



Montpelier's Savoy, home of the Lesbian, Gay and Bi Film Festival back in October

obviously should not make this list and the other one will not have arrived until after this article has been submitted for publication. The dates refer to the Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights Conferences. Creating Change/Creating Community was the theme for 1993's conference and A Queer Town Meeting was the theme for 1994's. Over 300 people turned out for the first annual conference at Vermont Technical College in Randolph last year where the day-long events included keynote speaker Paula Ettlebrick, workshops on a myriad of topics, lunch, and vendors exhibiting their gay/lesbian/bisexual wares. The 1994 conference was held at Middlebury College. You will have to read the January issue to find out what exciting events took place at the second annual conference. Stay tuned...

5. On June 4th, the Vermont Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual community celebrated its eleventh annual Pride Day. Dubbed "Stonewall 25", this year's Pride Day celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion, noted as the start of the

modern gay rights movement. This year, the festivities included a Pre-march Rally on the front lawn of the Unitarian Universalist Church, a March through downtown Burlington, a Post-march rally in Battery Park, and an outdoor dance party courtesy of the bar formerly known as Pearl's. The *Burlington Free Press* reported that 1,500 people took part in Pride Day, surpassing last year's count of 950.

4. "Effective August 1, 1994, medical and dental benefits coverage for dependents of state employees shall be extended to domestic partners and the children of domestic partners..." These words begin the letter from the Vermont Department of Personnel that makes Vermont the first state in the nation to extend health care benefits to the domestic partners of its employees. Vermont has once again taken the national lead in recognizing what defines a family in the socially aware '90s. "This really shows that the work we started doing to ensure that all Vermonters have access to truly equal rights is working," said Keith Goslant, former VCLGR Co-Liaison to the Governor.

While only providing coverage for employees of the state of Vermont and their domestic partners, it can still be considered "a progressive, responsive step forward to universal coverage for everyone," said state union director Thomas Whitney.

3. Number three consists of a whole mishmash of political fodder. In a mid-term election year where the Republicans (here we go again with the editorial time line problem) either sought or really did gain control of Congress, Vermonters were presented with politician's views that appeared somewhat hypocritical of views held only days previous to their announcement of candidacy. The promises of 'vote for me and I'll do such-and-such for you' grew to be almost unbearable this year. Nothing more than a mere mention of the topic or person is more than needs to be said to conjure up a lengthy and heated conversation. Some of the hot buttons this past year included: ENDA, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act; Sen. James Jeffords; Jeffords v. Backus; Sanders v. Carroll; domestic partnership benefits; and the Vermont Human Rights Commission.
2. Gay pop culture proliferates here in Vermont. Perhaps 1994 was an aberration, but it felt as though the gay/lesbian/bisexual community in Vermont was showered with more than its fair share of cultural events. Here's another list within a list. Films and film festivals: Lesbian, Gay and Bi Film Festival at the Savoy Theater in Montpelier; Vermont International Film Festival in Burlington; Go Fish, The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert, and Threesome (sort of). Concerts: Melissa Etheridge (twice); Cheryl Wheeler; Romanovsky and

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Women's Issues

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