

OUT in the mountains

VERMONT'S VOICE FOR THE LESBIAN, GAY,
BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY SINCE 1985

Vermont U.S. Senate Hopefuls Meet the Gay Press

➔ Tarrant or Parke to Face
Bernie in November

BY PAUL OLSEN



BURLINGTON - One thing independent U.S. Rep. Bernie Sanders and Republicans Rich Tarrant and Greg Parke do agree on is that the race to replace James Jeffords (I) in the U.S. Senate is the most important race facing Vermonters this year. While all three hope to replace Jeffords in Washington DC, they differ on many issues of concern to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Vermonters.

Independent Bernie Sanders has represented Vermont in the U.S. House of Representatives since 1991. Prior to his election to Congress, he was the mayor of Burlington.

In Congress, Sanders garnered 100% positive ratings from the Washington DC-based Human Rights Campaign, and a 100% rating from the AIDS Action Council. His office maintains a written nondiscrimination policy including sexual orientation, he is a sponsor of the Employment Non-discrimination Act (ENDA), and he voted against the antigay Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA).

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John Tracy and Matt Dunne Go Head to Head in Lt. Gov. Primary

Democrats Both Longtime State Legislators

BY LYNN MCNICOL

Democrats Matt Dunne and John Tracy, both supporters of gay rights in Vermont, will be facing each other in the September 12th primary. The winner of that primary will face the popular Republican incumbent, Lt. Gov. Brian Dubie. Both candidates say they would take a far more active role than Dubie has.

The role of lieutenant governor includes presiding over the Senate, breaking tie votes, and serving in the absence of the governor.

Matt Dunne, 36, has lived in Hartland in Windsor County most of his life. Dunne graduated from Brown University and ran for the Vermont legislature a few months later, in the fall of 1992. While serving in the House, Dunne also worked for Logic Associates in Wilder.

In his fourth term as a state representative, Dunne became the director of AmeriCorpsVISTA, a federal anti-poverty program. Dunne accepted the position, continuing to serve when George W. Bush took office. In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, Dunne said he was "infuriated" that Bush and his advisors took actions that, to him, preyed on people's worst fears. He decided it was time to come home. In 2002, he ran a successful race for a seat in the Vermont Senate.

Dunne completed his second term as senator this year after announcing his bid for the lieutenant governor job in December. Having served 11 years in the Legislature, Dunne is especially proud of programs he helped create to get young

people involved in legislation and public policy. One such program is the UVM Research Shop in which students help legislators do research that helps shape legislation.

"I had the extraordinary experience of being empowered at a young age by my home community," Dunne told *OITM* last month. "Since that time I've dedicated my life to doing the same for others."

He's enthusiastic about continuing to help people if elected as lieutenant governor this fall.

"What I would love to do is transform it into an office of action," he said. Dunne feels that Dubie follows the Bush political line, which has only modest support in Vermont. For example, Dunne noted, Dubie is opposed to civil unions, opposed to women's right to choose abortion, defends the administration's refusal to sign the Kyoto protocol on global warming, and defends wire-tapping of U.S. citizens without a warrant.

"I believe the values of Vermont are under attack by a group of right wingers," Dunne said. He expressed his frustration as a legislator serving on the Appropriations Committee at the damage done by budget cuts in Washington.

Dunne also votes for equal rights for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities.

"I was a strong supporter of the gender identity bill," Dunne said, and was "very disturbed" by Gov. Douglas' veto of that bill.

Nearly a decade ago, a friend asked Dunne if he supported same-sex marriage. He told the friend he did.

"All people need to be

equal under the law," Dunne said. Dunne helped create the Vermont Film Commission and is credited with

the right thing to do." Tracy returned to Vermont when his tour of duty ended in 1972, with a changed opin-



John Tracy (above) and Matt Dunne (left) are in some ways more alike than they are different: both are native Vermonters, both have served close to a dozen years in the Legislature, both support gay rights, and both promise, if elected, to play a far more active role in state politics than the incumbent, Lt. Gov. Brian Dubie.

PHOTOS: JOHN TRACY BY LYNN MCNICOL, AND MATT DUNNE COURTESY OF HIS CAMPAIGN

writing the first brownfields legislation to recover polluted land. He said the Cata-mont Health bill, which will go into effect next year, "starts to address" the problem of Vermonters who lack health insurance or the ability to pay for health care.

"I would certainly not declare victory," he said of the plan.

John Tracy, Dunne's opponent in the Democratic primary, is also a native Vermonter from Springfield. He announced his candidacy last month.

After high school, Tracy enlisted in the U.S. Army and volunteered for service in Vietnam because "it was

ion of the war and its leaders who "sometimes tell a different story" from the real story on the ground.

When he returned, Tracy worked in construction and with young people as an Outreach Director for the YMCA. He also earned a political science degree at UVM, and became a stay-at-home dad. Tracy coached youth soccer and basketball for many years, and served on the Burlington Waterfront Board. Rep. George Cross, (D-Winooski) said Tracy was a "major player" in minimum wage legislation and helped create Act

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