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Burlington Alders Pass Resolution

Therapy *from page 5*

By Tom Smith, (Alderpperson in Burlington, Ward 3).

The slogan, "Silence Equals Death," graphically points the way forward in the struggle against homophobia. We must be looking for every opportunity to challenge manifestations of homophobia, using varied tactics from "kiss-ins" at the Republican Convention to polemics in psychiatric journals.

The Burlington Board of Alders presents one such opportunity. With this in mind I brought forth a resolution this spring condemning the "Drink Beers, Kill Queers" campaign at UVM. In August I sponsored another resolution commemorating John Rutkowski's courage in educating the public about A.I.D.S. The following is the text of the resolution which was passed unanimously by the Board August 15 rekating to People With Aids.

CITY OF BURLINGTON

In the year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty-eight

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Burlington, as follows:

That WHEREAS, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (A.I.D.S.) has killed more than 40,000 people in the United States; and

WHEREAS, A.I.D.S. has had a profound affect on the gay men's community; and

WHEREAS, homophobia is a widespread system of beliefs that has been responsible for the harrassment of/and discrimination against those individuals thought to be homosexual; and

WHEREAS, these prejudices have undermined the public commitment to fund research to find a cure for A.I.D.S.; and

WHEREAS, the A.I.D.S. epidemic has exacerbated homophobia and heightened the harassment of gay men and lesbians; and

WHEREAS, John Rutkowski, a 29 year old Burlington resident was first diagnosed as having A.I.D.S. in September of 1987, and died June 28, 1988; and

WHEREAS, John had experienced the hardships of being an openly gay male in a homophobic society; and

WHEREAS, John chose to take his personal message about A.I.D.S. to the public despite the stigma associated with the illness; and

WHEREAS, John's efforts at public education contradicted the Vermont perspective that A.I.D.S. is simply a big city prob-

lem; and
 WHEREAS, John's choice to personally do public education about A.I.D.S. took great courage;
 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Aldermen urges the Mayor and the Board of Finance to pledge a sum of money from the special projects fund to Vermont Committee for A.I.D.S. Resources, Education and Services in the name of John Rutkowski; and
 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Clerk is directed to send a copy of this Resolution to John's mother; and
 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Board will seek creative ways to educate the public about A.I.D.S.; and
 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Board will re-dedicate itself to the struggle against homophobia.

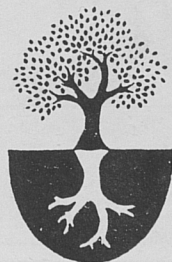
as an individual. As one person said, "If a therapist's reactions are going to get in the way of talking freely about the gay part of me--that's not the therapist for me!" All suggested that an initial get-acquainted meeting is the best time to ask a prospective therapist about their experiences and feelings concerning lesbian/gay/bisexual clients. It is imperative that a client be comfortable with her/his counselor, gay-sensitive or not. Shopping around a bit and getting friends' recommendations are highly suggested. The bottom line, several say, is that clients are paying for a service and should be satisfied with what they get for their money.

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