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in their work to pass legislation guaranteeing equal rights to Lesbians and Gay men in Vermont and insuring protection for People With AIDS and HIV+ persons. Contribute to our cause and add your name to our mailing list. **We need your help.**

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THANK YOU!

Dignity, Humor In Life, Death

by Andrea Heil

Reprinted from *The Valley News* - December 1991

Norwich— Charles Kurtz's friends gathered yesterday afternoon to say goodbye to him. They showed up at the Parish Hall of St. Barnabas Church in Norwich to celebrate the life of a man who was warm, caring, funny and, as many of them put it, outrageous.

Kurtz, 34, of West Hartford, died last week of AIDS. He died in the intensive care unit at Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital in the arms of his friend Peter Seery and his ACoRN "Buddy" David Williams.

ACoRN is the AIDS Community Resource Network, the local group that trains volunteers — buddies — to be available for emotional and other support.

"David and I were holding him and he just sort of slipped away," Seery said after the service. "It was quiet and it was with dignity."

Kurtz had been discharged from Hitchcock just before Thanksgiving, and his death on Dec. 12 came sooner than his friends expected. He had been readmitted to the hospital several days before he died.

He had lived in Greenfield, Mass., and worked as a bartender in Brattleboro, not far north of Greenfield. He had moved in with friends in West Hartford so he could be

closer to the medical center, and to AIDS specialist Dr. Ford Von Reyn and his staff.

Kurtz was an active supporter of ACoRN and the Brattleboro Area AIDS Project, and spent much of the last year of his life helping others with the AIDS disease and their families. Even though he was ill when the AIDS Memorial Quilt was on display in the Upper Valley last May, "he was there from opening until closing — every day," said Seery, an Enfield resident.

He is survived by a brother who lives in Kentucky, and, as his obituary said, by "many friends in the Upper Valley."

About 75 of them gathered in the parish hall to cry and to laugh and to share stories. The Rev. Fairbairn Powers of Hanover told them at the outset that they may want to tell some of "the outrageous ones that Charlie would have loved."

They complied.

You could sum up one or two of them by saying simply that Kurtz was a homosexual who was not shy about letting the heterosexual majority know of his sexual orientation. He was, in the parlance, "out." His friends called him "Princess."

Few people were as irrepressibly upbeat as Kurtz, says Sam Sanders of Windsor, who founded the ACoRN Buddy Program. Powers said the group was gathered together

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