

## → letters

**Tell it like it is!** Send your letters to: editor@mountainpridemedia.org or Out in the Mountains, PO Box 1122, Burlington, VT 05402

### “Queer” is OK

Thank you so much for your hard work on behalf of OITM. I love the redesign, and as a fellow reporter, I appreciate your thoughtful and professional coverage of the news. It's a vital service to our community.

It's clear from the bylines that you're currently the paper's only news reporter. I know you'd like to have more people covering news for you. There are certainly more stories to tell. I've contributed articles on occasion, and will again, but my partner and I recently had a baby, and I'm swamped with work.

That's partly thanks to OITM - when I decided to pursue a career as a writer in 1998, I got my first assignment from this newspaper. I wrote several stories for OITM, and they helped me to land my first paying gig writing for the *Vermont Times*. The clips that I accumulated at OITM and at *Vermont Times* are what convinced the editors of *Seven Days* to give me a shot at writing for them in 2001. They hired me as a full-time staff writer in 2005.

My experience is proof that writing for OITM can provide aspiring writers with clips they can use to advance their careers. And volunteering your time and your words is a great way to give back to the community.

On another note, I read your disparaging comments regarding the use of the word “queer” to describe our diverse community. I understand your reluctance to embrace the word, but I disagree with your statement that we need a label “more positive than queer.”

For the majority of LGBTQQIA people under 35 - maybe 40? - the world queer has mostly positive associations. We've reclaimed it. We're using it. And we wish you would join us. People of all persuasions all over the country are using the word in a very visible, positive way. To buck that trend, in my opinion, is to put yourself on the wrong side of history.

The debate over whether or not to use “queer” is similar, in my mind, to the debate over gay marriage. A sizable number of people in this country find gay marriage repellent. Most of them are over 40. If you look at survey data, it's clear that rising generations do not possess the same deep-seated discomfort with gay marriage, regardless of their sexual orientation.

The folks in the marriage movement argue that it's just a matter of time before the demographics shift, and people in this

country embrace state-sanctioned same-sex couplehood. Maybe the same thing is true of the word “queer.” I hope it happens sooner.

**CATHY RESMER**  
Winooski

### “Gay” is OK

In response to the question you posed at the end of your editorial entitled “Alphabet Soup,” I would agree “LGBTQQIA” is way over the edge. Instead, I would suggest that we simply stick to the word “gay” which would stand for anyone who is not heterosexual.

Years ago, one of my students came running up to me all excited and wanted to know for sure, wasn't it true that the word “gay” meant happy? I assured her that yes, indeed, it did in fact mean happy! We even looked it up in the dictionary and sure enough, Merriam Webster agrees. Since that day I have always cherished the word “gay.”

Many thanks for all that you do to keep *Out In The Mountains* up and running. Your fans greatly appreciate it. Best wishes for your continued success.

**BUNNY LAVOIE**  
Windsor

### Dean: Take Responsibility for DNC's Gay Outreach Program

After making the overworked Donald Hitchcock a sacrificial lamb, now the Democratic National Committee (DNC) is attempting to silence the party's gay activists. Choosing to let Donald go was a mistake. Now we have a new director, Brian Bond, without a strategic plan and without the funding, institutional support or time to handle both fundraising and outreach to the LGBT community. The DNC's LGBT and field staff now must divide their time between handling an immense task and calming the critics of the program.

Taking the LGBT vote for granted is a luxury the DNC cannot afford with crucial 2006 midterm elections approaching. It is likely that the LGBT vote will play a very important role in deciding who is elected and who falls just short this season. Without a strong and active LGBT field program from 2006 to 2008, the Democratic Party risks losing the substantial gains it made in organizing the LGBT community during the 2004 campaign.

The LGBT community is one

of the most engaged demographics. It is looking for a party that will fight for its issues. But under the leadership of Howard Dean, the Democratic Party continues to signal to LGBT votes that they will take our money but do not take up our issues for fear of appearing too liberal.

Stripping the field program and replacing it with a plan focused entirely on fundraising is not only disheartening, but is destroying the credibility of the DNC, Howard Dean and other high-ranking LGBT officers such as Andy Tobias. As the highest ranking officer at the DNC, Mr. Tobias should be the most vocal critic of the DNC's dismantling of the LGBT outreach programs - not its most silent.

The addition of Brian Bond provides a good opportunity for change. But the DNC should not use his skills for the purpose of fundraising as they did with Donald Hitchcock. Without a full-time field outreach staffer and a separate full-time LGBT fundraiser, the DNC will continue to sacrifice field organizing for dollars.

