



PAGE 3 by Marty Davis

Goodbye, 2009.

Goodbye, my foe, my enemy.

Don't let the door hit you in the butt on the way out.

I tell you, I'm as ready to move on from 2009 as a lesbian who's found a new girlfriend and hasn't told the old one yet. I simply cannot get out of here fast enough.

This is *Just Out's* Year in Review issue—time for me to reflect on events, personalities and dynamics of the past year. Time to look at what went right and what went wrong.

Uh, no thank you. I'm gonna pass.

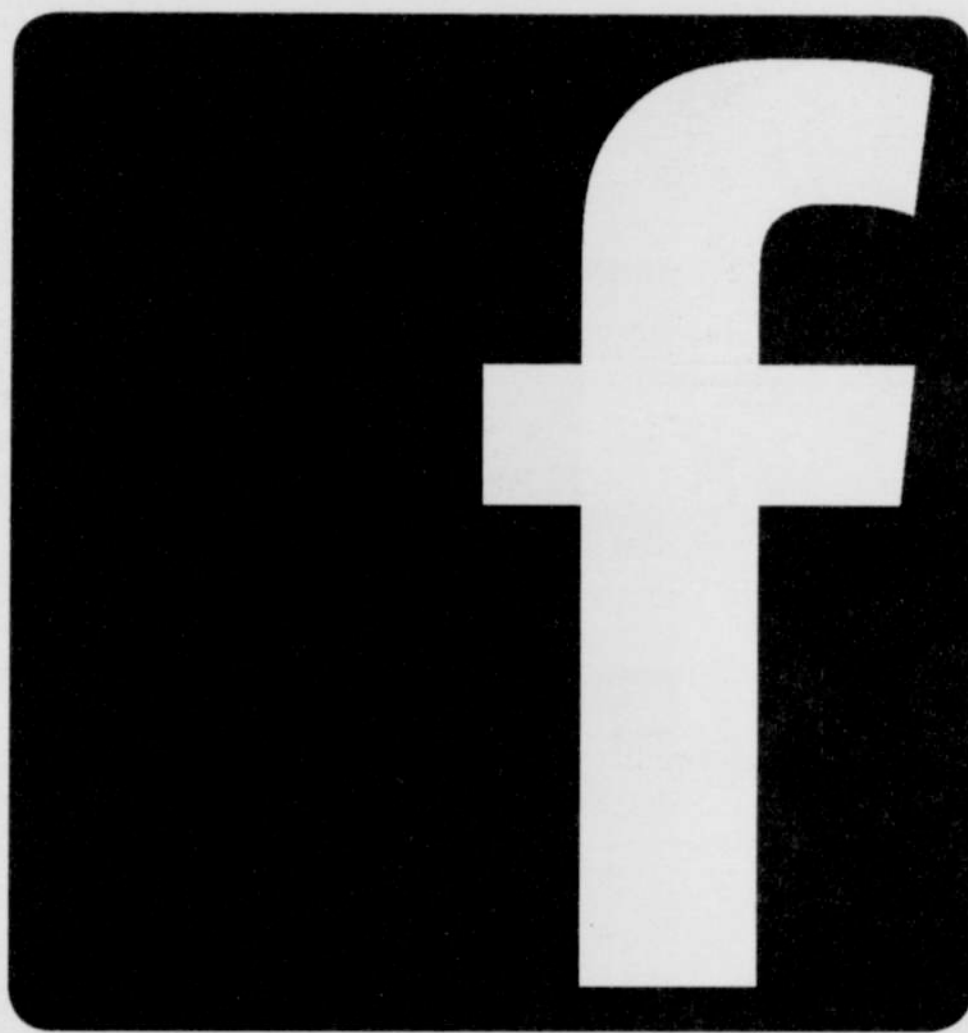
I've got nothing left to say about this year. I swear I'm been whining and complaining about 2009 since about 2005. I'm fed up with it, you're fed up with it, so let's all move on. Forget looking back, I'm looking forward. So much so that I went out and secured a personal 2010 forecast from

the most dynamic meteorologist and environmental reporter in the entire Pacific Northwest, and possibly parts of Utah and Wyoming—the handsome and charming Tim Joyce. Tim says the world will become a brighter place in 2010. That's good enough for me, people. Unless it involves snow, Tim is always—well, almost always—spot-on with his forecasts. Folks, there are better days ahead. The attractive weather dude says so.

