

Good Lookin' Out

A new year, a new look for our website and more



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"How many times do we have to go down this road?" read the email from a clearly frustrated and annoyed Karl Wilgus, owner of the Portland gay bar Casey's. Wilgus was writing in response to additional questions presented to him by *Just Out* staff writer Ryan J. Prado in reference to repeated complaints regarding unpaid wages to employees. My response to Wilgus was simple: "As many times as it takes for you to answer and address all the complaints against you—and the phone calls, letters and concerns stop being sent to us."

Just Out does not take any particular pleasure or delight in presenting the more difficult moments of our GLBT community; nor, though, do we shy away from our responsibility to present in an objective manner assorted situations that arise around us. I am well aware that any time we write about an individual or business in this community in a manner that can be construed by anyone as less than cheerleading and back-patting there will be ramifications of various degrees and natures. Facing threatened lost revenues from advertisers is a constant. I would guess that the first paper ever published in the world faced this problem, as likely will the last. Now of course, in 2011, the greatest "how-dare-you" from those unhappy with our reporting is to delete me from your Facebook profile.

An article in the Jan. 24 issue of *The New Yorker* profiling AOL CEO Tim Armstrong provides a simple yet cozy summary of the position in which local papers striving for

journalistic integrity can find themselves. To paraphrase, papers find themselves caught between journalism—which often requires the conveying of uncomfortable news—versus boosterism, which makes everyone feel good about the community served.

And there you have it. Within the wording of *Just Out*'s job description comes the obligation that we, when deemed necessary, convey uncomfortable news. Like it or not the gay community does not live within a lavender balloon of loveliness. There are, gasp, gay-owned restaurants that serve really bad food. There's a lot of bad entertainment, bad drag, bad movies, bad plays and cranky event hosts who should be called out for their boorish and rude behavior. Everyone has, or should have, accountability for their actions. *Just Out* is a venue and tool for accurate and responsible community accountability. Be glad that you have us.

Sometime today, tomorrow or maybe yesterday, depending on when you read this, *Just Out* will have launched our new website. I'm not going to give an exact day, hour and minute because I do not understand these things. I do understand very well, however, how complicated and complex the redesign and launch process is. I can tell you with great enthusiasm that the new site is amazing. It's neat, clean, simple and user-friendly. It also won't be in its completely finished format when it first appears. Websites are like children; the work is never done. Please visit us

soon at justout.com. It's seriously good. Kudos to Aimee Genter for her hard work and dedication to this project.

You'll also notice here and there small changes in our print design. There are many more to come. As we shake off the burdens of the last years of the wretched "financial doldrums," my staff has many exciting plans for the future, in design and in content. Not the least of these will be the hoped-for-soon addition of a seasoned news reporter to join our existing writing staff. My plan is, as budgeting allows, returning *Just Out* to full staffing by April. This means the addition of one three-quarter to full-time writer/copy editor, jack-of-all-trades newsperson. I'm not yet officially posting the job, we've got to get through February and March first—but I'm certainly open to coffee and conversation with interested parties who'd like to know more.

I'd like to remind all our community groups, organizations and nonprofits that tabling opportunities are available at *Just Out*'s monthly Gay Skate night at Oaks Park. Gay Skate is the third Monday of each month, Feb. 21 being the next. We generally draw a diverse and lively crowd of about 200+ skaters. The evening is all-ages, family-friendly and a good value at \$6 per person. This monthly event is also our main collection time for non-perishable food and sundries for Esther's Pantry. If you'd like to know more about space at Gay Skate, please contact me at marty@justout.com.

Just Out will also be collecting food for Esther's Pantry at the Feb. 26 Hot Flash dance in Portland. I'll have further details on that in our Feb. 18 issue, but for those who like to plan ahead, start shopping.

Now, in closing, for the women among us looking at the cover and the feature and shouting, "Hey, what about the hot ladies?"—simmer down, my dears. Simmer down.

We're simply saving the best for last. ☺

just out

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COVER PHOTOGRAPHER

Aaron Bong is a photographer and native of Portland. He works with clients to create one-of-a-kind portraits that represent who and what they are. Bong also creates limited edition folios and customized photography items for events in the community. He can be contacted through Facebook or aaron.bong@gmail.com.

REFLECTION



15 Years Ago in *Just Out*
volume 13 number 7, february 2, 1996

- Drag queens and kings wearing sequined gowns, wigs, tiaras and boas besieged the gates of Buckingham Palace on Dec. 19, demanding entry to the Queen's annual Royal Household Christmas Staff Ball.

The members of the London street-activist group OutRage! said they were protesting against Her Majesty's decree banning employees' same-sex partners from the party.

- Watch Maria's Show, featuring the only lesbian empress in the United States, at City Nightclub.
- The East Vancouver United Methodist Church exhibits a portion of the Names Project Quilt through Feb. 18. Special benefit concert tonight by the Vancouver Men's Chorus and a dramatic presentation by the REAL Kids.
- The Clinton administration was back in court Jan. 16 defending "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," the policy that bans gay men and lesbians from serving openly in the military.
- The Imperial Sovereign Rose Court, along with Rose Emperor V Frank and Rose Empress VI Mame, will hold a Feb. 11 benefit

called "Valentines from Hell: Tough Drags Do Disco...Again." Proceeds will benefit the Pride of the Rose Scholarship Fund, which provides financial assistance to sexual minorities furthering their education.

- Digital Queers Northwest meets in Portland. This organization of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender high-tech professionals and aficionados focuses on computer support for queer community organizations.
- Volunteers are needed to help organize the 1997 Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International Conference to be held in Portland. If you have skills in organization, accounting, fund raising, outreach, program planning, housing, conference registration, or childcare please call.
- Rainbow is a positive peer-support group, primarily for sexual minority youth of color, sponsored by the Urban League of Portland.