

Out in the Mountains

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To Submit Articles and Letters

We encourage and implore our readers to do what they can to make *OITM* a paper both for and by gay, lesbian, and bisexual Vermonters. Please assist us by typing your articles and letters double-spaced and including your name and phone number in case we have any questions. Your submission should be received by *OITM* no later than the 1st of the previous month. *Thank you* for helping out!

How to Advertise

If you would like to run an ad in *OITM*, please contact us for rates, sizes, and information. Ad copy must be received by the 1st of the month to be included in the next month's issue. Copy can be mailed to: *OITM*, P.O. Box 177, Burlington, VT 05402, or call Ellen at (802) 860-1922 Steven West at (802) 864-6399 or Bruce at BMH graphic design at (802) 658-1556.

From the Editor: Bernie's Back, No Joy for Jan, and Too Much Newt

Fred Kuhr

WINOOSKI -- The day after Election Day, I stayed home and watched CNN in a nearly catatonic state. Early in the morning, Phil Gramm, Republican Senator from Texas who has already declared his candidacy for the '96 presidential race, stated that he was willing to cooperate with the President as long as Gramm always got his way. I stared so intensely at Newt Gingrich's face at one point that I could only see those little pixels that made up his televised image. Friends of mine walked around depressed and angry for days. One friend even wore black to work.

The analyses and predictions that surrounded and trailed the elections have been all over the political map. I have heard everything from "the Republicans won't be able to accomplish anything and will be tossed out in two years" to "the Progressive and civil rights movements are over". However the next two years play out, let us take a final and more local look at the results as we enter this new year and new political era.

Before we get all hot under our collars, some (albeit very few) good things happened. To no one's surprise, Governor Howard Dean won reelection with 70% of the vote. As a friend of the community, he has worked cooperatively with Keith Goslant and Holly Perdue, former Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights Co-Liaisons to the Governor, and was there when the Legislature voted in 1992 to make Vermont one of the only states in the country to prohibit discrimination based upon sexual orientation. Dean's position on gay issues is unlikely to change as former VCLGR Co-Chair Susan Aranoff and former State Representative Thomas Fleury take over the reins as Co-Liaisons. So in the Governor's race, we win a point.

Another win for the community was in the U.S. House race. Although Bernie Sanders prepared himself for defeat as he spoke to the cautiously optimistic crowd at Sweetwater's, the Burlington restaurant that hosted the Progressive Coalition's victory celebration, he eventually did squeak out a two-percentage-point victory to the dismay of his Republican challenger, three-term Windsor County State Senator John Carroll. This was perhaps the most bizarre race since

the issue of gay and lesbian rights was the only position they shared. "In terms of gay rights," Bernie stated during a Pride Day interview back in June, "the basic issue is - are all people in our state, in our country, entitled to basic human rights? To be treated based on their character and not on their sexual orientation? And the answer is, unequivocally, 'Yes'." Carroll, who voted for Hate Crimes legislation and the Gay Rights Bill while in the State Senate, said in a recent interview, "I want people dealt with solely on the basis of their integrity and their contribution to the well-being of all of us." One of the key issues here was, and still is, health care. Bernie supports a single payer health care system; Carroll does not. A single payer system would eliminate the need for and the worry surrounding domestic partner benefits; we would all be covered all the time, regardless of the gender of our domestic partners. So in the U.S. House race, we win another point.

Another local win came in the State House race in Hinesburg. William Lippert, the former VCLGR Co-Chair who was appointed by Governor Dean last April to replace Democratic State Representative Chuck Ross who resigned to take a job with Senator Patrick Leahy, won his first election victory in November. Lippert is now the only openly gay man (or lesbian for that matter) in the Vermont Legislature. For Hinesburg, we win another point.

And now the losses...and perhaps the biggest loss was in the U.S. Senate race. Incumbent Republican James Jeffords won an easy ten-percentage-point victory over Democratic Windham County State Senator Jan Backus. Jan is a very vocal supporter of lesbian and gay rights, reproductive rights, AIDS issues, and the single payer health care system. Whereas Jeffords finally met recently with representatives of the gay and lesbian community after years of hounding, Jan was already meeting with us. And even though Jeffords is considered the most liberal Republican in the U.S. Senate, he still counts as a Republican when C-SPAN tallies up the majority/minority totals. So in the U.S. Senate race, we lose a point.

The Lieutenant Governor's race may have been a relatively boring one, but it was an important one. On one side we had the