

Vermont News

AIDS Funding Restored

After talks that AIDS funding for the state of Vermont would be significantly diminished and thereby threaten the effectiveness of area agencies and programs dealing with the epidemic, the Vermont Department of Health has recently learned that federal plans to redistribute AIDS-targetted monies have been suspended.

The proposed cuts would have most affected the education programs presently in existence in the state. These account for approximately one third of the \$500,000

offered to Vermont by the federal government. To date, Vermont is one of only a few states which allocates no state funds for AIDS prevention programs.

The federal government's reversal comes after intensive lobbying by health officials from Vermont and other states.

New P-FLAG Group Started in Burlington

A new chapter of the national group Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (P-FLAG) is currently forming in the Burlington area. The group is being sponsored by OUTRIGHT VERMONT, which works primarily with gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth.

According to OUTRIGHT Coordinator Josie Juhasz, it seemed natural that her organization would want to assist the formation of a parent-oriented support group. "(The parents) wanted to be able to share their experiences and find more information, which is something that (OUTRIGHT) wanted to be able to offer."

Interest for the group was solicited via various announcements, including a number of colorful posters placed in strategic locations around the city. The response at the initial meeting was good, according to Juhasz.

The next meeting of the Burlington P-FLAG is scheduled for December 9th from 2-4:00 in the OUTRIGHT office at 30 Elmwood Avenue. At this meeting, the group will decide on a more permanent location in which to hold its meetings.

Anyone interested in finding out more about this group can call Josie at the

OUTRIGHT office (865-9677) or contact one of the other two P-FLAG groups currently operating in the state (see Resource Page for addresses).

Pearls Vandalism Continues

Burlington's only gay bar, Pearls, continues to find itself the target of hate-motivated vandalism.

The most recent incident coincided with the election night campaign party for Howard Russell, an openly gay man who ran for State Senate from Chittenden County. On the night of the party, cars parked outside of Pearls had their tires slashed while their owners were inside.

In previous months, a would-be arsonist lit several small fires along the outside of the building. None of the intended blazes incurred significant damage to the location.

Pearls owner Nancy Barnett remains strong in the face of such adversity, stating simply and clearly that the gay and lesbian community in Burlington "will not be victimized." She has called on both her own patrons and the Burlington Police Department to increase their alertness when in the neighborhood of the bar.

Barnett claims that this year has been like "a war zone," and as such has been one of the most horrible for the bar in terms of the number of anti-gay incidents of harassment. In addition to the recent tire-slashing and arson attempts, two patrons of the bar have been beaten over the past year. In both cases, the assailants were quickly apprehended.

Letters *(cont. from page 4)*

work to educate the community on the issues within the AIDS crisis and will be a vocal opponent of those forces which would have us believe that the AIDS crisis is over, or of little concern to the state of Vermont.

There is an incredible amount of work to be done before we conquer this plague, but waiting for "someone else" to act on our behalf will be the nail in our coffin.

I implore everyone to join the battle against AIDS in some way. Whether it be writing a letter to our congressional leaders, talking to your children about safe sex, volunteering your time to Vermont C.A.R.E.S., or joining ACT UP/VT, if we do not fight back our silence will surely equal our deaths.

Sincerely,
Peter Blackmer
ACT UP/VT

Dear OITM:

I want to thank you out loud for your tremendous, enthusiastic, and thorough support of my Women's Music Series. You have encouraged me to pursue future venues for your area.

Already I have tentative dates for Csselberry-Dupree (for mid-February), Kate Clinton (for spring 91), and the amazing dancer/choreographer/performance artist from Philadelphia, Ellen Forman. Everyone, watch for our ads. Your support is precious and I hope Queen's Run Concerts can continue to do right by you.

Thank you, thank you,
Peg Eves, Queen's Run Concerts

P.S. Don't forget our man Allen Ginsberg on December 8. Out of the closet, waving the flag since 1945. Let's give him a warm welcome. He brings new meaning to the term "poetry reading."

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