Ups-N-Downs

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Phillips; Virginia and the Wolves; and Womyn's Night at the Last Elm Cafe. Theatre: Jeffrey. Other: VGSA events; coffee houses; Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights Conference; Middlebury College's Rainbow Festival; Gay Pride Day; Coming Out Day events; and numerous other speakers and performers who have graced our state with their presence,

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A post-arson Vermont CARES back in June

sharing their talents with us, and enriching our lives spiritually, culturally, and entertainingly.

1. "Fire will become not a sign of destruction but a symbol of things that cannot be destroyed," said Gary Kowalski of the Unitarian Universalist Society at an interfaith worship service which took place shortly after a devastating hate-motivated arson fire gutted the offices of Vermont CARES. Support for Vermont CARES runs quite deep as evidenced by the outpouring of community resources and the large outcry of disbelief that this could happen in Vermont. CARES has since found new office space on North Street in Burlington; been the benefactor of numerous fundraisers;

and assisted financially by the Vermont legislature. Vermont CARES has been re-invigorated knowing that the whole community stands behind them in denouncing the arson and in helping to rebuild an even stronger service organization. Rabbi Joshua Chasen addressed issues of hatred and bigotry when he said, "Until we recognize in the most fundamental way the essential quality of our being, until we come to know in the deepest places of our souls that our physical and cultural differences are wonderful, then we will inhibit our personal fulfillment and condemn ourselves to watching the breakdown of our society."

Words to ponder as we begin a new year.

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