

celebrates 15 years

VERMONT'S VOICE FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER COMMUNITIES

WILB
HQ75
.0971

OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS

Volume XVI, Number 5

June 2001

www.mountainpridemedia.org

Pride!

Calendar

pg. 18 & 19

Amy Ray Goes Stag
pg. 23

Civil Unions: Everything is Different
pg. 9

HomoGenetic
pg. 13

Psychiatrist Denounces Media Coverage of "Ex-Gay" Study

BY CHUCK FRANKLIN

Numerous national and local media outlets reported on May 9 that a Columbia University psychiatrist had determined gays and lesbians can become straight.

Dr. Robert L. Spitzer presented the findings of a study he had conducted on this issue to the American Psychiatric Association's annual meeting that day.

However, in a May 23 *Wall Street Journal* op-ed, Spitzer claimed these media reports were misleading.

"To my horror," he wrote, "some of the media reported the study as an attempt to show that homosexuality is a choice, and that substantial change is possible for any homosexual who decides to make the effort."

He went on to say in the op-ed that he suspected "the vast majority of gay people would be unable to alter a

firmly established homosexual orientation." He also said that parents should not use his study to try to coerce gay or lesbian children into unwanted therapy.

However, the media coverage of his initial May 9 announcement caused a ripple of responses from national GLBT organizations as well as many Vermonters. VTPRIDENet, Mountain Pride Media's e-mail listserv, suddenly came alive with e-mail after e-mail expressing mostly outrage about the study, as it was reported by the media.

National gay and lesbian organizations such as the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, the Human Rights Campaign, and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force all issued press releases condemning the study. Most focused on the

>2

Jeffords Abandons Republican Party Change Could Improve Climate in Senate for GLBT Community

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) claims that the shift of control in the Senate caused by Sen. James M. Jeffords' withdrawal from the Republican Party will create a more favorable environment on issues important to the

GLBT community.

In a press release dated May 24, NGLTF outlined some of the changes which are expected to happen in the Senate after Jeffords announced on that same day he would become an Independent and vote with

Democrats on organizational matters.

The move effectively gives Democrats a 51-49 majority, and Sen. Tom Daschle will become the Majority Leader. Democrats will have the power to name the chairs of all Senate committees.

Because of this shift, Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-VT, will replace Sen. Orrin Hatch as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which votes on President Bush's judicial nominations.

Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-MA, will become chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. This committee considers a number of measures important to the GLBT community ranging from nondiscrimination laws to school safety programs that fight HIV/AIDS.

Sen. Joe Biden, D-DE, will replace Sen. Jesse Helms as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Helms is one of the senators who held up the nomination of openly-gay James Hormel to be ambassador to Luxembourg during the Clinton administration.

"The new composition of the Senate will serve as a brake on Bush's more radical proposals," said NGLTF political director Tim McFeeley.

"It will mean that Bush's nominees, particularly for the judiciary, will receive more careful scrutiny. It will mean that pro-GLBT measures, like the proposed hate crimes law, safe schools legislation, bans on discrimination and pro-GLBT immigration measures could stand a better chance of at least being aired for debate."

"All in all, this change will make the U.S. Senate more compassionate and less conservative," said McFeeley.

NGLTF maintains "W Watch," a web site devoted to tracking Bush's nominees and initiatives that could affect the GLBT community. To visit W Watch, go to www.nglftf.org and click on the "W" button.

RU12? Dinner Meets Goals



Don Eggert (l), co-chair of the RU12? Community Center, with Cathy Resmer (r), emcee for the evening's events.

BY CHUCK FRANKLIN

RU12?'s annual fundraising dinner in May raised \$7,000 after expenses, according to co-chair Don Eggert.

"This is more than double what we earned last year [\$2,000]," said Eggert, "and exactly what we budgeted for."

Eggert says the money will help RU12? keep their new downtown headquarters office open, as well as finish out the year with a surplus.

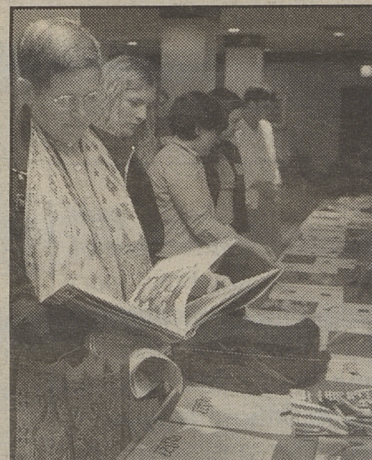
That surplus will allow RU12? to begin an actual fund to build a new community center, said Eggert. He said the organization expects to announce the details of the fund sometime early in 2002.

One of the events that helped this year's dinner to be so successful was a silent auction, which brought in more than double the amount expected.

RU12? volunteer Jill Hoppenjans organized the auction, her first ever. She began work on the auction last November and spent the next several months until the dinner preparing for it.

Eggert says the funds raised at the dinner will also allow RU12? to keep its programming going. In addition, he said the Gill Foundation had recently given RU12? an \$8,800 grant to help pay general operating expenses such as utilities and rent.

The next fund raising event for RU12? will be a concert by the Samadhi Singers on Friday, June 15, at 7:30 p.m. at the College Street Congregational Church in Burlington. Tickets are \$10 per person and may be purchased at the Peace and Justice Store on Church Street or at RU12? headquarters.



The overwhelmingly successful silent auction helped RU12? reach its goals.

inside

Arts.....	23
Calendar.....	27
Classifieds.....	33
Columns.....	13
Community Compass.....	26
Letters.....	5
Replay.....	8
The Source.....	29
Views.....	9