



PAGE 3 by Marty Davis

Break on through to the Other Side

And now that we're here, let's share.

"Made the scene.
Week to week.
Day to day.
Hour to hour.
The gate is straight.
Deep and wide.
Break on through to the
other side.
Break on through to the
other side."

We did it! We made it! We're on the other side of last year. The gate is straight, the potential deep and wide. We are here!

Before the final curtain call on the much-maligned year, I would like to share with you a highlight, perhaps the highlight of 2009, which ended the year on a bright spot for me.

On Saturday, December 19, I attended the Portland Gay Men's Chorus concert, *Celebrate the Season*. The mood was festive, the performances top-notch. Upon my arrival I was pulled aside and had it impressed upon me that I needed to stay securely seated throughout the entire performance and not steal away during intermission. This was accomplished with the ruse that I was needed to take a photo. Intermission came and went. More songs were sung, dances were danced, Artistic Director Bob Mensel came on stage to announce the presentation of a special award. This was my cue to take the photo. As I focused on how I was to manage this task I noticed that Mensel wasn't making a lot of sense. He wasn't talking about the right person at all. No, no, not at all. Oh my gosh, he's talking about *ME*.

Sure enough, to my tremendous surprise I was the person awarded an Honorary Lifetime Membership in the Portland Gay Men's Chorus. I thank the chorus very much for choosing me to be one of their award recipients in 2009. It means a great deal to me. The fact that it was *that* year makes it even sweeter.

I cherish my friendships, personal and pro-



Just Out Publisher Marty Davis (center) received the Portland Gay Men's Chorus' Honorary Lifetime Membership, presented by PGMC Artistic Director Bob Mensel (left) and Board President Donald Falk (right).

fessional, with PGMC. I share and appreciate the values they espouse. The chorus' mission statement includes these words:

"Community outreach is especially important to the Portland Gay Men's Chorus. By using music as a medium to address philosophical and social barriers, the Chorus' concerts become powerful tools in the effort to spread important messages."

To me the chorus demonstrated its commitment to community by partnering with Our House and Esther's Pantry at the holiday concert series. Donation bins were at the doors and concertgoers dropped off food as they made their way into the hall. So easy, so perfect, so needed.

Other groups and organizations in our community strive to do outreach. The Oregon Bears and the Imperial Sovereign Rose Court raise thousands of dollars annually to shore up and assist the more needy among us. Over the holidays I challenged many to join me in soliciting staff and membership to bring in food donations. Basic Rights Oregon stepped up and PFLAG Portland heeded the call. Hip Chicks Do Wine is actively encouraging guests to bring food to its January 18 "Beat the Winter Blues" wine-tasting party.

For 2010, I challenge all our nonprofits,

and yes, our gay, lesbian, bi and trans business owners to add a charitable/goodwill clause to your mission statements. Make it your business to help others as you achieve your own goals. Our community, locally and nationally, is at the crossroads of significant change. Today we lost marriage equality in New Jersey; tomorrow we'll take a step forward elsewhere. But, on our path to full equality we must never lose sight of the very simple truth that to be truly great, to be truly strong, we must first learn to take care of the weaker and the needier among us.

A year like 2009 would be pretty much worthless, were it not for the lessons learned. If there ever was a time to learn lessons, it was last year. Oh yeah. Based on those lessons and a vigorous desire to not repeat events and mistakes of the past, I've decided to take an offensive position as we begin 2010.

First quarters in the newspaper business are rough in the best of times. Although better times lie ahead, they're not quite here yet. With that in mind, *Just Out* will publish only one issue per month in January, February and March. We will then resume our regular first and third Friday schedule starting on April 2.

During this period, we'll be increasing our blog content, so check www.justout.com several times daily for all the latest news. We'll be working on redesign ideas and catching up on long-delayed projects. We'll also be moving full-steam ahead on our March 5 issue. You'll be hearing more about this. It will be a very special edition. You're gonna like it.

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just out

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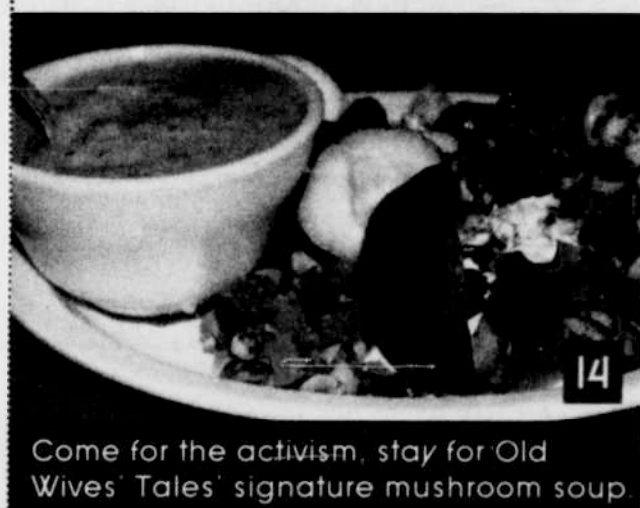
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