

Q & GAY

Answers to a few of your pressing questions



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BY MARTY DAVIS

On March 2, 2011, the U.S. Supreme Court taught us all a lesson—a lesson in tolerance. On this date the court threw out a lawsuit against Fred Phelps and the Westboro Baptist Church, effectively stating that the First Amendment to the Constitution provides free speech protections for Phelps and his followers, even in their most dastardly moments, picketing and protesting at military funerals with the venomous anti-gay bent that they bring to all they do and believe.

No one wants to see or hear from Phelps. He and his folk are a waste of time and energy on all counts. But as despicable as their message, the fact remains that they have a right to their beliefs and behaviors. Like it or not, they must be tolerated. That's why I don't like the concept of tolerance. I cringe when it's applied to the LGBTQ community. I don't want to be tolerated. I want to be respected and treated as an equal for who I am and what I do. I want no special rights, I want no special treatment and I surely have no interest in court-mandated tolerance. People tolerate that for which they have no other choice. Tolerance should never be a goal of the infamous gay agenda. We are far better than that. We deserve far more.

As for Phelps, these people will perpetuate as long as they are given that upon which they thrive—attention and media spotlight. I firmly believe that they'll stop picketing schools and funerals the day after no one shows up to watch and goad them on. They exist solely for our attention. They bask in the flash of our cameras; they mock our signs. They feed off our pain and anger. They thrive in our intolerance. Deprived of this attention, they will sputter and they will fail. We, collectively, have the power to control the Westboro Baptist Church. Why don't we?

Moving on, this seems like a good time to answer a few of the more frequently asked questions I receive. Am I interviewing myself? Perhaps.

Q: Will *Just Out* ever bring back the personal ads to the website?

I don't want to say that this is a 100 percent "no," so let's go with 97 percent. I do not see this happening. The free personal ads were fun and well received. Unfortunately, they were also a very high-maintenance project. At their peak there were several hundred people using the site and unfortunately on nearly any given day several hundred folks lost their password, became confused with directions and sent endless emails beseeching help. Sadly, I couldn't then, and certainly can't now, afford to hire anyone to provide all that assistance. While my ego loves the notion of running a vast empire meeting all the needs of the LGBTQ community, the truth is that our time and resources are best served staying focused on the print and electronic versions of the newsmagazine.

Q: Is Gay Skate night an all-ages event?

Just Out presents Gay Skate night on the third Monday of each month at the Oaks Park roller skate rink. There is much to love about Gay Skate, especially when Beki plays ABBA and Michael Jackson. The family-friendly all-ages venue works surprisingly well. There are moms and moms and dads and dads with their children in tow. I've seen kids in the tiniest, cutest little roller skates on the planet. I've seen some, well, older kids in the tiniest little shorts I've ever seen, too. We've got a regular crowd of "Hot Guys," many of whom are out-skated by the um, let's say more mature skaters. Some folks come to exercise, some to dance, others to see and be seen. It works. It doesn't sound like it should, but it does. From toddlers and teens to gray-hairs and no-hairs, they come to skate and laugh. You should come too.

Q: When are the Unity Portland Pages putting out their second directory?

I get asked this so often you'd think it was my publication. There seem to be two

answers to this question: 1.) "It's at the printers," or 2.) "When the inventory of the first book is gone." Last we heard the Unity Portland Pages were still locked in battle with the Portland Gay and Lesbian Yellow Pages, with a possible court mediation/settlement date set for mid-March.

Q: What's up with Pride Northwest this year?

Really good question—let me know if you hear anything.

This topic follows a clear pattern. Pride Northwest conducts annual Pride events in Portland in June. Immediately following these events, loud cries of outrage and anger, followed by calls for resignation and demands for new blood arise from the angry mobs—or at least a few pissed off people on Facebook. These frustrations seethe and simmer for a few days, maybe a couple of weeks. The Pride Northwest board goes about their business; nothing ever happens, no one new ever really steps up to take a leadership role. Now the same people are planning Pride 2011 and I'm pretty sure the pattern will continue.

I can tell you that for the fifth consecutive year *Just Out* was not invited to participate in the bidding process for the Pride Guide produced by Pride Northwest. I've been given reason to think that the job went to another of Portland's alternative weekly newspapers, but not the one that had it a couple of years back. This time it looks like it's the other one, the one that laid off its lone queer-specific writer several years ago and has had little or no interest or focus on our community since. But hey, why go there? It is what it is.

Q: Does *Just Out* have a Facebook page?

Does *Just Out* have a Facebook page? Hello, 2011, yes! Find us, like us, no Love Us, please. We have deep, meaningful conversations and give away stuff there. We're kinda easy to find, we're *Just Out*.

And finally, the most asked question of all:

Q: When are you going to write about me?

Soon—very, very soon. I promise. You're very, very close to almost being next.

Ah, sorry, no more questions, that's all the time we have for today.

See you Out & About soon.

just out

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