Portland Mayor Sam Adams to either turn in sufficient signatures to merit a recall election of the openly gay Adams, or as predicted by most, announce that the bid failed.

For the last few weeks the campaign has "gone dark." Only the sparsest of email updates have been sent. Mainstream media, electronic and print, appear to have lost interest in the story. Even *Willamette Week*, which broke the story of Adams' confession that he lied to Portland voters, and then milked it for weeks and months, has seemingly moved on. Apparently, it's true, time heals all wounds—or at least scabs them over.

I, too, think it unlikely that there will be a recall. I am not closing the door entirely

on the possibility of a jubilant Jasun Wurster marching into the city auditor's office and plopping down 35,000 or more signatures. There will be much shock and awe in Portland if Wurster and his supporters actually pull this off.

Portland's GLBT community has shown tremendous loyalty to Adams. He clearly remains the golden boy, the one who can do no wrong. This has been made abundantly clear—Portland gays and lesbians stand by their man. I asked my Facebook crowd their opinions on the seemingly failed recall effort. With little exception their messages were, "Good, move on." If I was to be asked how I feel at this time about the past 10 months, my answer would be a string of two words. "Sad, tired." "Worn down." "Beat up." I suspect that I'm not alone in this regard. I think that was Adams' game plan from the beginning. Stonewall. Wear down. Survive. It appears to have been an effective strategy for the mayor.

What I'd like to see from Adams now is leadership. Dynamic, heartfelt leadership. Portland needs a mayor whose reach and message extend beyond big thinking, pie-in-the-sky funding proposals. Portland citizens are fearful of our police department. We are losing respect for our police chief. We are watching the decay of a once vibrant downtown city center. Jobs are few and far between. If potholes could be filled with worries we'd be in good shape.

Our city has a soul—it has been wounded. Fixing it will not be as simple as a pothole-filling photo op. Talk to your people, Sam. Live up to the belief and faith that so many have in you.

Sam Adams could have one day been

among the 31 individuals celebrated during national LGBT History Month. His political career, at the beginning of 2009, seemed full of promise. The next 3 1/2 years will tell what his place in gay history will be.

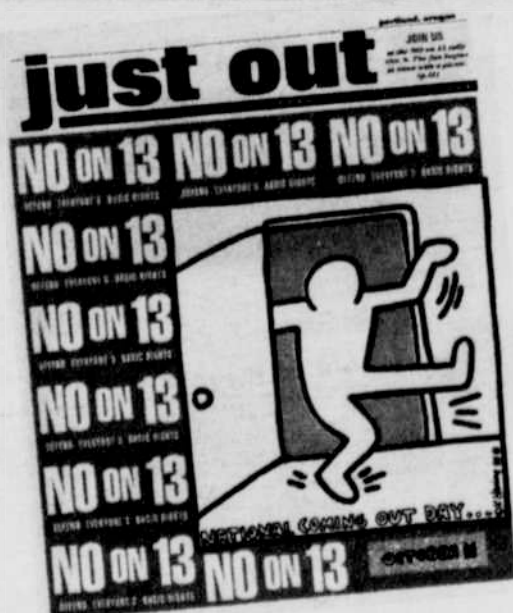
Beyond LGBT History Month, October brings a flurry of activity for Portland's gay community. One major event is the Cascade AIDS Project AIDS Walk, scheduled for October 11. Last year a new-to-town Michael Kaplan took to the stage as CAP's new executive director. In a touching and meaningful moment he introduced himself to the crowd as a man living with HIV. He asked others so impacted to join him. One by one, men and women came forward to the front of the stage. They stood together, with strength. Screw stigma.

In the year since, Kaplan has proven himself to be adept at building bridges and restoring CAP to a position of esteem in the gay, lesbian, bi and trans community. Kaplan and his staff have galvanized the gay population around AIDS Walk. Facebook postings are full of announcements for teams being formed and walkers and pledges wanted. Gay bars are competing to raise the most funds and secure the right to host the official AIDS Walk After Party. It's great to witness the resurgence of energy and enthusiasm for this organization and this project.

There's still time for you to sign up, as a team or as an individual walker, for AIDS Walk 2009. It's a family-friendly, pet-friendly, everyone-friendly event. Visit the CAP Web site (www.cascadeaids.org) for all the details.

