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**Our Bodies Our Minds**

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Chittenden County's Directory of Health and Wellness Resources for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Questioning and Allied People

This **FREE** guide lists over 150 queer and queer-friendly mainstream and alternative health care providers.

Our Bodies, Our Minds can be found at the following locations:

- R.U.1.2? Community Center
- Burlington Community Health Center
- Imani Health Institute
- Outright Vermont
- Planned Parenthood's Mansfield Ave Clinic
- SafeSpace
- Spectrum Youth and Family Services
- Vermont CARES

Use the guide on the on-line at: [www.ru12.org/vdhp.cfm](http://www.ru12.org/vdhp.cfm)

Our Bodies, Our Minds is published by the Vermont Diversity Health Project (VTDHP), a program of R.U.1.2? Community Center. For more information call R.U.1.2? at 802.860.7812



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**Laugh (at) Yourself Sicks**  
The Kinsey Sicks Bring 'Dragapella' to Gay Ski Weekend

BY JAY SCHUSTER

In Vermont we have been blessed with a multitude of drag performers who, bucking the traditions of the genre, actually sing with their own voices. I never fully appreciated the ones I grew up with, Amber and Marguerite, Noël, Cherie Tartt, and Yolanda, until I left the state. The drag performances I saw in the vibrant centers of gay night life of San Francisco, Provincetown, Worcester (Massachusetts) and Fayetteville (Arkansas) were consistently disappointing. The performers all lip-synced! Sure, their costumes might have been big budget and fabulous, but aside from makeup and dress-making, where was the talent?

Even Cherie Tartt's deadpan, monotone, erratic delivery was preferable to seeing what was basically a glorified version of karaoke. As a result, I no longer make the mistake of going to see lip-synced drag performances.

Therefore, I was both overjoyed and irritated that on Saturday, February 8, I had to choose between two different drag events: the Drag Ball in Winooski, or the Kinsey Sicks in Stowe.

The Kinsey Sicks, "America's Favorite Dragapella Beautyshop Quartet," were brought to Stowe by Winter Rendezvous, a gay and lesbian ski weekend sponsored by IGLOO, the International Gay and Lesbian Outdoor Organization, an umbrella coalition for various gay and lesbian outdoor-oriented groups, including the Chiltern Mountain Club out of Boston. This event happens annually, usually in February. Mark your calendars: next year's Winter Rendezvous will be February 3rd through 7th, 2004.

The Kinsey Sicks have been performing for six years. They've been profiled on national television on 20/20 and the CBS *Early Show* with Bryant Gumbel, featured in the arts section of the New York Times, performed at the Montréal Just For Laughs festival, and even had a Drama Desk Award-nominated Off-Broadway show, *Dragapella! Starring the Kinsey Sicks*. It seemed like an event not to miss, so a couple of friends and my partner and I decided to skip the Drag Ball and head to Stowe.

After a nice prime rib dinner at Gracie's, we headed to the Stowe Memorial Building for the performance. "It's the big brick building with the columns in front of it on Main Street. You can't miss it," the woman in the town clerk's office told me over the phone, and she was right. Escaping the cold, we joined the line of Winter Rendezvous participants waiting for the auditorium to open. Not having been part of Winter Rendezvous, I was curious as to who might be there. The warmth of the people in line was infectious. I ran into only a couple of Vermonters that I knew,



**The Kinsey Sicks**

Stowe Winter Rendezvous  
February 8th, 2003.

but did see an old Radical Faerie friend from Ottawa and an ex-boyfriend from when I was seventeen who now lives in Boston.

As we entered the auditorium, men selling raffle tickets accosted us. The grand prize, a weekend at the Green Mountain Inn, was well worth the price.

After we finished schmoozing and settled in our seats, there were the usual rounds of thanks and applause for the organizers, cruise-ship-style gag awards for Winter Rendezvous participants (including one for the person who came from furthest away – Senegal!), and cause-oriented announcements (these from Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders) before the show finally started.

Four visions in big hair and taffeta stormed the stage and started belting out "Dragapella" to the tune of "Halleluia." Ben Schatz, who writes most of the new songs and lyrics, was the raunchy and temperamental Rachel. Chris Dilley portrayed the innocent-yet-slutty Trampolina. Kevin Smith Kirkwood was the incredible femme fatale Trixie, and could have fooled many an unaware suitor. Irwin Keller was the polite suburban homemaker Winnie. Keller and Schatz are founding members of the troupe.

They proceeded to mesmerize and entertain the audience with their incredible voices, wit, and commentary. The singing was excellent. Trixie, especially, sustained notes that lasted forever. They are indeed an a capella barbershop quartet, beauty-shopped. Songs were done as a group, or as rotating solos with three-girl backup. Biting political commentary, the standard of drag acts everywhere, was present in numbers like "Locked Out of the Chapel of Love" (to the tune of "We're Going to the Chapel") and "AZT" (to the tune of the Jackson Five hit "ABC, It's Easy as One Two Three" from when Michael was cute instead of weird).

Cultural commentary was where the Sicks excelled, however, with "You're Scaring Us," including the line "my age is precarious," to the tune of "Aquarius," and "Herpes," to the tune of "Memories." A mother gives advice

to her children in "Cruise People Uglier Than You." The spoof "Titanic: Why Does Celine Go On?" highlighted their stunning voices – they can hold notes for at least as long as Ms. Dion. They got pretty pointed – and funny – about drag when they segued "I Enjoy Being a Girl" into "Macho Man."

Almost every number had the audience in hysterics. Some songs included audience participation. After the first one, every time a cast member stepped off the stage, you felt the social fear sweeping the room.

While their shtick is primarily humor with social and cultural commentary, the Kinsey Sicks showed their breadth of talent with a touching ballad about lost loved ones. Winnie surprised everyone by singing a Yiddish lament (interspersed with an English summary for us goyim), and finished it with a clarinet solo, the only instrument used in the performance.

We ended the evening with our cheeks sore from laughing. Giddy with delight, we hit the merchandise table and purchased all three of their CDs: *Sicks in the City*, *Boyz 2 Girls*, and *Dragapella!*. Had we been really dedicated (and the weather warmer), we might have also bought tank tops and tee shirts.

In a conversation after the show, Ben Schatz ("Rachel") revealed that the group's repertoire is extensive, with over 90 songs, from which a selection is tailored to the event.

If you like drag, cultural satire, or just some incredible harmonies, do not miss them. You can find out more information about them, including biographies (Schatz was a Clinton aide), performance dates and locations from their web site: <http://www.kinseysicks.com/>.

If you like skiing and would like to schuss with gay and lesbian co-enthusiasts, keep an eye out for next year's Winter Rendezvous at Chiltern's web site: <http://www.chiltern.org/events.htm> or the perhaps ephemeral <http://www.geocities.com/igloostatowe/>. The references to <http://www.gayskieast.org/> were unavailable, but might work in the future. ▼

Jay Schuster is a founder and vice president of the Physician's Computer Company in Winooski.