



OPDX LAST CHANCE SUMMER DANCE

SEPTEMBER IS FINALLY HERE AND SO IS THE SLOW WIND-DOWN OF SUMMER. THE COMING DAYS WILL BE FILLED WITH LABOR DAY BARBEQUES AND LAST CHANCE SUMMER DANCES WHERE YOU MIGHT START THINKING OF WHITTILING THAT DANCE CARD DOWN TO ONE MAIN CUDDLE BUDDY. I'M STILL HIGH OFF A HIKE-IN CAMPING TRIP WHERE WE SLEPT UNDER THE STARS AND TALL TREE BOUGHS, A RUSHING WATERFALL RIGHT BESIDE US. SUN DRUNK WE PLUNGED INTO CLEAR COLD WATERS AND NESTLED INTO THRONES CREATED OUT OF ROCK BEDS. EXHAUSTED WE BUILT FIRES WITH FOUND WOOD AND I THINK I HAVE FINALLY SHED MY CITY-KID AVERSION TO PEEING IN THE WOODS. BUT I KNOW THESE FEELINGS ARE FLEETING.

Still, it also made me realize, once again, what an exceptionally beautiful, and just plain exceptional, place we live. As one of those rare Portland natives (for the most part) I have seen our city and our state grow, change and struggle through many literal and figurative seasons. As we head into autumn, whether that's going back to school or just into chillier weather, none of that beauty is lost, merely transformed. That kind of transformation is what we hope for Red Cap Garage, one of our oldest gay bars, that shuttered August 18th.

Even if this summer only saw one weekend scorcher we played at the river often, hiked woods that are so dense you hardly believe they're right in the city and brought nature into town itself with things like the sandcastle contest in Portland's "living room" Pioneer Square or the fecund vegetable gardens that seem to grow everywhere, even in tiny patches between driveways and in front of neighborhood streets. We biked over bridges and on neighborhood greenways and lived summer to its fullest. Now it's time to take that energy and put it into art, work, and even cold outdoor activities.

Festival season isn't over though the art and music may have moved indoors. We'll see a preview of the 16th Annual Portland Lesbian and Gay Film Festival in the October issue and in the September issue we cover another of our biggest fests, PICA's Time Based Arts. TBA will take over several venues, including their late-night spot they've dubbed The Works which occupies the old Washington High School on Southeast Stark. One particular TBA highlight includes Claudia Meza's Sonic City sound tour that celebrates the Portland ambience.

TBA celebrates Portland as both place and people and engages with a city that has always been proud of its difference, even if you don't ascribe to the "Keep Portland Weird" mentality. Because normal or weird, LGBT or queer or straight, we all know that Portland is special.

So as I watch the leaves change on our few deciduous trees I won't be sad but rather ride that summer wave of energy into a season of arts, politics and eventually holidays. Maybe I'll even buy a snowboard this year. ■

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Just Out has a long and proud history of informing and entertaining the LGBTQ community in Oregon and SW Washington, our supporters near and far, and working to build bridges that lead to justice, fairness, and equality for all people.

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