I hope to see you there. I'll be the one with the camera.

REFLECTIONS



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- Baltimore is the site of the African American People of Color Gay and Lesbian Community Center, perhaps the first of

its kind in the United States, according to The Washington Blade. Slated to open in October, the center will welcome the heterosexual as well as the entire gay and lesbian community.

- Agoraphobic support group for gays and lesbians meets weekly. Geared towards gay men and lesbians whose anxiety and fear control their lives.
- Women and Legal Land Issues is a workshop with Cynthia Cumfer, a Portland attorney experienced in working with nonprofit organizations, real estate law and wills.
- Family, Friends and Neighbors, a unique collection of photos and personal stories focusing on 50 gay and lesbian Oregonians, is exhibited as part of Beyond the Closet's Illuminating Intolerance series in celebration of National Coming out Day.
- "Adelante con Nuestra Vision" was the title of the first National Leadership and Self-Empowerment Conference for

Latina Lesbians. Co-sponsored by Lesbiana Latinas de Tucson and the National Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Organization, the purpose of the conference was to give a national voice to Latina lesbian communities in the work toward a future of equality and justice on all fronts.

- The Rev. Roy A. Cole has been elected senior pastor of Metropolitan Community Church of Portland. An installation service will be held at 10am Sunday, Oct. 30.
- Opponents of Ballot Measure 13, a broad-reaching, anti-gay and-lesbian rights initiative on the November ballot, hope to make a strong statement with a massive Oct. 9 rally in Portland's Pioneer Courthouse Square. "We want 10,000 people to jam the square to send the message that we are united in our fight against discrimination," says No on 13 campaign manager Julie Davis.
- Co-Dependents anonymous for gay men and lesbians meets weekly.

just out

VOL. 26 NO. 23 OCTOBER 2, 2009

INSIDE >>

» FEATURE

18 WORTH FALLING FOR

Preview what's in store this season in visual arts, dance, theater and more

» NEWS

5 NORTHWEST BRIEFS

10 WARRIORS. COME OUT AND PLAY

National Coming Out Day events get local, thanks to PSU and Pride NW

12 REPEALING DOMA

Oregon Congressman Earl Blumenauer Changes His Position to Co-Sponsor the Respect For Marriage Act

14 WALKING STRONG

CAP's annual AIDS Walk marches on, despite growing national complacency about HIV/AIDS

16 DECODING THE INFORMATION AGE

Tech Expert Brian M. Westbrook Explains It All...

» ARTS & CULTURE

23 OUT & ABOUT

30 REVIEWS: NEW MUSIC

32 FREAKY SPEAKY

Homomomentum Rocks The Body at the E-Room

34 REVIEWS: NEW BOOKS

38 OUT OF THE ZEN ARCADE

Former Hüsker Dü Frontman-Turned-Solo Artist Bob Mould Gets Into His Life and Times

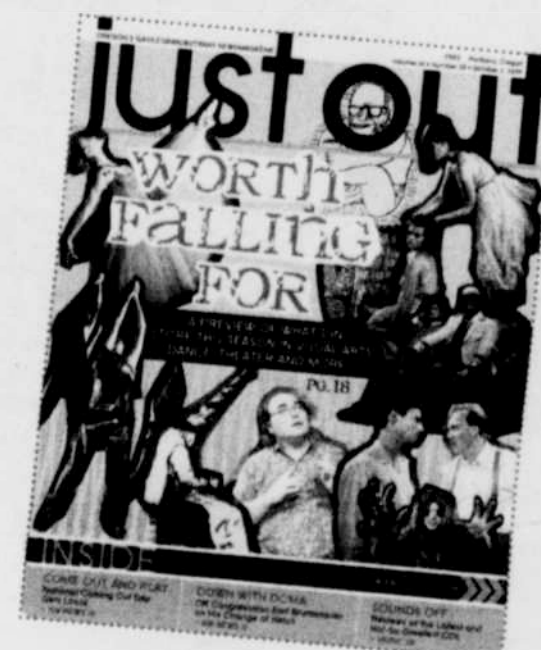
» COLUMNISTS

29 LIVING OUT LOUD

36 THE SASSY GARDENER

39 REMEMBER TO BREATHE

45 MS. BEHAVIOR



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