

BLOOMIN' ANTIQUES

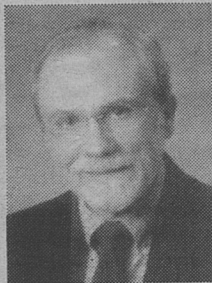
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OUT in the MOUNTAINS

YOUTH PRIDE 411

BY LAUREN PARKER

This year's Youth Pride will be bigger and better than ever. If you've never come out to celebrate it, this is the year to journey to Burlington. You'll be part of a loud, proud movement of queer youth and their allies. If you've come before, expect something different, new, and exciting. New or old, May is the month to celebrate our pride—and take it to the streets.

Youth Pride will kick off around noon on Saturday, May 14, with a speak-out on the steps of Burlington's City Hall. This is a time to rally the forces and listen to the stories of queer youth. You can even step up to the mic and tell your story, sing a song, read a poem, whatever your heart desires.

After the fabulous speak-out, we'll prepare for the Pride march. Bring posters (or carry some created by Outright youth), warm up your chanting voice, and get ready to march in the street. This year, we hope to move the march off the sidewalk and into the street to further

reinforce our strength. We'll be waving rainbow flags, chanting at the top of our lungs, and having an all-around good time.

When the march is over and your yelling voice is shot, you have lots of options for spending the rest of the day. You can finally see the short Theatre for Social Justice play that Outright youth created. We'll also have workshops for you to enjoy (their topics are TBA to keep you in suspense...), some outdoor games (pull out that deflated kickball and put it to good use!), and a nice place to chill and watch some movies at our very own Outright. If none of these are your thing, just hang out downtown with your newfound friends and maybe do a little shopping for the drag ball! "There's a drag ball?" you ask? Read on...

When the hour grows late and the sun lowers in the sky, it's time to start primping for the prom! And at this prom, you don't have to worry about the sex of your date. All you need to worry about is gettin' down to boogie! ... Anyway, prom primping: dress up, put on some make-up, adjust your wig: do whatever

you need to do to become the fabulous, fashionable you (or your alternate personality).

Then, when you're ready, step onto the dance floor. We'll have great music, food, and some good, old-fashioned dance contests. Don't skimp on your yoga routines; you'll need that flexible back to hold your own in the limbo contest. You may also want to get out that dance video for a not-so-old-fashioned contest: the Drag Show. Either sign up ahead of time to perform or be an adoring fan of our wonderful young queens, kings, and everything in-between. The rest of the night is yours. Dance, dance, dance.

Youth Pride is about being yourself, being accepted, being loved, and being welcomed into Vermont's vibrant queer and allied community. So don't let anyone stand in your way. Get out your coolest rainbow gear, grab a ride to Burlington, and show your PRIDE. ▼

Lauren Parker is a senior at Champlain Valley Union High School in Hinesburg and founded the school's Gay-Straight Alliance

Playing for Justice

BY FAYE

On a Saturday in late February, a group of about ten people gathered in the basement of the UU church. Although they all were different ages, and had different stories to tell, they all came to collectively write a play. On one side of the circle Norma Bowles and Sarah Guerrero began by telling everyone they and their colleagues fly all over the county to help groups find their voice through theatre.

The first day, we collected stories from everyone in the group. One group member told about a protest where an anti-gay protester showed up, and began to shout and wave signs. All of the protesters surrounded him, dancing and playing music. Soon he became frustrated and left peacefully. Another told about her negative experience coming out to her church community as trans.

The next time we met, Norma and Sarah had typed up a transcript from the voice recording. We all read it over, and talked about what parts of it were most powerful, and how we could adapt the stories to break down stereotypes, and be most meaningful to our target audience: high

school students who try hard to fit in, and just aren't sure how they feel about queers. By the end of the night we were trying to decide the best way to put all of our stories into one, short, but intensely effective play. We left that night, not sure if we should give our message a comic tone, or make it into something a bit darker.

Overnight and throughout the next morning Sarah and Norma worked on finding a balanced way of presenting our message. Finally Sarah had a eureka moment, and they speedily composed a general outline for "The Reel Deal." The play would be a youth-hosted movie review show. It would include people's stories as clips from movies. Between clips the hosts would have a chance to talk about what the audience just witnessed, and there would also be the opportunity for PSA announcements, which promote Outright, talk about transphobia, and encourage youth to make a difference.

We spent our three hours that night improving the dialogue that would happen in the loosely written scenes. Once again, Norma and Sarah took all of our dialogue to their hotel to type it all up, but this time, their cre-

ation would be the first draft of our script.

Our next two days were spent paring down the script to make it a more succinct, 30-45 minute play, composed essentially of the three movie clips. The first is a romantic comedy about two girls who fall in love in high school, including the girl's friends and ex-boyfriend's responses to her new relationship. The next is a screwball comedy about a young man in high school who is afraid to tell his friends and girlfriend that his dad is gay. The last is about a trans young man who is not understood by his teachers or peers.

Since Sarah and Norma left, the TSJ group has congregated twice. The first time, we discussed the future of the production, the second time to gather potential actors and prepare for a reading. We decided the reading would be an awesome way to gather feedback about our script and get a feel for what it looks like onstage. We will hold two more rehearsals before we present our script at Youth Pride. ▼

Faye is a student at Burlington High School and has been actively involved at Outright for the past year. She is in charge of BHS's GSA and is co-directing "The Reel Deal" with Jen Berger.