

Purpose

The purpose of Out in the Mountains is to serve as a voice for lesbians, gay men, and our supporters in Vermont. We wish the newspaper to be a source of information, support and affirmation for lesbians and gay men. We also see it as a vehicle for celebration of the goodness and diversity of the lesbian and gay community.

Editorial Policy

We will consider for publication any material which broadens our understanding of our lifestyles and of each other. Views and opinions appearing in the paper do not necessarily represent those of the staff. This paper cannot, and will not endorse any candidates and actions of public officials on issues of importance to lesbians and gay men.

We will not publish any material which is overtly racist, sexist, anti-Semitic, ageist, classist, or homophobic.

All materials submitted must be signed so we can contact the author should we need to consider editorial revisions. However, within the pages of the newspaper, articles may appear anonymously, upon request, and strict confidentiality will be observed. No revisions or rejections of materials will occur without dialogue with the author.

We welcome and encourage all readers to submit materials for publication and to share your comments, criticisms, and positive feelings with us. This paper is here for you. The deadline for submitting material for each issue is the 7th of the month prior to publication.

Materials should be sent to:
Out in the Mountains
PO Box 177
Burlington, VT 05402

To Submit Articles

We encourage our readers to participate in bringing this publication to Gay and Lesbian Vermonters. Please assist us by submitting articles no longer than two double-spaced typed pages. Your submission should be received by OITM no later than the 7th of the previous month.

Thank you!

Editorial

What Should We Print?

Most of the unsolicited contributions we receive at OITM are greeted with shouts of joy and celebration. "Ready-to-print" copy from our readers is something we've seldom, if ever, had enough of. The commentaries and letters we receive slip largely unscathed by our red pens (space considerations aside) and you, our readers, talk to one another with little meddling from us.

Thus it was not business as usual this month when our usually casual editorial meeting turned into a heated discussion over whether or not to print a particular piece. At issue was whether its sexually explicit language was, on one hand, mildly erotic or, on the other, offensive and whether it was "soft porn" or a light-hearted treatment of lesbian sexuality. And, all arguments aside, it was clear that most of us didn't feel comfortable with our role as censor.

At the root of the problem seems to be how we can celebrate ourselves as loving people without necessarily being sexually explicit, and, of course, where we draw the line. Does every issue of OITM need to be safe enough to show tentatively accepting parents or legislators? Would OITM quickly degenerate into a "bar rag" if we

started printing personals and other sexually oriented material? Is the paper too boring? Are we too prudish, or maybe homophobic? Do we have the right to censor what our readers see?

If you've already leafed curiously through this issue, you know we didn't print the piece. Our compromise decision cleverly postponed the dilemma: we decided if the submission had been a one time offering, we would have printed it, but since the contributors were offering to be columnists, we felt their voices became that of the paper, and carried our implicit approval, something we didn't feel comfortable giving.

Our hedge saved us this time but we need a policy to help us make these decisions. You, as readers and contributors, have a right to know our expectations and standards, as well as help us decide what they should be. We, as reluctant censors, would like to avoid having to make these decisions. If you want to see what we didn't print and want to help us decide what our new policy should be, why not come to the next editorial meeting (see calendar) or write and let us hear what you think.

Letters from OITM Readers

V.P.R. Supports Lesbians and Gays

In October, Hugh Russell sent a \$300 day sponsorship to V.P.R. from their "lesbian and gay friends." V.P.R. returned his donation replying that his sponsorship was inappropriate for their station. (See letters below)

After lengthy conversation between OITM staff and Sandy Northrop, V.P.R.'s Development Director, their original decision was reversed. As of November 16th, V.P.R. had not been able to contact Mr. Russell of their reconsideration. We congratulate V.P.R.'s willingness to hear us out, especially during marathon week in November. **OITM READERS STAY TUNED!**

October 26, 1988
Hugh Russell
Box 107
Marlboro, Vermont 05344

Dear Mr. Russell:

Under the direction of my supervisor, I am instructed to let you know that VPR finds your day sponsorship to be inappropriate. Unfortunately, the station feels that your day sponsorship falls under the category of messages which "raise controversial or divisive political, religious, moral or other issues."

Enclosed, you will find your check. If you would like to donate the money, regardless, or suggest an alternative message, that would be most encouraged.

Any questions concerning the station's policy should be directed to Sandy Northrop, Development Director.

Again, I apologize that this is the case.
Sincerely,
Debbly Lewis
Membership Coordinator

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