

Permit for Faerie camp

Faerie Camp Destiny is pleased to announce that we have been granted our ACT 250 permit. We actually have the papers in our hands and can begin construction of our campground in Grafton and Chester, Vermont!

In spite of the efforts of certain local politicians to stop our project through the spread of fear and misinformation, the District Environmental Commission #2 ruled in our favor and rejected their arguments.

Thanks for your ongoing interest in our project and let me know if there's additional information we can supply.

Thank you,

Jim Jackson

Contact for Development at
Faerie Camp Destiny, Inc.

Domestic Violence Not About Sex

I am writing in response to the article, "More than Rough Sex: SafeSpace Provides Help For Victims of Violence Within Queer Families" in October's issue of *OITM*. First of all, as the Executive Director of SafeSpace I want to thank you and *OITM* for helping us raise awareness about the violence committed against and within our queer communities in Vermont. We want LGBTQQ survivors of violence to know that we are here to help, and we really appreciate your support.

However, there are some issues about the article I want to address. The SafeSpace board and staff had concerns about the title because it implies that domestic and sexual violence has something to do with "rough sex." In fact, abuse and violence are not about sex at all; they are about power and control, one person using their power to control another person. We are also concerned that the title might perpetuate the harmful stereotype that portrays LGBTQQ people and relationships as merely sexual and perversely sexual at that.

I also need to make an important correction to the article on the topic of housing for gay men escaping abusive relationships. The article states that "there is now a network of potential safe homes for such men." The truth is that there is no network of potential safe homes for gay men or other LGBTQQ survivors of violence in Vermont. What I did say in the interview is that in *other communities*, safe homes are used to shelter gay men who cannot access shelters for abused women. Safe homes are the homes of trained volunteers who take in survivors for limited amounts of time to provide emergency shelter until more permanent housing is found.

The important thing that I want to emphasize here is that emergency housing for LGBTQQ survivors is a need in our community. SafeSpace is working on meeting the needs of the survivors who contact us. We cannot do it alone.

We would welcome the assistance of anyone in the community who is interested in helping us address this housing need. SafeSpace can be contacted at 802-863-0003 (V/TTY) or toll-free 866-869-7341 Monday through Friday 10am-6pm.

Thank you again, Euan and OITM, for all you do for our communities!

Kara DeLeonardis

SafeSpace Executive Director

The title came from a comment either you or Peter made (and I paraphrased) about how police and social service agencies have in the past related to allegations of same-gender domestic violence as being just "rough sex." Thanks for correcting the information I obviously misheard about a network of safe homes for those not served by the traditional domestic violence agencies that doesn't exist yet in Vermont. How about it, folks? You can help shelter someone leaving an abusive relationship by contacting SafeSpace. - EB

Harboring Abusers

While all the coverage of the Catholic Church's sexual abuse scandals has been disturbing, none has affected me quite so greatly as the recent coverage of the case of Donal Ward, formerly the pastor at St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church in Vergennes.

I attended St. Peter's for many years after my baptism there in 1969, finally leaving the Church in 1989 after coming to the conclusion that Catholicism was mired in corruption, misogyny, homophobia, and many other egregious abuses of power. Now I learn that my former parish has harbored a sexual abuser for years. Bishop Angell has declared that Ward will not be punished for his abuse of power but instead allowed to retire with a full pension and the support of the diocese.

Why? Because, despite acknowledging that he had been abusing his young victim for many years, there is "no proof" that Ward "had sex" with the youth before the age of consent.

This certainly makes a nice end run around the Attorney General for Angell and Ward but some of us are going to continue to insist that Donal Ward's behavior should be punished. Simply because a youth has reached the age of consent [16 in Vermont] does NOT in any way mean that the youth had consented to sex. There are dozens of ways that older abusers can coerce young people into sexual behavior. As the Attorney General noted, there is ample evidence that Ward groomed this young person for sex for many years. A man in his sixties, an authority figure with great power, regardless of whatever random age might be labeled "the age of consent," should not be using his power to entrap teenagers in abusive situations.

It is simply unacceptable that St. Peter's Parish and the Diocese of Burlington would support abusive men like Donal Ward. If we continue

to allow abusers and their handlers to spin the language and control the debate, we will solve nothing, and the Church will continue its rapid descent into an increasingly twisted version of Dante's *Inferno*.

I support organizations like SafeSpace, that actually support male (and female) survivors of sexual abuse, no matter their age. I will also be officially removing my name from the baptismal records of St. Peter's Parish in protest of this latest round of hypocritical, morally bankrupt behavior.

Christopher Kaufman

Burlington

Positive Judgment for Crow

Just a note to say how much I enjoyed Crow Cohen's article on "Judgment vs. Judgmentalism." I inadvertently stumbled upon your website when I did a Google search on the definition of judgment. I believe Crow nailed it with her definition. In this day and age, judging seems to be politically incorrect. But yet on some level, we all must judge. The balance that she offers with her synopsis "Judgmentalism is judgment without compassion" expresses my sentiments exactly. That explanation captures the spirit of discernment and critical analysis, and tempers it with benevolence. It made me stop and think. I'm not the type to offer my opinion but I had to say thanks.

Maria Olson

Lake Mary, FL

Crow was unable to write her regular column this month, but don't worry, she'll be back. - EB

Giving Thanks

I'm thankful for groups like yours that are there for parents, friends, family of and those of course who are gay/bi/lesbian/transgender/questioning. I am a member of a local Gay-Straight Alliance and have been fighting to make sure no rights are infringed upon and with local groups like Project 10 have assured we are not singled out or ignored because of what we support. I have many gay friends and groups like yours make me feel much better about their safety both mentally and physically because they aren't alone.

