



Vocal Minority Gets New Director

By YVES MORRISSETTE

In the fall of 1998 a group of men with the love of music and singing gathered in the Unitarian Universalist church in Montpelier and formed The Vermont Gay Men's Chorus, "A Vocal Minority." The group found a director who was at the time working with Lost Nation Theater, a Montpelier-based theatrical group. With talent and undying leadership since the incarnation of the chorus, Tim Tavcar directed the Vocal Minority for six years. Tavcar and the Chorus performed around Vermont in communities large and small. At such events as benefits for AIDS Service organizations, the Habitat

for Humanity, peace rallies, the Vermont Statehouse Farmer's night, Vermont People with AIDS Coalition, Cambridge Arts Council, remembrance and memorial services, to name a few, the men in the chorus sang out their hearts.

In April 2004, Tavcar took a job as director of talent and music at the Astor Mansion Arts Center in Newport, Rhode Island. Now the Vermont Gay Men's Chorus is proud to announce their new director, a native of Vergennes, Wayne Hobbs.

Wayne Hobbs, tenor, is a native of Vermont. He has enjoyed a plentiful performing career both here in the U.S. and abroad. He has been heard on the concert and operatic

stages in Italy, Germany, Austria, Canada and the U.S. and his media performances include CBC Radio Canada, WCAX-TV, Vermont Public Television and WCVT Classic Vermont. Wayne also enjoys musical direction and conducting and was Assistant Music Director for Lyric Theater's recent production of *Secret Garden*.

Wayne is active in the Stowe Theater Guild and has directed several shows over the last two years. In the near future, Wayne is looking forward to performing the Rutter Requiem with his choral group, the Otter Creek Choral Society based in Vergennes and Stowe Theater Guild's upcoming production of *Oliver*. Currently, Wayne lives in Vergennes and is an

Assistant Vice President for the Chittenden Bank.

Wayne and the men of the chorus are looking forward to a new level of performance, music and new faces.

Because of the group's origins in central Vermont and the Northeast Kingdom, they have not seen much involvement from Chittenden County. However, Hobbs hopes to recruit some voices and possibly some rehearsal time in and around the Burlington area. ▼

For information on becoming a part of the chorus call or email the chorus at 802-633-3605 or, robnyves@hotmail.com. Writer Yves Morrisette is a member of the chorus.

Lammy for Vermont Cartoonist

By EUAN BEAR

Last month Vermont resident and cartoonist Alison Bechdel received a Lambda Literary Award in the humor category for her latest collection *Dykes and Other Sundry Carbon-Based Life Forms to Watch Out For*. The Lambda Literary Awards recognize the best in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender literature. Each award winner is selected by a panel of judges from five finalist nominees in each of 20 categories.

Asked about the award via email, Bechdel wrote, "Well, I have mixed feelings about awards. I'm ecstatic when I win, and deeply depressed when I lose. But seriously, it was very nice to win a Lammy. This is my fifth, actually. It always feels great to get that nod of recognition from the queer literary community."

She wrote that the book was doing a bit better in sales than previous collections, and that she had done readings only in Washington, DC, New York, and Boston. "I didn't

do anything locally because I come out with new books every couple of years and people start to get a little burned out. Like, 'Oh, no. Yet another *Dykes To Watch Out For* book-signing?' So I'm giving it a rest for a while in Vermont."

Bechdel is balancing writing a graphical memoir about her father with the continuing saga of the DTWOF strip. "My life is broken down into two-week sessions. I work for two weeks on the strip, then I switch to the memoir. I am getting kind of nervous, though, because my next *Dykes* book is due in December, and the book about my dad is due in March. And I have a

really phenomenal amount of drawing I have to do. I'm sort of considering this year as a retreat - I can't do anything but work."

Other winners of note (a selected list): lgbt erotica - *Best Lesbian Erotica 2004*, ed. by Tristan Taormino (Cleis Press); visual arts - *Women Seeing Women*, edited by Lonhar Schirmer (W.W. Norton); lgbt fiction anthology - *Pulp Friction*, edited by Michael Bronski (St. Martin's Press); lgbt memoir/autobiography - *Naked in the Promised Land*, by Lillian Faderman (Houghton Mifflin); lesbian poetry - *The Dirt She Ate*, by Minnie Bruce Pratt (University of

Pittsburgh Press); gay men's poetry (tie) - *Middle Earth*, by Henri Cole (Farrar, Straus & Giroux) and *Sky Lounge*, by Mark Bibbins (Graywolf Press); transgender - *She's Not There*, by Jennifer Finney Boylan (Broadway Books); lgbt studies - *Time on Two Crosses*, edited by Devon Carbado and Donald Weise (Cleis Press); gay men's fiction - *Lives of the Circus Animals*, by Christopher Bram (William Morrow); lesbian fiction - *Southland*, by Nina Bayoy (Akashic Books). ▼