

BUMPER STICKER POLITICS

With summer over, the show's about to begin



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BY MARTY DAVIS

If you're a gay or lesbian in search of equality in Oregon, your wait is almost up. Yup, equality comes to Oregon early in the morning of September 23, with the arrival of the autumnal equinox. On this day there is an equal amount of daylight and darkness—12 hours each. From this point on, daylight hours dwindle until we reach the winter solstice on December 22, the day with the least amount of daylight in the Pacific Northwest.

If you're looking for any other kind of equality—oh, say marriage equality—I'm afraid that I can't offer you quite such a specific forecast. As you'll read in NW News on p. 6, Basic Rights Oregon, by way of an advisory group and its board of directors, will very soon decide if 2012 will be the year to once again place marriage equality before Oregon voters. This is not a choice that will be made lightly. Sometime between the equinox and the solstice a very major decision will be made.

The choice to do this will be based on many factors. Reaching majority support of Oregon voters is high on the list, but other factors must be considered also. To contemplate a marriage equality ballot measure in Oregon in 2012, one has to look well beyond the state boundaries. President Obama and his fortunes, or lack thereof, need to be a consideration—to my mind at least. If 2012 turns out to be as bloody a battle as is indicated, it simply might not be the most opportune time to place this initiative before an angry, broke, bitter, hate-speech and rhetoric-fueled voter base. People find empowerment in the secrecy of the ballot. If they can't vote out their frustrations over high unemployment and lowered economic lifestyles, they'll more likely stamp a "NO!" on ballot measures attempting any change in the status quo. This type of anger-based punitive voting is not going to show up in polling data yet must be considered a factor in the voting outcome, albeit unpredictable and unmeasurable. The fortunes or lack thereof when it comes to the

current presidential administration have a strong likelihood of bringing new meaning to "trickle-down policies" in state and local elections. Voters feeling personal powerlessness pounce on opportunities to take any power away from others.

GAY RIGHTS ARE CIVIL RIGHTS

2012 is already shaping up to be an unforgettable election year. As of mid-September three "credible" candidates have entered the race for the Portland mayoral seat currently held by Sam Adams: Eileen Brady, Charlie Hales and Jefferson Smith. Each of these candidates—well, two of them at least—will come before the LGBTQ population with a carefully prepared portfolio of interests and background in working and advocating for full civil rights for the gays. *Just Out* will be spending a lot of time—reading, watching, listening and speaking—with these candidates. All this background will be shared with you, so that we can all make an informed and educated decision as to who is best qualified to next lead our city. Our goal is to determine which candidate has the best qualifications to lead all of Portland, not the one who most convincingly spews out all the politically expedient "I support the gays" rhetoric.

Oregon's late-starting fire season had a little flare-up this week, not from lightning or human error, but from clashing opinions over wording changes in the platform of the Oregon GOP. Supporters, or wannabe supporters, of the Republican Party would have had us dancing in the streets over the supposed removal of anti-gay wording from the party platform. The positive is that the party's disapproval and contempt for gays was "softened." Deleted from the platform were the words, "We do not consider 'same-sex marriage' to be marriage nor 'civil unions' to have

any equivalency nor right to legal standing. Nor do we believe 'same-sex marriage' or 'civil unions' worthy of legal standing for adoption or parenting purposes." Nice, huh?

In a begrudging gesture, the above phrasing was removed. What still remains, however, is this: "We concur with the Oregon Constitution that marriage is between one man and one woman." This is bumper sticker politics, folks. To say that the Oregon Republican Party has become more welcoming or receptive toward gays is like decreasing the amount of mayo on a Burger King Double Whopper and calling it a "healthy choice option." Don't buy it.

Have you ever made a kinda dumb mistake? Well I have, and today I discovered a doozy of one. One of my not-too-complicated duties as publisher is to check the main *Just Out* email box, justout@justout.com. For some reason on June 17, I stopped doing this. Between then and today, when the box started rejecting incoming emails, prompting a phone call, 14,000+ emails had been sent to that box. I know a lot of these were spam, but one of them might also have been from you. Unfortunately, the box is now broken so I can't go back and check. If you sent an email to justout@justout.com in the last three months, I apologize deeply for the lack of response. Yes, I have learned a lesson from this: I will now check daily.

September is one of those glorious five Friday months. This means *Just Out* staff take a week off in preparation for an anticipated and needed hearty holiday season. We will be closed the week of September 19, returning on the 26th to start work on our October 7 print issue. You'll still find me at *Just Out's* Gay Skate, 7 p.m. September 19 at Oaks Park. I'll be raffling off tickets to the Erasure concert on October 5, with all proceeds going to Esther's Pantry. Bring canned food, bring cash, come skate into the autumnal equinox, or at least until 9 p.m. ☪

just out

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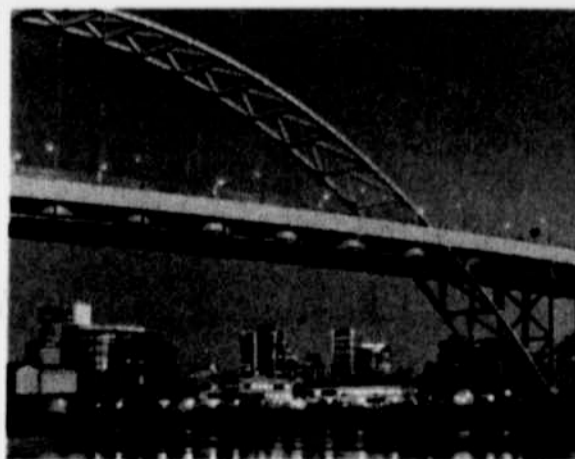
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the
encore
condos on the park

Life that fits your style

Life in the Pearl is good. Life at the Encore is better. No lawn mowers, no traffic jams. Everything you need, just steps or a streetcar ride away. And, only at the Encore, the city's largest planned park at your doorstep. Livability has a new home. Maybe you should too.



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