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VERMONT'S NEWSPAPER FOR LESBIANS, GAY MEN, AND BISEXUALS

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Vermont's Human Rights Commission Targeted by Anger

Cleland E. Selby

MONTPELIER -- Vermont's Human Rights Commission (HRC) has become the target of many respondents and the Vermont Republican party. Created by the legislature in 1988 with strong support by then-Governor Madeleine Kunin, the HRC has been a highly visible, active "watchdog" for a profusion of alleged civil rights violations. As might be expected, given its six year history, the Commission, under the leadership of Susan Sussman, has rendered many decisions that have not been popular with the approximately fifty percent of the respondents who have been found in error of violations.

During the last legislative session, the Legislative Committee on Civil Rights Enforcement was created to take a look at the effectiveness of the HRC. Part of that process has been a series of four public meetings to gain information, much of which has come from angry violators who have often made personal verbal attacks upon Ms. Sussman and/or members of the Commission.

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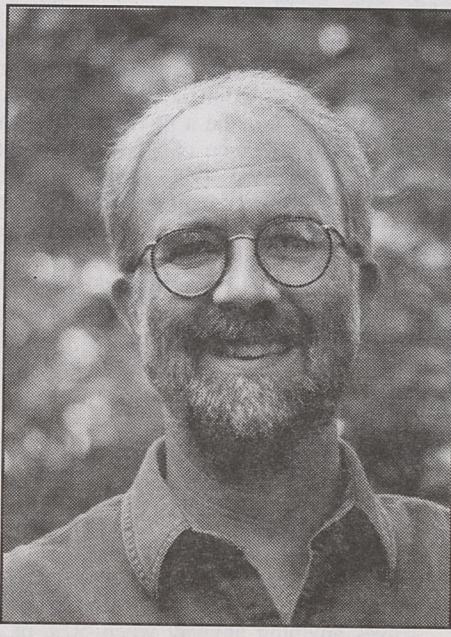
In This Special Valentine Issue:

- Country Goes Queer, page 8.
- In Memory of Ron Conner, page 16.
- Opinions on Dykes To Watch Out For, page 19.

Watch for our new look and our 10th Anniversary Issue next month!!!

Win Some, Lose Some: OITM's Final Election Day Retrospective

Paul Olsen



Rep. Bill Lippert (D-Hinesburg), the only openly gay member of the Vermont General Assembly. (OITM file photo)

COLCHESTER/MONTPELIER -- Regardless of your position on the political spectrum, results of the 1994 election proved to be mixed for lesbian, gay, and bisexual Vermonters. While reporting of the state and national election results continues and the Sunday morning "talking heads" prognosticate, David Brinkley, Marselius Parsons, and Tim Russert have provided little analysis regarding a number of races of particular importance to Vermont's g/l/b community.

While the political change in Washington is far-reaching and may take months to sort out, Vermont's congressional delegation will continue to consist of Democrat Patrick Leahy, Republican James Jeffords, and Independent Bernard Sanders. Senators Leahy and Jeffords and Representative Sanders have all cosponsored the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) which, if passed, would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation nationwide. According to

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Vermont Fights The Right: Seminar Explains the How and Why

Paul Olsen

"It's like guerrilla warfare. If you reveal your location, all it does is allow your opponent to improve his artillery bearings. It's better to move quietly, with stealth, under cover of night." -- Ralph Reed, Christian Coalition Executive Director

BURLINGTON -- Over 60 people from throughout Vermont attended a December 10, 1994, seminar entitled "Fight the Right" sponsored by the Burlington Women's Council and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF). The need for the forum was highlighted by both the results of the recent elections and Operation Rescue's (now aborted) plan to protest the testing of RU-486 at Planned Parenthood in Burlington.

"Fight the Right" began with a panel of leaders explaining their thoughts and experiences with the Religious Right in Vermont. The panel included Elaine Alfano of Pro-Choice Vermont, Karin Eade of Outright Vermont, former State Representative

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