

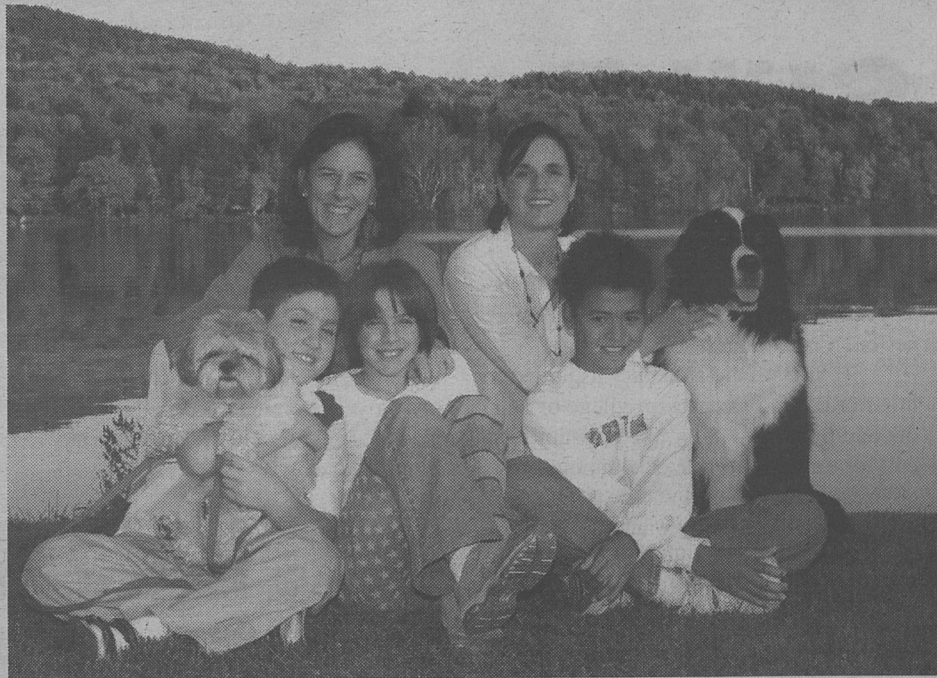
Family Pride Honors "Buster" Family

Washington, DC – According to a press release from The Family Pride Coalition, the Gillian Pieper and Karen Pike family will receive the organization's fourth annual "Families of Courage" award at its 10th annual Family Week event in Provincetown July 30-Aug. 6.

The Pieper/Pike family was featured in the "Postcards from Buster" episode that ignited a national debate after U.S. Education Secretary Margaret Spellings strongly denounced the program.

"We are deeply touched by this award from the Family Pride Coalition," Pieper and Pike said. "We simply did what any mother would deem necessary. When bullies come knocking, you stand up for your child's safety and rights. The real courage lies in our children who stood up along side us and fought for their family's right to be seen and loved by America. That's courage."

Family Pride is the only national organization exclusively dedicated to securing equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) parents and their families. Jennifer Chrisler, executive director of Family Pride, said, "It is real families, sharing real facts about their lives that will dramatically reshape our



The Pieper/Pike Family: (back) Karen (left) and Gillian; (front, from left) David, Emma and James.

civil rights battles. The Pieper/Pike family will long be remembered as heroes of our move-

ment for doing just that – sharing the real story of who their family is."

Pieper and Pike said, "What Margaret Spellings and PBS took from us, Family Pride has returned tenfold."

A longtime activist for human rights and diversity in the workplace, Pieper is a nationally-renowned presenter and a founding member of Vermont Safe Harbors, a Department of Education-sponsored effort to maintain safe, civil schools for LGBT youth, families and staff.

An award-winning photojournalist, Pike's work has appeared in countless publications, including *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and the best-selling book *America 24/7*. As an activist for human rights, Pike has provided a visual image of social justice throughout her career, donating her time to non-profit organizations, documenting poverty across the world and standing up for sexual minority and gender identity rights.

Pieper and Pike were united in a Vermont civil union in 2002. The couple lives with their three children, Emma (12), James (12) and David (10), in Hinesburg. ▼

For more information on Family Week, see www.familypride.org or call (202) 331-5015.