Leslie Smaltz,

San Pedro, CA

Photo Essay Recommended

Thank you for writing a review of Linda Hollingdale's new photo/essay book, *Creating Civil Union: Opening Hearts and Minds*. This is an extraordinary book, for a couple of reasons. First, Linda's photos are stunning; they really capture the essence of the person being photographed. Second, the essays accompanying the photos,

taken together, tell the full story of the joys and heartache we all experienced during the civil union struggle.

To mark the publication of her book, Linda's photographs and their accompanying essays have been on display at the FlynnDog Gallery, on Flynn Avenue in Burlington. Several hundred people attended the opening reception, and the night felt like a celebration. Many of the people who were involved in the effort to pass the civil union law were gathered together simply to enjoy one another's company and to marvel at the scope of our accomplishments here in Vermont in the area of g/l civil rights. It was truly a magical evening, and I want to thank Linda personally for making it all happen.

This is a book about our history, by a local author who lived through the process with all of us. I highly recommend it.

Susan M. Murray,
Ferrisburg

Linda Hollingdale will be signing copies of her book at the Peace & Justice Center on Church Street in Burlington on Saturday November 23, from 1 to 3 p.m. - EB

The Case for Pollina

I am writing in response to Chuck Kletecka's letter in the Oct. issue. I could not disagree with his analysis of the Lt. Governor's race more. While he is absolutely right that Anthony Pollina and Peter Shumlin both support the LGBTQ community's issues, I think Chuck's take on the legislature is not right. While the issue is less likely if the Republicans do not have the majority, if they do then in fact Anthony Pollina has a better shot of being elected the Lt. Governor than Shumlin. The history between the House Repubs. and Shumlin is not warm ... they do not like him and will not elect him ... unless he had a huge plurality ... which is clearly not going to happen. If the final vote is approximately 33 percent for each then of course Dubie wins.

However if you help Anthony Pollina continue to build momentum (as the May to Sept. polls showed) he has a clear chance of not only being the top vote getter, but actually having a 5 percent to even 10 percent margin ... but only if you help. In that same Sept. poll, it was a three-way dead heat with Shumlin and Dubie at 24 percent ... doesn't it make you wonder why they are not both still at about 30 percent, the base numbers for each of their Party support across the state? Anthony has appeal beyond party label (only 3 percent statewide ID themselves as Progressive yet he polled 22 percent), and he is going up while they are going down. I ask you to join that momentum and help put a large enough margin in the race so that Dubie does not end up in office. Even if it is not a huge

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editor's notebook

There was a message on my voice mail the other day. The guy who called (I'll call him "Eric") said that he has been disappointed with how I'm shaping *Out in the Mountains*.

"It's too focused on politics, too lesbian, too mainstream," he said. He rarely read it any more, Eric said. "I just don't bother picking it up." Then he concluded, "I just wanted to let you know that in the rainbow flag that stands for our community, I feel like my stripe is not being represented in your pages."

Wow.

I had a lot of responses, none of them having to do with taking his comments personally.

I wished he had left his

last name and/or his phone number so I could respond. I wished he had sent me his comments on email so I could publish them. I wished I could encourage him to be a little more specific about what he'd like to see in the paper that's not there now.

I wished I could thank him for speaking up.

I don't ever expect to make everyone in our community happy with my decisions on what events and issues *OITM* covers and how it does so. To a sometimes alarming degree, the contents for any given month depend on who volunteers to write about something he, she, or hir is interested in. Some folks like to write and are receptive to suggestions

about issues or events that might be important or interesting for our community to know about. Others write only when subjected to editor panic, promises of undying gratitude, and/or verbal arm-twisting. And then there's the silent masses.

Of course editorial judgment always comes into play, fitting the pieces together into a more-or-less coherent whole. Some stories we go after; others we screen out.

These pages are yours – not mine (except for page 4 – the editorial – that's mine). Every month I send out an email with the beginnings of ideas for stories, concerts, books, recordings, issues, people and more to be covered, looking for more input. When no response comes, I start emailing, calling, sometimes buttonholing particular individuals at meetings or social events, trying to find out what is on their minds and whether

it might work for an article in *OITM*.

For any given article, if I didn't write it, someone else in our community volunteered – and came through – to inform, persuade, enlighten, or entertain you. Everything that I didn't write in the paper got there as someone else's contribution. Ideally, I write only to fill in when an event or a story is orphaned by lack of volunteers.

One person cannot put this paper together. It just doesn't happen that way. One editor cannot cover all the ground there is to cover.

Like building a community – or creating a Pride Festival – publishing *Out in the Mountains* takes all of us, of many political and personal stripes, to make it work. We need your contribution of time, energy, awareness, words, photos, artwork, stories, opinions, suggestions – and yeah, money

wouldn't hurt either.

OITM can only be as good as we, together, make it.

So, "Eric," – and everyone else in the LGBTQ rainbow – if you should happen pick up this issue, email me: I'd like to hear your suggestions on how we can get your stripe into *OITM*. You can reach me by email at editor@mountainpridemedia.org.

Corrections

▼ On the front page of last month's issue, the story on the St. Johnsbury needle exchange program was erroneously credited to Stacey Horn. It was written by Euan Bear.

▼ And the email address for the UVM LGBTQ center was missing a letter. You can reach the center at www.uvm.edu/~lgbtqa. ▼