



Don't Volunteer Here with Queer Fear.

Volunteers make *Out in the Mountains* possible every single month!

Come Participate in the Fun!

A SPECIAL WORD OF THANKS

Jenni Hurner
Distribution Volunteer

Last summer I walked up to Jenni who was attending our Pride Day Open House and, as I shoved a sign-up form into her hands, I asked if she would be interested in Volunteering with us. She immediately offered to help distribute the paper in Montpelier and has been with us unfailingly ever since. We bid her a fond farewell as she moves back to Seattle. Thanks, Jenni - you've made a real difference.

thanks!

We thank the following volunteers who, in addition to our writers' efforts, worked on last month's paper:

DELIVERING:

Thia Artemis, Rick Bersaw, AIDS Project of Southern Vermont, Tom Bivins & Bennett Law, Daryl & Dennis DePaul, Patrick DiDomenico, Kathy Donna, Thom Fleury, Danny Gates, Keith Goslant, Jeni Hurner, Nat Michael, Fran Moravcsik, Fred Pond, Rick Wold

STUFFING NIGHT:

Marie, Euan Bear, Steve Ekberg, Tom McGlenn, David Lynch, Kate McTavish, George Parker, Jonathan Stauffer, Joe Swinyer, Greg Thompson, Greg Weaver, Bob Wolff

OFFICE MAGIC-MAKERS:

Dana Anderson, Joe Swinyer

TRANSNATION BY JACOB ANDERSON-MINSHALL

Passings

IT IS A SEASON OF PASSINGS. WHEN controversial radical feminist writer Andrea Dworkin died last year, a friend said she "didn't recognize her name." I guess that's every writer's dream: for your ideas to outlive your name. The passing of Connie Panzarino and Mary Francis Platt did not make major waves in or outside of our queer communities, although these fearless disabled lesbian activists transformed much of disability politics in this country - their legacy lives on in every ramped sidewalk in America.

When I was young, I would often watch television with my mother who would gasp and cry at the death of some politician or entertainer that I'd never heard of before. That scene is now repeated with my children. "Oh my god, Betty Friedan died," I gasp, and my kids give me that look. "Who's that?" they say disdainfully. How could

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anyone possibly be important if they haven't personally heard of them? A half century later my children have no sense of the pre-feminist world that detonated Betty Friedan's dissatisfaction with married life with children, or Andrea Dworkin's fury at patriarchy and pornography.

The icons of my youth are men and women pushing seventy and eighty now; a generation is passing away. I want to make note of some passings whose stories may not have made it to the evening news, but who have made the lives we live possible.

Betty Berzon recently lost her longtime battle with breast cancer, leaving her partner of over 30 years Terry DeCrescenzo, and a long legacy of gay activism. Betty was a lesbian psychotherapist, at a time when that phrase was an oxymoron. She was the author of nine books addressing lesbian and gay life, including *Positively Gay*, and *Permanent Partners*. Additionally, she was a founding mother of the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center, the largest gay community center in the world, providing services for over 1/4 million people a year (!).

Betty struggled with her lesbianism, suffering

psychiatric breakdowns until she came to accept her sexual orientation. She then went on to found the first organization of gay therapists within the American Psychiatric Association. Betty worked with others (like Judd Marmor who died in 2001) to remove the diagnosis of Homosexuality from the list of psychiatric disorders. In 1973, Homosexuality was officially removed from the diagnostic manuals and in one fell swoop (to quote Richard Green), "...several million mentally persons were cured."

Stanley Biber was a medical doctor who performed thousands of sex reassignment surgeries long before transgender was a household word. From a small town of Trinidad, Colorado, which became known as the "sex-change capital of the world," he perfected the surgical art of genital surgery, assisting transsexuals in their dream to fully actualize themselves. Dr. Marci Bowers, gynecological surgeon, parent of three, and male-to-female transsexual herself who has continued Biber's practice, said, "He put the operation on the world map. He made it safe, reproducible and functional and he brought happiness to an awful lot of people."

If you don't recognize the name Charles Socarides, you can thank people like Betty Berzon and Stanley Biber for doing their work so effectively. Charles Socarides continued to believe that homosexuality was a mental illness long after most psychiatrists had come to accept human sexual diversity. Socarides was a founder of the National Association of Research and Treatment of Homosexuality, a large right-wing organization of clinical therapists committed to turning gay people into straight people. Their theory, a literal nut-shell, is that same-sex attraction is due to poor gender identification; their treatment includes sending women to beauty parlors, and having boys spend time playing football with their fathers. Socarides' death represents the passing of a homophobic era. By the way, his son Richard was a senior adviser to Bill Clinton on gay and lesbian issues. Perhaps if he only played more football with his son.....?

I received an email last week that a young man died - the 19-year old son of some colleagues. Although I had never met their son, I burst into tears when I read the email, and have cried many tears since for young Jacob. This is a mother's pain I feel, a pain so deep and searing that I never knew existed before I held my tiny babies. When parents say they will give a kidney or an arm for a child, it is not rhetoric. I can never hear of death, a car accident, an army casualty and not think: that was someone's baby, someone's child. My heart aches for my colleagues, their loss, and the world's loss.

We only have a short time here on this fragile planet. Let us all do our work in the world with passion, to honor those who have come before us, and for the children who are watching our every move. ▼