

OUT in the mountains

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

Three Vie for Vermont's Lone U.S. House Seat

➔ Rainville or Shepard Will Face Welch in November

BY PAUL OLSEN

BURLINGTON - The political spectrum is well represented in the race to replace independent Rep. Bernie Sanders in the U.S. House of Representatives. Democrat state Senator Peter Welch is on the left, Republican Martha Rainville is in the middle, and the other Republican, state Senator Mark Shepard, is on the right. Rainville and Shepard will face off in the GOP primary on Sep-



tember 12th. The winner of that contest will face Peter Welch in November.

Senator Peter Welch (Windsor County) currently serves as Vermont's Senate President Pro Tem. Welch, an attorney, said gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Vermonters should support his candidacy due to his record as a "strong and consistent supporter of equal rights."

If elected to serve as Vermont's only representative in the U.S. House of Representatives, Welch promises to fight for gay and lesbian equality. He said he opposes the anti-gay Federal Marriage Amendment and would cosponsor the Employment Nondiscrimination Act (ENDA), the Uniting American Families Act, and the Domestic Partner Health Benefits Equity Act. ENDA would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation nationwide, while the Uniting American Families Act would treat same-sex partners as married spouses for purposes of immigration law. The

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Gay Games or Outgames?

Two Vermonters Size Up the Summer's Big Sports Events

BY FRAN MORAVCSIK

I fully believed that I had signed up for Gay Games VII in Montreal, when suddenly I found my registration transferred to Chicago along with the whole shebang. Meanwhile Montreal on its own decided to host the first Outgames. Both Olympic-style events happened back-to-back in the hot July of 2006. How all this came about is too complicated for me to understand, much less explain to you. Since both organizations plan to continue holding competitions every four years, they must believe that there is enough interest in sports in our community to float both their boats. I personally have neither the stamina nor the finances to attend both, this year or in the future, and so I was curious how they matched up.

As luck would have it, my friend Al Perkins had gone to the Outgames in Montreal with some friends. On her return we met over coffee to compare experiences. Both of us are older lesbians who compete in track and field, having attended straight (or "don't ask, don't tell") meets locally and around the country. For Montreal and Chicago, we had even chosen the same events: shotput, javelin, and discus.

Al praised the Outgames, saying they were well organized and well run, with plenty of friendly and competent volunteers who went out of their way to be helpful. For example, she was particularly grateful to one who offered to keep her implements



AL PERKINS (above) won two gold medals, in shot and javelin, at the Outgames. Only three other women in all ages competed along with her, and she was the only person in the 80-84 year old women category.

FRAN MORAVCSIK, (right) who did have some competition in her categories of women over 50, won gold medals in shot and discus, and silver in javelin at the Gay Games. The woman pictured with her is the mother of a competitor who decided to participate in the games as well.



PHOTOS PROVIDED

safely locked in his office overnight and deliver them next day to the site in time for competition, which he did. This contrasted with what she was told by a coach whose team went to Chicago first. He had been deluged with daily emails complaining about how things were handled there.

I had to admit that I, and most people I spoke with in Chicago, had experienced some problems, not really critical issues but the kind that shake your confidence that the folks in charge know what they are doing. A buzz of rumors and suggestions then arise among the athletes concerned, and they help each other solve or cope with the situation,

a bonding experience in itself. For example, two women spent several hours weighing and measuring everyone's shot, discus, javelin and hammer. They were participants, not volunteers, and had their own competitions to consider, but those in charge had not provided anyone else able to do that essential task.

Unlike Montreal, Chicago had never hosted a regular Olympic Games, and did not have the centralized, standard facilities nor the management experience that comes with that. However, the correctness of the organizers and the facilities was less important to me than the friendly, happy camaraderie of the

participants themselves.

One problem that came up at both venues, and is worth taking into account by anyone contemplating attending either event in the future, is the almost inevitable last-minute rearranging of the schedule. Airlines, hotels and your personal obligations are often inflexible, and so you may end up a no-show at an event for which you had planned and trained. Al missed out on her discus competition this way. Leave yourself an extra day or two if you can.

As a longtime feminist, Al's complaint about Montreal was that the scene was slanted toward the

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