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The purpose of Out In The Mountains [OITM] is to serve as a voice for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people, and our supporters in Vermont. We wish the newspaper to be a source of information, insight, and affirmation. We also see OITM as a vehicle for the celebration of the culture and diversity of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities here in Vermont and elsewhere.

### Editorial Policy

We will consider for publication any material that broadens our understanding of our lifestyles and of each other. Views and opinions appearing in the paper do not necessarily represent those of Out In The Mountains. This paper, as a non-profit organization, cannot and will not endorse any political candidates. We reserve the right not to publish any material deemed to be overtly racist, sexist, anti-Semitic, ageist, classist, xenophobic, or homophobic.

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## editorial

# Showing Up

I thought I knew how it would go on Pride Day, July 9, as I drove from Franklin County through the pouring rain to Burlington. There would be a few stragglers, maybe as many as five per organization. None of the politicians would show up, since it's not an election year. The small crowd would disperse immediately after the march, leaving the speakers addressing the bricks and the sculptures outside City Hall.

Okay, I was wrong, I admit it. While floats might have been appropriate, given the weather, they were not much in evidence. But there were plenty of marchers for nearly every organization: perhaps as many as three or four hundred people paraded through a rain that slackened to a drizzle for the duration. Onlookers – including some prominent members of our community who should've been participating (you know who you are) – took the drier path, sitting at strategic tables under restaurant awnings along Church Street.

Not only were there politicians in a non-election year, though not many, but there were representatives from a full range of parties, Republican, Democratic, Progressive and Green. The lone "out" Republican was Plattsburgh Mayor Dan Stewart, taking a break from the Mayor's Cup festivities across the lake – and from the hate-filled rhetoric of members of the Westboro (Kansas) Baptist Church who had come to his town to picket.

Stewart walked alongside Burlington Progressive/Democratic Mayor Peter Clavelle. Democratic Gubernatorial hopeful Scudder Parker braved the rain, playing volleyball with the guys from Vermont Gay Social Alternatives. He wasn't carrying a sign or particularly promoting himself – he was just there to be there. I asked him jokingly, "Is there something about you I ought to know, Scudder?" He replied, "You mean that I'm running for governor?" His wife, Susan Sussman, walking nearby, laughed, too. Among the legislators present were David Zuckerman (P-Burlington), Jason Lorber (D-Burlington), and Bill Lippert (D-Hinesburg).

Kitchen Sink Samba drummers led with their catchy and danceable beats, as always, stirring feet and hips along the way. Members of the open-minded, open-door churches – Unitarian, United Church of Christ, Episcopal, Presbyterian – came to bear their banners as witness to their support of lgbs in the downpour. There were a few drag queens (it's hard to deal with heels, hair, gowns, and make-up in

that kind of weather), fewer leathermen, lots of young queers animating a sodden cloth and papier-mâché dragon with energy and aplomb, and the Green Mountain Veterans for Peace.

SafeSpace, Outright, Out in the Mountains, Vermont Freedom to Marry, PFLAG, all the usual groups were there – with a full complement of staff, volunteers, board members and supporters.

And bringing up the rear was a lesbian driving a U-Haul truck that carried the joke punchline: "Going on My Second Date."

**We still have work to do:  
just ask all those youth  
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in high schools across  
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For them and for us,  
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our Pride, working and  
walking for equality.**

The speakers carried on, despite a balky bullhorn, people flooded the vendors and organization tables inside Contois Auditorium for the first post-parade hour or two, and then many wended their way to the Mountain Pride Media/R.U.1.2? bar-beque on Elmwood Avenue and/or events in tents at 135 Pearl just down the block.

Everyone I've spoken with expressed surprise at how well the day went, how large the turnout was, confessing their own doubts and misgivings about the dampening effect of the weather, the change in venue from the waterfront to City Hall, the lack of post-parade programmed entertainment.

We showed up, despite those misgivings, despite rain, and apathy, and uncertainty about changes. We showed up – and so did a lot of our allies. The rumors of Pride's demise were clearly premature. And, by the way, we all owe thanks to the Pride Committee for their tireless (and generally thankless) work.

We still have work to do: just ask

all those youth how easy it is (not!) to be out and proud in high schools across Vermont, for starters. For them and for us, we need to keep parading our Pride, working and walking for equality.

And when we get it, when our lives and our relationships are valued the same as those of heterosexuals, we will need to still keep walking our pride and our history so we never forget where we've been and how we got to where we are that glorious day. We need to keep showing up, so when our kids – yes, OUR kids – ask what we did to help establish equality and make the promise real, we can say, "I was there, I marched, I held the hand of a survivor of violence, I lobbied the government for equal rights, I voted, I

danced there in the street when Christians screamed that I would go to hell, I embraced my brothers, I embraced my sisters, I kissed my lovers, I drummed my drum, I waved my sign, I was there. I showed up." ▼

Euan Bear

**PS: Just after we went to layout, the news broke from Canada: having received "Royal Assent," the country's new law opening marriage equality to same-sex couples has gone into effect. Now, if only Vermont and the US would follow suit!**