

Pride Schedule

Vermont's Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Pride Day will be held in Burlington on Saturday June 4th. The following is a list of the day's events.

11:00 am - Marchers rally at the Unitarian-Universalist Church front lawn at the top of Church St.

11:30 am - A member of Vermont's delegation to Stonewall 25 Committee will speak along with other speakers to be announced.

12:10 pm - The March will kick-off from the lawn, ending at Battery Park.

1:00 pm - Entertainment, games, vendors and fun at Battery Park with special guest MC and performer Jamie Anderson.

4:00 pm - Pearl's outdoor festival begins under tents on the parking lot adjacent to the bar and the state office building.

The Pride Committee needs volunteers to help with traffic control, technical support, and vendor assistance. In addition the Marching Band is looking for additional members.

Floats are encouraged, check with the Pride Committee for specifics - the theme of the March is the 25th commemoration of the Stonewall Riots.

For more information or to volunteer contact the Vermont Pride Committee at 864-6764. ▼

The First Northeast Bisexual Community Meeting Plans for the Future

Kirsten L. Isgro and Shannon Williams

For the first time in New England, bisexual people and their allies gathered to meet, network, share resources and begin to get organized within their communities and states. On April 30, in Montpelier, 35 people from Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Connecticut came together to break down the individual and collective isolation they face as bisexuals in the northeast region.

The day-long meeting was co-facilitated by Stephanie Berger and Laura Marina Perez, the northeast regional representatives of the National Bisexual Network (BiNet USA). The day began with introductions and large group discussion, followed by two 1-hour long sessions in which people met in small groups to discuss topics of concern. Issues addressed during the day included strategies and struggles of urban and rural organizing, how to set up support groups as well as networks in one's area, sex and sexual identity, and support for married people and those in "alternative" relationships. Other areas of interest were coming out issues, addressing the anti-oppression work that needs to be done within the bisexual community, and organizing a culture and arts festival. There was plenty of time to break and talk and view an on-going video project created by Jill Merkle.

A participant from Plainfield said, " I didn't know what to expect. I've been to a lot of different gatherings, but to have the opportunity to meet other bisexual people in Vermont was exciting. I was

looking for kinship...the meeting went beyond my expectations."

Sharokin Betgevargiz, a participant from Burlington, liked the large group discussion that developed the meeting structure. "People were honest...in bringing out their concerns...I totally felt a positive, good connection. People spoke the same language, and I didn't have to justify myself to anyone."

Some of the ideas that came out of the community meeting were planning a regional bisexual conference in the fall, organizing a bisexual culture and arts festival in August, and creating a more cohesive and visible Vermont Bisexual network. Sharokin talked about the viable future of a bisexual community: "It's necessary for people in different communities or support groups to call each other and organize on the local level, and communicate somehow to each other."

This meeting was co-sponsored by BiNet USA. The purpose of BiNet is to collect and distribute information regarding Bisexuality and to facilitate the development of bisexual community and visibility and to work for the equal rights and liberation of bisexuals and all oppressed people. Organizers, participants, and ideas are needed for the upcoming fall conference. For information about BiNet and/or the conference, contact (617) 338-9595. To find out about the arts festival and bisexual video project, contact Jill Merkle at (802) 496-2071. ▼

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