

"...my existence is a political issue."

I would like to organize or find a Central Vermont Lesbian group. If you could possibly pass along my name and address to any womyn in the area that may have asked you about such a group, I would be very grateful.

The ERA campaign was a heck of a time to be coming out, but it actually accelerated the process, for me. I had to realize why I was taking the whole thing so personally, why I was so defensive. The issue of rights for women was not enough to explain my reactions. That issue became that we must have if we are going to feel safe enough to make ourselves known. I have never been a political person, an agitator or organizer; I have set back and admired people who were. All of a sudden, for the first time in my life, I felt myself thrust into the role of oppressed minority on two counts, as a female whom others do not see as being worthy of inclusion in the state constitution, and as a lesbian, whom others do not even want to think about as being worthy of existing. My simple existence is a political issue, it seems, whether I want it or not.

While "marches alone don't bring integration," marches of solidarity don't always either. Ordinary people walking down the streets being unashamedly themselves help bring understanding. I hope.

I did not intend this to be a long letter. I just wanted to say that I want to be involved.

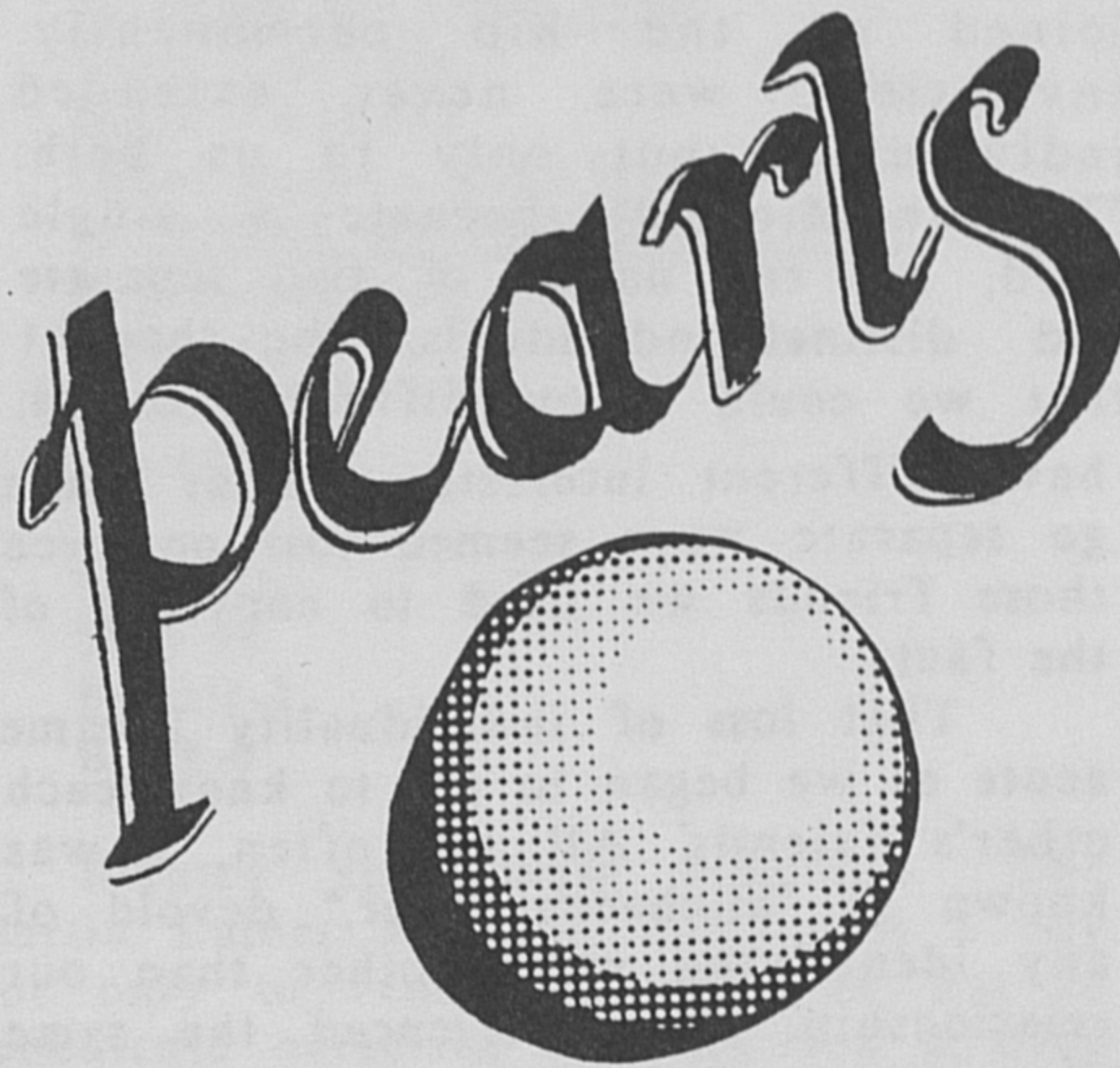
Lesbians Meet in St. J.