Vermonters Attend Boston Elders Town Meeting

By ROBERT WOLFF

Boston – Three Vermonters, Peggy Luhrs, Jackie Weinstock and I (Robert Wolff), attended the LGBT Aging Project's Town Meeting for Elders and Boomers, on June 6, 2005. Speakers included U.S. Representative Barney Frank; Amber Hollibaugh of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force; Arline Isaacson of the Massachusetts Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus; David Aronstein of Stonewall Communities; and Lisa Krinsky of the Aging Project. The event, moderated by Dale Mitchell,

Executive Director of ETHOS, a Jamaica Plain community service entity specializing in longterm care options, was a Boston Gay Pride event and an official "mini" White House Conference on Aging.

Barney Frank spoke to the roughly 50 participants, reminding them about how far the lgbt cause has come since the 1960s. He also underlined the difficulties of making real progress during a time when the Republicans control the Executive and Legislative branches of the federal government, stressing the importance of working toward long-term goals. The other speakers focused on

the work they have been doing to serve lgbt elders and their organizations' plans for future development of services.

The Vermonters sought information for use as we move forward with the Vermont Queer Elder Project at R.U.1.2? Queer Community Center. Luhrs is a long-time Burlington activist and an Americorps Vista Volunteer at the center; Weinstock is an Associate Professor of Integrated Professional Studies at the University of Vermont and member of the SafeSpace board of directors; and I am a theatrical designer, a potter and a member of

the R.U.1.2?QCC board of directors. We three are developing a program, which will, among other things, present workshops for health care professionals.

The leaders of the Vermont Queer Elder Project (VQEP) are aware that many lgbtq people entering hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and other institutions providing health care, are treated with less than proper respect and certainly without what could be termed "Queer Awareness." Elders may fear entering these facilities because their partners might not be allowed to participate in their care and support as they would if they were a heterosexual couple, for example.

The participants from Vermont were particularly interested in the activities and future plans of

the LGBT Aging Project and the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force. NGLTF is developing programs that will allow community leaders to learn from programs in other locales through an enhanced communication network. We also received pointers on specific steps that would assist the development of the Vermont Queer Elder Project and some of the challenges that could retard its growth if not well handled. Lisa Krinsky of the Aging Project strongly suggested focusing our energies on mainstream health service providers and on teaching cultural competency among service leaders and staff. ▼

Samara Foundation Grants \$23K

Burlington – The Samara Foundation announced its grants and scholarship awards in June, totaling \$23,000. That represents the smallest amount given by the foundation in the last five years.

The foundation's giving peaked in 2002, with total awards of \$39,000, according to foundation Executive Director Bill Lippert's figures. In 2003, the amount awarded was \$25,000, including three \$1,000 scholarships. In 2004 the

total was \$31,000, including \$23,500 in grants, five \$1,000 scholarships, and a special additional "regrant" of \$2,500 given to Mountain Pride Media.

According to Lippert, the reasons for the decline are complex. "In the first three years we gave out grants, we made a strategic decision to give out larger amounts than we could necessarily sustain, in part to get our name out there," Lippert said. In addition, the foundation's

board wanted "to move significant amounts of money into the community," since it was then the only Vermont foundation specifically responsive to lgbtq concerns. For the same reason, the foundation funds general operating expenses, a rarity among foundations.

Another reason for the recent decline in Samara grants is the existence of the Unity Project, a partnership of the Vermont Community Foundation and Samara,

as a new source of grant funding. The time-limited Unity Project – funded in part through a challenge grant from the Gill Foundation and other large foundations – had over \$200,000 to award to Vermont lgbtq projects as of 2004, of which just over \$78,753 was awarded last year, with \$118,950 available this year.

The additional source of funding for the lgbt community projects has allowed Samara to rein in its award amounts without leaving organizations high and dry, Lippert said. However, the Unity Project is slated to end its existence by disbursing all of its funds this

year.

And finally, Lippert said, "Our board of directors has made a strategic decision to be true to our multiple stakeholders: our donors, our investors, our grantees, and those whose gifts will come to us in the future as bequests." That means limiting grant awards to available dividends and interest, while building and maintaining the foundation's endowment, he said. "Annual granting is not the only measure of what we're up to," he concluded.

Fundraising, according to figures provided by Lippert, brought in \$69,000 in continued on page 6