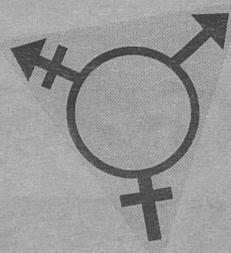
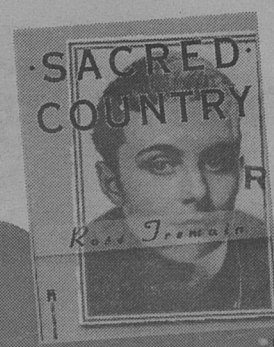
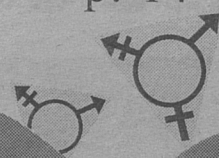


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VERMONT'S FORUM FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER ISSUES

# OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS

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Photo: Max Stroud

Liz Trott and Janice Moran owned and operated Tunbridge Brewery in South Royalton. They were consistent supporters of the annual Drag Ball to benefit GLBT organizations.

## Lesbian-Owned Brewery Closing

BY CHUCK FRANKLIN

A South Royalton-based microbrewery has closed due to lack of interest and unmet funding promises from local and state agencies, according to its owners.

Incorporated by Liz Trott and Janice Moran in 1995, Jigger Hill Brewery, Ltd., also known as Tunbridge Quality Ales, bottled its last batch on Tuesday, December 19.

Trott said the town of South Royalton had promised the brewery a loan of \$35,000 in late 1998 to allow them to move into a new building and obtain the equipment they needed to meet increased demand for their beers.

Based on this guarantee, the brewery signed a lease and moved into its current South Royalton location. However, the town never fulfilled its promise, Trott said, and they have been struggling ever since.

"The letters of regret from our discussions and loan applications have [all] been negative," said Trott. "However, the results of the beer hitting the streets and the public have [all] been positive." Support from the gay and lesbian community has been especially strong, she

added. Trott believes that the banks and state agencies have been basing their negative decisions on the history of other similar companies and not looking at Tunbridge's positive projections. "If they are looking at them, they're not believing them," she said.

Trott explained that the operation started out undercapitalized, with only her own personal investment and a Small Business Association loan through the Northfield Bank. However, sales of their brews soon increased beyond expectations, and the brewery found itself needing more equipment to meet that demand.

The company did obtain a \$15,000 loan in 1997 through the Vermont Economic Development Authority to buy some equipment. However, demand kept increasing and Trott said she had to expand and buy yet more equipment. The brewery still bottles their beer by hand, explained Trott, and it takes four people an hour to bottle 35 cases. With a new bottling machine, it would take only two people to bottle 40 cases in one hour.

However, several local

TUNBRIDGE > 5

## State Pulls Outright from In-School Presentations

BY BARBARA DOZETOS

Montpelier—The Vermont Department of Education announced plans last month to do its own outreach to gay and lesbian youth in schools, rather than pay Burlington-based agency Outright Vermont to do it.

Commissioner of Education David Wolk said his department would incorporate the work Outright has been doing in its "safe schools" initiative. The program addresses harassment based on race, religion, and sexual orientation, among other things.

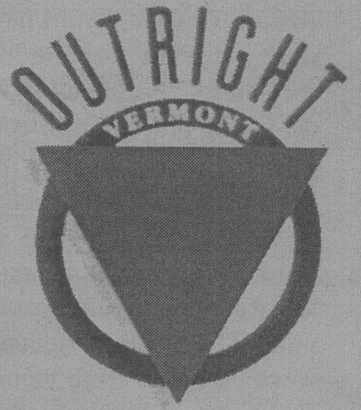
In the big state budget picture, the \$12,000 designated for this work is seemingly insignificant, but it has captured the attention of conservative legislators. Virginia Renfrew, a lobbyist with Renfrew and Zatz Consulting, said she expected the money intended for Outright Vermont to be the source of heated debate in the coming legislature, espe-

cially in the newly Republicans-controlled House of Representatives.

Outright has been a victim of the backlash stemming from Vermont's new civil union legislation. Right-wing groups have accused Outright of recruiting kids to homosexuality with their school programs. One organization did a mass mailing just prior to the elections, quoting randomly from safer sex brochures it said were being distributed in schools.

Outright maintains its work in schools is limited to tolerance and anti-harassment education. It also helps students start gay-straight alliances where there is an interest. The more graphic and controversial information is available at the group's drop-in center in downtown Burlington, but not a part of any work in the schools.

Keith Elston, executive director of Outright Vermont, said removing his organization from the firing line could have been part of the



reason for the cut, but he was not consulted before the decision was made.

The Department of Education is supportive of Outright's work, said spokesperson Diane Derby, but public confusion puts the bigger mission in danger.

"The problem is about what Outright Vermont does in schools as opposed to in the drop-in center," she said. "Our concern is that no matter how hard we try to explain that, the distinction is still lost." That, she said, did play into the department's decision to take on the work

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## Supreme Court Split Decision Bodes Ill for Community

BY BARBARA DOZETOS

During the recent campaign season, Democrats expected the Supreme Court to play a role in deciding the presidential race: they urged gays to vote for Vice President Al Gore in part because he would be the more likely candidate to appoint justices who would support civil rights.

But no one could have predicted just how key the Court's role would be. And the fallout from its direct involvement in the presidential race's outcome has the attention of the gay community.

The openly divisive nature of the Dec. 12 decision that ended Gore's chance at the next presidency is not a good sign for gays, said Eric Ferrero of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Lesbian and Gay Rights Project. "It probably lessens the Court's willingness or ability to come to compromise on a number of issues as they have done in the past," he said.

The justices, he said, have been known for respectfully agreeing to disagree amongst themselves and for coming to a consensus on important issues. "Those are both things that have sometimes

benefited our community," said Ferrero. "At least for the immediate future, that may be hard for us to do."

Mary Bonauto, an attorney with Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders and co-counsel in Vermont's Baker same-sex marriage case, said the five/four division in the Bush vs. Gore decision was not a surprise to her. "We've seen that same split frequently in the past," she said.

The division is not new, Ferrero agreed. "What is new is their being more public about it and strident about it," he said. "That gets at

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