

# Politics

## Russell Looks Ahead to Election

Howard "Howdy" Russell reports that his campaign for the Vermont State Senate is gearing up for the final push before the September 11th primary. "I have a very positive feeling," says the Hinesburg Democrat. "We've gotten a great reception and a lot of exposure and positive coverage."

Russell's campaign picked up even more momentum recently with endorsements from incumbent State Senator Stephen Blodgett (who is not running for re-election) and Burlington Mayor Peter Clavelle.

The primary's outcome, however, will depend on voter turnout, cautions Russell. "We can't let ourselves get overconfident, but if we can get all of our supporters out to vote, we should do very well."

Although a voter can vote for up to six candidates in the Democratic primary, it is important, says campaign manager Terje Anderson, "to vote only for those people you really want to see elected, anywhere from one to six candidates." Anderson

notes that voters can concentrate their support by only voting for their favorites. "A lot of people think you must vote for six, but that only dilutes your vote. I tell people that they should vote for as many people as they feel good about voting for, be that one, three or six. There are good candidates in this race, and I just hope one of everyone's votes is for Howdy."

In true grassroots fashion, Russell spent his summer meeting voters. For two months, small groups have gathered nearly every night and weekend in supporters' homes to listen to Howdy's views on agriculture, tax policy, and human services, with nearly 50 gatherings before the primary. Russell has also campaigned extensively at public gatherings, shopping centers and door to door.

"This has been a grassroots campaign in the best sense of the word," says Russell. "Last spring, I couldn't have imagined that we would mobilize the kind of effort we have." Over 300 volunteers across Chittenden County are involved in the campaign,

and over \$10,000 has been raised in contributions. Russell has received more press coverage than any other candidate.

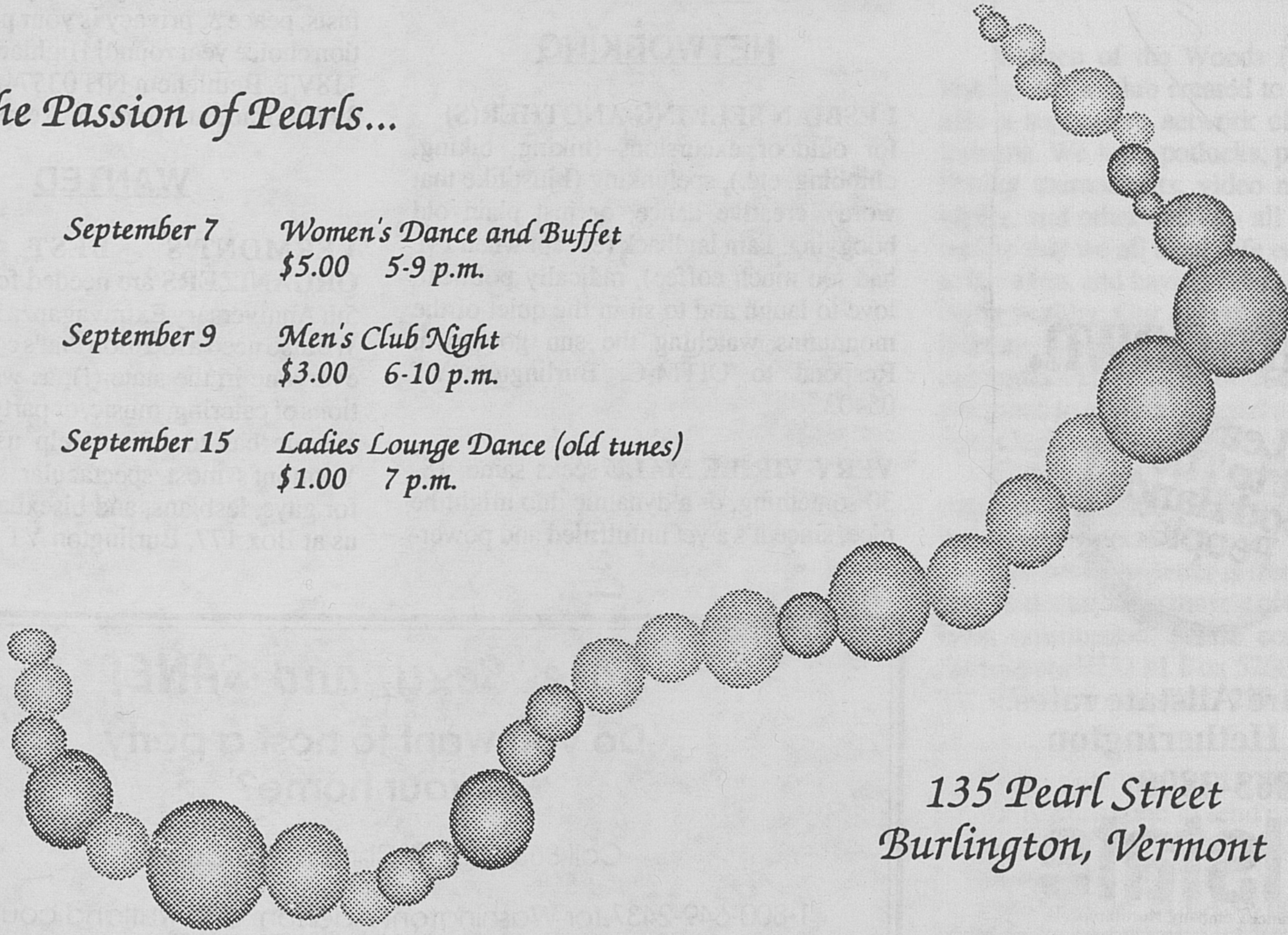
Russell's campaign has also drawn support from outside of the state. Prominent author Rita Mae Brown will be speaking in Burlington on Monday evening, September 24, in order to draw attention to the significance of Russell's bid for the Senate.

Positive feedback for Russell's campaign has come from all sides, according to Anderson, who says he makes a point of soliciting opinions from outside Howdy's base of supporters. "The impression among political people is that we're running a very professional and serious campaign." Now, says Anderson, Howdy's supporters must turn out on September 11th to make that impression an accurate one.

"We've proven that an openly gay candidate can be taken seriously," says Anderson. "Now we are going to prove one can win."

### *The Passion of Pearls...*

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| <i>September 7</i>  | <i>Women's Dance and Buffet</i><br>\$5.00 5-9 p.m.      |
| <i>September 9</i>  | <i>Men's Club Night</i><br>\$3.00 6-10 p.m.             |
| <i>September 15</i> | <i>Ladies Lounge Dance (old tunes)</i><br>\$1.00 7 p.m. |



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