I strongly urge you to consider what the DNC is doing before writing a fundraising check. It is time to accept that the LGBT community must be more than the silent piggy bank of the Democratic Party and from this day forward commit to realizing a formal place in Party organizing and outreach before it is too late.

**ANDY SZEKERES**  
LGBT and Democratic Activist  
Former LGBT Field Director  
- Wisconsin Democratic Party  
Former Out for Dean Chapter  
Leader

### Mary Cheney vs. the Ugly Gay Left

The Gay Left is increasingly becoming a mirror image of all the hatred and intolerance they condemn. Specifically, they exclude over one million gay voters who, according to the *New York Times*, are Republican and represent one out of four gay voters in exit polls.

This problem was on display with the vile attacks and despicable bar-raising by many gay editors and activists toward Mary Cheney, the partnered lesbian daughter of Vice President Richard Cheney.

Mary Cheney's recent public statements opposing the federal constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage has been almost consistently greeted with “too little, too late” responses

from those who write editorial opinion for the gay world. The fact that her father, a conservative Republican, is also opposed to amending the Constitution to ban gay marriage is not even underscored or celebrated by the far left gay press.

This is exactly why the gay left has reached the point of diminishing returns in the gay community. They cannot accept incremental progress on gay issues by Republicans, albeit they certainly allow the Democratic National Committee to veer right on gay marriage and outreach. Republicans can never do enough; their efforts to placate - even defend and include gays - are always painfully or horribly inadequate, according to the Gay Left Noise Machine of weeklies, blogs and websites.

As Kevin Naff, managing editor of the *Washington Gay Blade* asserts, many gays are wrongfully blaming Mary Cheney for not coming out soon enough and completely enough for gay causes. This is the phony legacy of so many liberal and so-called “progressive” gay writers.

You eventually learn that when most gay people say they are completely out, they really mean that they are “selectively out,” depending upon the situation, e.g. people consider themselves “completely out” when they march in a gay parade with dark sunglasses on and a baseball hat pulled tightly over their head. Some say they are completely out at work, creating a false impression of self-confidence and superiority, because they don't tell you of the closeted aspects of their lives.

This “selectively out” business applies to many, many left-wing writers and activists in the GLBT community who still hold the keys of their own closet. While they demand that everybody be “out” 24/7, many of these sanctimonious gay leftists forget that they hide their true identity from even Democratic family members and friends.

Mary Cheney's public outing was never so limited. She couldn't hide from her parents, friends, the GOP or the Democratic Party - and certainly not the ugly elements of the gay press who like to call themselves humanitarians and egalitarians. Mary Cheney couldn't conveniently select which avenues of her life she wanted to be “out” the way most gay people do and certainly many of her stuffy pretentious critics.

As Kevin Naff writes, “We should all look in the mirror before condemning Mary Cheney.” And that introspection, first and

foremost, goes for the columnists and editors of the hateful, ridiculing, ugly Gay Left.

**MATTHEW VERITAS TSIEN**  
Vice President, Membership  
Log Cabin Republicans  
South Florida

### Scudder Parker Supports Rights

Jim Douglas isn't the Governor that Vermont needs. His actions are consistently inconsistent with his words. An immediate and extreme example is Jim Douglas' statement of commitment to Vermont's history of protecting minorities, ending discrimination and creating a safe community at the “Creating a Welcoming Community” diversity conference at St. Michael's College. He made that statement just a few short weeks after his veto of the Gender Identity and Expression Bill (H.865). This makes him the first Governor in recent history to veto a piece of civil rights legislation.

Vermont needs a leader, not a lifelong politician who doesn't stand up against the ugly influences of partisan politics that threaten the Vermont way of life. We need a leader who does not appoint right wing conservatives to Vermont's Human Rights Commission who then vote against important civil rights legislation. Jim Douglas puts special interests ahead of what is best for all Vermonters.

My name is Scudder Parker and I am the Democratic candidate for Governor of Vermont. My campaign is a campaign to unite and empower people all across our state, regardless of party affiliation, to join together in a common purpose. I will protect what is special about our state and restore Vermont as a leader on basic human rights issues. I will unify Vermont and end the divisiveness that concerns so many of us.

I will work tirelessly to protect your civil rights. Jim Douglas needed me to remind him that he needed to protect Vermonters from the NSA wiretapping. Jim Douglas also needs to be reminded that all Vermonters deserve to be protected from discrimination for expressing their gender identity.

My campaign is powered by people - Vermonters fueled with optimism, passion, conviction and the dedication to make ideas become reality. I invite you to join us.

**SCUDDER PARKER**  
Middlesex