Tim doesn't stand alone in his forecast. The folks who supposedly understand these things say that the economy will shake off the doldrums in 2010. Vitality will gradually reappear. I'm not expecting to wake up on January 1 to find my home has vaulted up to pre-recession values, but I'll take whatever positive signs come my way. Rather than dwell on past and current problems with political leadership at Portland's City Hall, I'll look forward to the elections of 2010 and 2012. New voices, new ideals, new ethics will appear. As for me personally, rather than bemoan the lack of leadership in our community, I'll step up and strive to do a better job myself. I'll be a stronger advocate for the causes I believe in. I'll do my best to find value in the harsh lessons learned during 2009.

A short time ago I was asked whom *Just Out* would select as its Person of the Year. The question left me puzzled. First, *Just Out* has no history of selecting a Person of the Year, and second, if we did, who would it be?

I mulled that question about for sev-



eral days. 2009 was not a banner year for leadership in our community. Who was out there to be counted on in hard times? Who was always there, who provided a steady shoulder and a listening ear? Who was trustworthy and had the ability to bring community together? Who could be *Just Out's* "Person of the Year"?

2009, while lacking in personal leadership in Portland, clearly was, for better or worse, the year of powerful growth in social media. For those reasons, I pick as my "personal" Person of the Year—the queen of social media—my dear friend and confidant, **facebook**.

Yes, my person of the year isn't even a person. Facebook is more than that. Facebook is a phenomenon. The past year has seen Facebook grow locally, nationally and globally. While I never gave a moment's thought to Myspace, or any of those that came before, Facebook has won my heart and my affection. Facebook has helped fill the leadership gap in our community. Discussion has been fostered; conversations exist daily. Tensions have flared, and yes, folks, de-friending does exist. I think we've all had a moment or two of junior high pettiness when it comes to Facebook. That aside, I have been able to bring together a circle of people who make me laugh, think and who allow us to indulge in provocative and stimulating conversation without too much personal drama and nastiness. Facebook has given rise to queer identity and queer voice.

Most important of all, Facebook brought me back to Scrabble. This is not Scrabble played the way we did as kids.

This is competitive, tough, fun Scrabble where no one, and I mean no one, wants to lose.

Facebook has brought me new friendships and strengthened old ones. Facebook gave us a safe place to talk about the problems and woes facing so many in 2009. Lay-offs, poor health, missing pets, family deaths, break-ups, lost love, new relationships—all these played out for us on the screens of Facebook.

I know that in times past, people lived these same scenarios, lived fulfilled lives without computers, iPhones and electronic communication devices. But this is—this *was*—2009, and the world has changed. People are close and far away at the same time—Facebook managed to help us close many

of the gaps between us.

Will Facebook last? Probably not. Something new will come along. Something, somebody new *always* comes along. While extolling her virtues I must state that Facebook also cannot replace newspapers and books. Facebook cannot—should not—be viewed as a sole source of education and information. Those limitations aside, and for those reasons previously listed, Facebook is my Person of the Year for 2009.

NETWORK HUG NOW.

I close with the acknowledgement that I am not one to make or set resolutions for the new year. I am, though, one who knows the value of setting goals and striving to make each year better than the one before. As I look ahead, my goal for myself can be simply put:

For 2010, I will strive to be more of the person many of you think I am—and less of the one many suspect me to be.

While not looking back, I do want to thank the many of you who stood by me during the tough times of last year. Without your friendship and support, I might well have not gotten to this place today. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Just Out is on vacation the week of December 21. Our next issue will be published on January 8, 2010.

And now, myself and all the staff of *Just Out* wish you, and all of us, the very best in the coming year.

just out

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