At the 7th annual Lesbian wood party there was a discussion about how to have an "out" lesbian on the Umbrella Board of Directors, St. Johnsbury's Women's Center. A date was set for planning. A week later was the Vermont Gay and Lesbian meeting in South Royalton where specifics and energy for the plan were kindled. Research was done and letters were mailed.

On November 4, we Vermonters chose not to have equal rights for women and men in our constitution. The campaign was painful, particularly for lesbians promoting the Equal Rights Amendment and simultaneously dealing with the blatant homophobia from both sides. We all experienced the deep roots of sexism and homophobia in this state. Perhaps one positive outcome of the equal rights defeat is the reaction from lesbians in the area. As one woman said, "The defeat of ERA shook me up. We have to affirm ourselves, we can't wait for it to come from the outside."

On November 15, twenty lesbians met, coming from Thetford, Derby Line and many towns between these. We began by saying who we are, where we live and why we were here. We came to strengthen and organize the community through networking, to be involved with change, to combat fear, hatred and being alone. Some came to meet other lesbians, take care of our own needs and define our community. We could probably name forty more lesbians in the Northeast Kingdom. And then there are all the others. We are many and varied.

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Tues. Ed's \$1 Bud Night
Wed. Ladies Night
Thurs. Boys Night Out

**Dancin' in the New Year 8 - 3 am
Make it a Hot New Beginning**

\$5.00 Door

(Womyn's Cocktail Party 5 - 8 pm Upstairs Bar \$3 Cover)

January 9th Womyn's Dance 5 - 9 pm

January 18th Drag in the New Year

Tony Rose, winner of the 1986 P-town Golden Gull Award

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Featuring: Joan Rivers, Bette Midler, Diana Ross, etc.!

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Mon.- Fri. Open at 5pm
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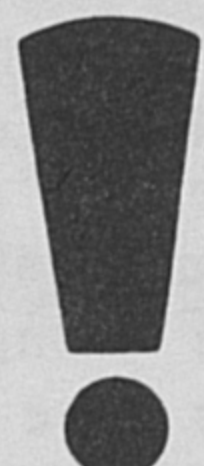
Burlington, Vermont

802 863-2343



Congratulations

Suzi and Joan



**Eight years
January 19, 1986**



Celebrating an Anniversary?

Send us your anniversaries! We want not only to keep us all informed of lesbian and gay news, we want to note our personal and communal celebrations. If you have ever wanted to publicly proclaim your anniversary (for example), this is your chance.

To have your anniversary published, we need to receive the following information by the 15th of the month preceding publication.

Please send the full names of both partners, number of years as a couple and anniversary date. Please specify if you want only your first names published. Send to

**Out in the Mountains
PO Box 438
Hinesburg, VT 05461**