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Published by
Glenn-Kipp Publishing, Inc

Rivendell Media, Inc.
authorized national advertising representative

just out™
Founded in 1983

FORMER PUBLISHERS
Founders Renee LaChance & Jay Brown
Marty Davis

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.

Published by Glenn Kipp Publishing, Inc.

Printed in the U.S.A.

LOOKING BACK

Just Out, started during a controversy over the L-word, turns 30 years old in 2013.

Picking up Volume I, Number One, of *Just Out*, (October, 1983), is like walking into an argument in progress.

"We're back, folks!" Jay Brown announces in the very first editorial. "And we're doing it our way."

From the distance of 30 years, it isn't clear who had been missing, where they had gone, whose way they had been doing it before, or even what "it" was.

However, queer Portlanders in 1983 knew that "it" was the issue of inclusion; and by the way, we never, ever called ourselves queer in those days. It was a sneering, pejorative, oppressive term, and, to this day, some elders in the community have difficulty saying it. Nowadays, the term "queer" lets us avoid the alphabet-soup LGBTQI label that never seems to fit; but in fact, in 1983 we didn't have the alphabet soup, either. The story of *Just Out* began in the controversy over changing the name of 1983 Gay Pride to "1983 Lesbian & Gay Pride."

Emotions ran high. Lesbians, and plenty of other folks, favored inclusion. The publisher of Portland's only gay newspaper at the time, the *Cascade Voice*, believed that "gay" was inclusive enough. "Lesbian & Gay Pride 1983" finally won out, but two staff members at the *Cascade Voice*, editor Renee LaChance and assistant editor/photographer Jay Brown, felt the value conflict strongly enough to leave the *Voice* and start up their own newspaper. In *Just Out*, the two of them were indeed back – back in print, and running their own very inclusive show.

Portland watched to see if the town would support two gay newspapers – or, rather, one gay newspaper, and one lesbian and gay newspaper with regular contributions from the Black

community, plus writers in Roseburg and the Klamath Basin.

Yes, Portland supported *Just Out*; or, more correctly, *Just Out* earned its place in Portland. By any measure, each of the early issues looked healthier than the one before, with more advertising, more local articles, and more engagement with the community.

The little publication overcame two potentially fatal problems during that first year. Plans for paid regional distribution fell through, and local circulation plunged when *Just Out* suddenly cost 25 cents per issue, possibly because people outed themselves just by buying one. Renee and Jay went back to distributing their papers for free at friendly locations. Also in the first year, the pressroom at Nickel Ads abruptly refused to print *Just Out* any longer, causing the young publication to miss an entire issue, and leaving the staff scrambling to locate a printer who found the content morally acceptable.

Nonetheless, at the end of the first year, in October, 1984, *Just Out* was up to twenty well-filled tabloid pages from the original sixteen, and looking good.

For those who were wondering, *Cascade Voice* printed their last issue in December 1984, changed ownership, and came back as *The Eagle Newsmagazine* from January through August of 1985. *The City Open Press*, *City Week*, *Oregon Gay News*, *The Portland Monitor*, and *The Alternative Connection* all came and went between 1985 and 1993.

Just Out continued, inclusively. Jay Brown died in 1990. In 1998, Renee sold *Just Out* to Marty Davis, who ran the publication until 2011 when it was acquired by its current owners. §