

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 and Letters

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 and letters to the editor no longer than one double spaced typed page. Your submission should be received by OITM no later than the 7th of the previous month.

Thank you!

Editorial

Private Battles in the Public Eye

Not many people willingly choose messy legal battles in which intimate and painful facts of their lives become public fare for casually interested readers. Choosing to fight for what's left of her family is not a decision Susan Bellemare made, rather it is something she has to do. It is small comfort for her, no doubt, to know hundreds of gays and lesbians across the state are watching and silently cheering her. We seethed with anger when a lawyer termed her "a fox at the henhouse door" because he objected to her "conflicting" roles as executor of her partner's will and guardian of her own son. How inconvenient for him that someone who loved her entrusted her to do the right thing.

Her situation presents a dilemma for all of us who want to see her triumph, and want everyone else to hear about it when she does. How can we respect the deeply private nature of her struggle to retain custody of her son, and on the other hand, still trigger the groundswell of public support that comes from having a large and sympathetic audience?

Too often the word "lesbian" or "homosexual" is exploited for its hysteria-producing potential in the mainstream press. Susan Aranoff, a law clerk and well-known lesbian activist in Vermont, knows

this. She is currently contesting in court provisions in the legal code which hold clerks and judges alike to the same standards of impartiality. Her story would be of dubious interest to the Burlington Free Press if not for the fact that she wants the exemption so she can freely lobby for sexual orientation anti-discrimination legislation. Her story appeared on the front page of the Vermont section with the subheadline: Lesbian Activist Says Code Violates Rights. Aranoff calls it the "lesbian-got-up; lesbian-took-a-breath" approach to journalism where anything controversial has commercial value.

Lesbians and gays who set legal precedents are heroes of a fashion. They chip away at institutionalized discrimination and in doing so, make things a little easier for the rest of us. It would be nice, however, if like Aranoff, we all had the luxury of choosing our battles, if we could wait until we felt strong enough to endure public scrutiny. Such is not the case, of course, and Susan Bellemare's composure in court is all the more compelling because of it.

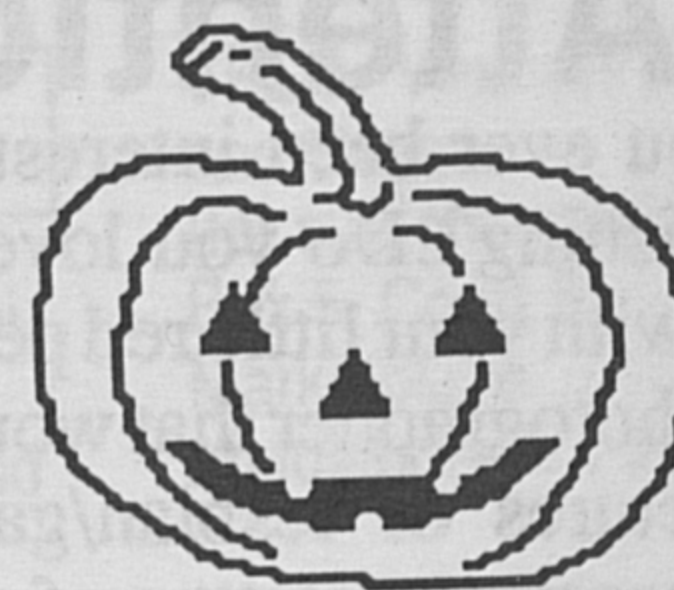
We will be following developments in her case closely, with hope and with sadness that this case might be what it takes to finally establish custody rights for gay and lesbian Vermonters.

Letters from OITM Readers

Dear Editors:

I believe that I did not sign the letter to the editor that I mailed in August. The letter was in response to Christine Burton's article in the June 1989 Out in the Mountains.

Alverta Perkins
So. Burlington, VT



We Have An Office !

Come see our new space- either during a meeting or during our Open House on October 6th from 7:30pm-9:30pm.

Help Make OITM Happen- Check the Calendar Dates for our Meeting times