

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Queer Social Space in the Making

BY JEN BERGER, LIZ BLOCKER AND CONNIE BEAL

"On the night that Pearl's closed I danced my heart out until the very last minute when they stopped the music and turned the lights on. I went from having the best night of my life, to sadness wondering what would become of the queer community..."

Concerned Community Member, Burlington

The above statement about the future of the queer community gave voice to concerns on many of our minds, and has become the catalyst for much discussion within our community. We all feel the gap in our social lives, and our concerns are growing as we deal with the aftermath of having had something cherished - and, as many feel, essential - re-

moved from our community.

After the doors closed at Vermont's last queer bars (Shooka Dooka's in Rutland and 135 Pearl in Burlington), a small group of community organizers began a series of conversations about what it means to have a very real absence of openly queer social space, and the potential possibilities for Vermont's queer community. The concern over the lack of public visibility of the queer community, as well as issues of safety, incited further discussion. On Saturday, July 2nd, activists met at the R.U.1.2? Queer Community Center in Burlington to talk about the lack of public queer nightspots and queer public space in Vermont. After much discussion, we realized we needed input and feed-

back from more members of the queer community. At the Vermont Pride celebration on July 8th, a survey was distributed amongst the crowd in Battery Park, allowing the larger voice of the queer and allied community to be heard.

While levels of passion and dedication varied among the 30 surveys collected, not a single respondent said there wasn't a need for a queer social space. R.U.1.2? and other places like it are essential for information, education, community and peer support, and social services, but a queer social scene serves another purpose entirely.

Here are some of the thoughts community members shared

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Faerie Camp Destiny Building Update

PHOTO: MATT BUCY

GRAFTON - Faerie Camp Destiny, New England's first Radical Faerie sanctuary, which was formed in 1994, is in the process of building its camp kitchen. Destiny bought land in southern Vermont in 1997 and now owns 166 acres. After delays in permitting and this summer's amazing rains, Destiny is ready to move ahead!

Destiny finalized changes for a new gathering kitchen, bath facilities and small cabins for a caretaker and folks with mobility issues. Now that things are finally drying out, we're looking for folks with an interest in helping out to join us in a traditional "barn raising" with an ecological twist. Destiny's kitchen will be built using timber framing techniques along with strawbale walls. But before we can lay the foundation, we need to find a licensed plumber and electrician to lay in these services. If you know anyone who might be interested in helping or if you know GLBT friendly folks interested in alternative building practices let us know.

We are aiming to lay the foundation in August so we can start work on framing and walling part of the building before winter. So ideally, we'll be able to



Faeries posing with freshly milled timbers for the new construction

find an electrician and plumber to work with beforehand. We'd also love to hear from other folks interested in helping with this building project.

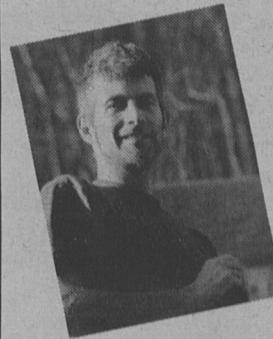
If you'd like to get involved with Destiny in general, we are having

our annual Lammas gathering July 18 - August 6.

For more information, please contact Destiny at info@faeriecampdestiny.org or see our website at faeriecampdestiny.org.

"Fermentation Fetishist" ...

Sandor Katz
comes to Vermont!



"My fermentation fetish grew out of my overlapping interests in cooking, nutrition and gardening. I am also an herbalist and an activist and a writer and a builder and a craftsperson and a bicyclist and many other things: a generalist. I am a native of New York City, a graduate of Brown University and a retired policy wonk. Ten years ago I moved from New York to Shor Mountain Sanctuary, a queer intentional community deep in the wooded hills of Tennessee. I have AIDS and consider fermented foods an important part of my healing."

• <http://www.wildfermentation.com> •

Monday August 28 6 - 8 P.M.

in the "Fletcher Room", upstairs at the Fletcher Free Library.

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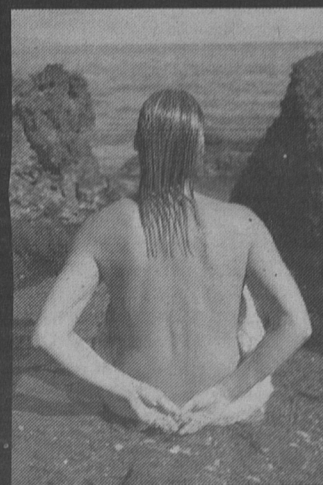
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