

# Civil rights petition circulated

A petition is being circulated around Vermont in support of a lesbian/gay civil rights statement. A similar statement last year was signed by over 650 Vermonters and was published in the Burlington Free Press about a week before the lesbian/gay pride march. Attempts to have this same ad placed in the Rutland Herald and the Barre Times-Argus were thwarted by some undefined advertising policy.

It is the goal of parade organizers this year to gather 2000 signatures and to publish the statement in five major Vermont newspapers. This goal can be

reached with your help.

Copies of the petition are inserted in each copy of OITM, so here's your chance. Ask your friends, co-workers, family, neighbors, etc. to show their support for you by signing this petition.

It's also very important that people back this statement financially. It's very expensive putting these ads in prominent papers.

There is a place for people to say yes or no to a mailing list. This refers to a mailing list being pulled together by VLGR to keep Vermonters informed on various political issues of particular concern to lesbians and gay men. This mailing list will be strictly confidential



# Letters Home

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much, there is no way that your thoughts would not have an impact. While I will continue to chart my life's course in a way which best fulfills my needs and beliefs, I do care about what you think.

Yes, I guess I will always be "tilting at windmills." Such tilting fulfills a deep need of mine to help right situations which I believe are wrong. And at the moment my major focus is on efforts to combat homophobia, and to lessen the hysteria surrounding AIDS.

For some people, Mom, working for a cause can be done in a detached way, ie., sending a check to the Cancer Society. But for me, such detached involvement doesn't "cut the mustard." Therefore my efforts related to gay activities are often in the "public eye." I know you and I disagree about this topic. How differently you might perceive my publicness if I were involved with something like the Sierra Club as opposed to gay rights. Ironically, the ease with which a person could stand up and talk about gay issues as compared with environmental or any other issue is exactly what I'm fighting for. As long as you or I have to feel uncomfortable or threatened by such an action, then there is every reason to be active and public.

You and Dad appear to be very concerned about my involvement with the gay/lesbian newspaper. I can understand your fear that my whole life revolves around my gayness, but that assumption just isn't true. There is no way I could avoid being a part of the heterosexual world even if I wanted to. Gay or straight, all of us have to deal with a variety of everyday activities, work, going shopping, etc.

But I am gay and that part of me needs periodic involvement with and nourishment from the lesbian/gay community. I believe this is true for the majority of lesbians/gay men. In a rural, sparsely populated state like Vermont, a major way of helping people counteract isolation is through a state-wide newspaper. I think this is one of the most important activities I am involved with.

Well, I could go on and on, but perhaps it would be better to continue the discussion during my next visit. Much of what I do is difficult for you to understand, I know. But more understanding on both our parts will only happen from continued communication. Thanks for your continued love and support.

Love, Burton



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