

POLITICS

State Campaign Battles Take Shape

BY PAUL OLSEN

MONTPELIER — Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Vermonters are beginning to get a sense of the choices they will be faced with on Election Day in November. The campaigns for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, U.S. Senate, and U.S. House are high-profile races that will have an impact on gay equality in Vermont and nationwide.

Governor

Incumbent Republican Governor James Douglas will face former State Senator Scudder Parker (D-Caledonia County).

Gov. Douglas opposes gay marriage and Vermont's civil union compromise and failed to issue a requested proclamation recognizing the state's LG-BTQ Pride Day. To his credit, he supported anti harassment legislation and opposes efforts to amend Vermont's Constitution to ban gay marriage.

In his announcement speech, Scudder Parker, who marched with his wife in the 2005 Pride parade, said, "We have begun to confront homophobia and the legal structures that perpetuate it; we have begun to address discrimination against people with physical and emotional differences—these struggles, all of which are ongoing—have taken steps toward removing cruel inequalities."

Lt. Governor

Incumbent Republican Brian Dubie faces a challenge from State Senator Matt Dunne (D-Windsor County).

Dubie opposes Vermont's civil union compromise and supports amending the U.S. Constitution to prohibit gay marriage.

At the request of a gay constituent, Dunne circulated for

signatures a legislative letter to U.S. House and Senate leaders supporting federal recognition of civil unions.

Progressive Anthony Pollina is also considering another run for Lt. Governor.

U.S. Senate

Independent U.S. Rep. Bernie Sanders hopes to replace retiring U.S. Sen. James Jeffords (I). As a member of Congress, Sanders garnered 100 percent positive ratings from the Human Rights Campaign and received a 100 percent rating from the AIDS Action Council. His office maintains a written nondiscrimination policy including sexual orientation, he is a sponsor of the Employment Nondiscrimination Act (ENDA), and he voted against the antigay Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA).

Sanders will face either retired air force pilot Greg Parke or IDX founder Richard Tarrant, both Republicans. In his unsuccessful campaign for the U.S House of Representatives in 2004, Parke pledged to promote "conservative values and principles" and combat "the homosexual agenda." As a political neophyte, Tarrant's views on gay and lesbian equality are not well known. In an interview with OITM, Tarrant's campaign manager, Tim Lennon, said Tarrant would support ENDA and is opposed to the Federal Marriage Amendment. "IDX was an early supporter of domestic partner benefits," Lennon said when describing Tarrant's commitment to workplace nondiscrimination. "He does believe that marriage is between a man and a woman, however, he believes that it is inappropriate to be handled as a constitutional amendment and is best left to the states to decide."

U.S. House of Representatives

The race to replace Bernie Sanders in the U.S. House of Representatives pits State Senator Peter Welch (D-Windsor County) against either Major General Martha Rainville or State Senator Mark Shepard (R-Bennington County), who will face off in a GOP primary on September 12.

Welch told OITM that he has long opposed discrimination and will take that fight to Washington DC. "I've supported nondiscrimination legislation in Vermont and certainly would support it nationally," he said. "I also absolutely oppose the [federal] constitutional ban on gay marriage."

Rainville is the adjutant general of the Vermont National Guard and, according to Nathan Rice, director of her exploratory committee, is declining press interviews. "Martha Rainville is in the process of making her final decision about whether she is going to become a candidate and until she makes that decision she isn't talking specifics," he said.

Shepard has served in the senate since 2003 and introduced an amendment to the Vermont Constitution stating that marriage in Vermont "shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman." To date, Shepard's amendment has not been adopted.

State Rep. David Zuckerman (P-Burlington) is also considering entering the race for Vermont's lone seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Election Day is Tuesday November 7. ▼

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➔ **Mayoral Candidates** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

you know, the human resources department is coming up with policies about not discriminating. But it's more than just equal opportunity. It's not just who we hire, but how we serve. I would want a culturally competent administration. We would have a zero tolerance policy.

EB: For discrimination, you mean.

KJC: Not just discrimination but education for department heads and managers. I guess I'm not your typical Republican.

EB: Can you give me a brief sense of your platform?

KJC: I just want to move the city forward. I am concerned that we are taxing vulnerable parts of

the city out of their homes. We need to have a state-of-the-art recreation plan. We have a lot now, but it could be a lot better, a lot more. I'm interesting in fostering economic development to create and maintain jobs.

Burlington should be fun, friendly, and economically viable. I'm fiscally conservative, not 'morality conservative.' ▼

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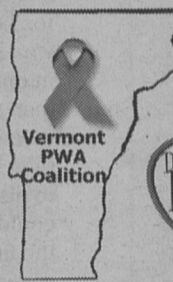
Higher Ground, South Burlington, Doors open at 7, 18+

IN THE SHOWCASE LOUNGE

- 7:30 — A Cabaret Show
The House of LeMay, The Decoys & several special guests
- 9:30 — The Diva Disco Lounge
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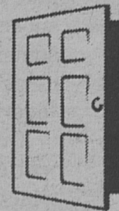
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