

letters

Help the Cause

Out in the Mountains / Mountain Pride Media sorely needs your help. Below I set out for you the reasons I personally hope you will decide to assist with your money and your increased involvement. However, while newspaper delivery personnel, writers and others are needed, this letter focuses on funding.

I will have been in Vermont for 2 years come Halloween 2003. In many ways I feel like I have just arrived. But the thing that has been a constant and useful to me from before I arrived is *Out In the Mountains (OITM)* / Mountain Pride Media (MPM). During the past 6 months I have been learning more about the operation of the newspaper and, like you, have been reading recently of the diminishing dollar resources of the paper. While people continue to be MPM's most valuable resource, it also must have funds. Perhaps the excellent level of communication that MPM and *OITM* provided during the Civil Union legislation period is not envisioned as important as it was during the campaign for Civil Unions. But the importance of a great newspaper is not diminished simply because there is not a single issue in front of us. An effective paper is even more important

when there are many issues.

No community can work together to ensure that it is treated equally, that others respect it and its members, that its members are paid fairly, that it can serve its country in times of war, that it can hold its head high, without excellent communications media. After myself getting quite deeply into the workings of *OITM*/MPM, I can say that the people leading MPM/*OITM* are dedicated, prudent, gifted, responsible people. We are very blessed to have people of their quality at the helm. Euan Bear is doing a fantastic job editing and leading the journalistic staff. The leadership provided by the board has been and is excellent.

However, as a frequent stuffing-night volunteer, I watch the number of subscriptions diminish each month. I see that there is less advertising than there was when I started reading the paper. Now the paper is smaller in size. Certain resources are available now only on the web. All of this occurs in the face of rising, not falling, production costs. The editor no longer has space for all the articles deserving publication. With all these rather noticeable changes taking place, and with the editor and others consistently alerting people to the fiscal difficulties, I personally do not think that

people are taking this seriously enough. The leaders of MPM are not crying "wolf." They report reality.

Even with all the information coming their way, I wonder if our community understands the severe conditions under which the paper is currently being produced. We crucially need more people to subscribe, more people to use *OITM* as a gift for others, more people to talk with merchants with whom they trade to purchase advertising space, more people to contribute to Mountain Pride Media.

The leadership of Mountain Pride Media has demonstrated that it believes the community needs and wants excellent communication media. We can applaud their insight and their work by providing them with the cash to carry out their vision. We can ensure that there is an *Out in the Mountains* and the other activities of Mountain Pride Media for the next generation of readers. We can make certain that the editorial quality of the paper can be retained and developed. I have confidence that we will do these things.

Robert W. Wolff
Randolph VT

Southern Comfort

Greetings from down south—southern Vermont, that is. Please allow me to respond to the letter from Jill van Tuyl in the August issue:

I'm sorry you're so disenchanted with the gay life in our state, but allow me to point out to you and others who may not know, that there are two gay bars in the state.

The Rainbow Cattle Co. is the other. We are located near Brattleboro, in the southeast corner of the state, and we are *not* all of the things you accuse the northern bar of being.

We are a gay and locally owned club. We own the building and keep it in good repair. We have good music and responsive, courteous DJs. While dancing and music are important, we also have a "cozy" room with a fireplace where people can converse without shouting. We also make sure that everyone respects everyone else, be they gay, lesbian, straight, or whatever!

So, please don't condemn the bar scene in the whole state until you check us out. You'll have a good time, I'm sure.

We are open Thursday through Sunday from 8 pm. There are reasonably priced motels nearby and also

two campgrounds within walking distance. Feel free to call us at 802-254-9830 (after 8 pm) or check out our website at www.geocities.com/rainbowcattleco.

Bill McDaniels & Jeff Miller
Brattleboro, VT

Corrections . . .

▼ What can we say about the September issue appearing with an August designation – that we were reluctant to let go of summer? That the editor is overworked on paste-up day? Regardless of the reason, last issue was indeed the September issue (as indicated in the headers on the inside).

▼ And, due to a production error, our front-page teaser identified Sharon Randall as part of the Vermont Rainbow Coalition, when, of course, it should have been the Vt. Rainbow Connection. We apologize for the error.

WANTED: Sharp-eyed, quick-reading, detail-oriented volunteer to assist Friday afternoons and/or Sunday afternoons with final proofing. Call 802-434-6486.

NEEDED: Computer-literate, deadline-savvy, detail-obsessed Classified/Calendar editor 5-8 hours per month. No pay, much adulation. Call 434-6486.

NOTE: Crow Cohen notified us that she will no longer be writing her *Crow's Caws* column – she's busy finishing her book and raising her grandson.

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