

## Community Center Moving from Dream to Reality (But Only with Support)

Rob Roach and John Olson

Regular meetings have been held each of the last several months to establish a community center in the Burlington area for lesbians, gay men, bisexual people and their supporters. Discussions to date have centered around a presence at Pride Day in Montpelier, a statewide community survey, and several fundraising events.

There is a lot of enthusiasm and momentum for this center, and it is going to make Burlington — and the rest of Vermont — an even better place for our community to live and flourish.

With recent passage of the civil rights legislation (YES!!), this center is a great next step for affirming who we are as individuals and as a community. We need your enthusiasm, ideas, involvement and your financial support to make this happen for all of us.

Possibilities for our community center are endless. Some ideas so far include: a coffee house, writers' groups, performance space, workshops, office and retail space, pool tables, pingpong, separate space for women and men, etc. Your ideas are welcome, and we'd like to hear them!

Community surveys were sent with the last issue of *Out in the Mountains*, and have been available at Pearl's, the Burlington Women's Council, the Peace & Justice Center, and Outright Vermont. Response has been good, and we still want to hear your ideas. Please return your survey as soon as possible to PO Box 5122, Burlington, VT 05402-5122. Donations to support our work can also be sent to this address, payable to *Out in the Mountains*.

We need your involvement and help. We meet on the second Tuesday each month from 7:30 to 9:00 pm at Outright Vermont's offices at 109 So. Winooski Ave. in Burlington. Please join us. If you would like information about planning for the center, contact John Olson at Vermont C.A.R.E.S., 863-2437.

Watch for us at PRIDE on June 6th. ▼

# How About Those Cats!

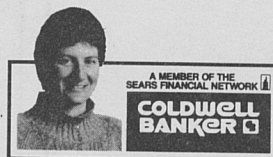
Dot Brauer

The UVM women's basketball season concluded with a mostly glorious and only slightly sad ending on March 18th. Within an hour of the end of the final game against George Washington University, I heard people saying, "Now what will we do with our spare time?" Every woman I know, no, make that every lesbian I know, has followed the progress of the team for months. I attended almost every game starting halfway through the season, including a road trip to Boston. At the first game I attended I saw dozens of familiar faces in the crowd. By the end of the season there were hundreds of lesbians among the capacity crowds cheering on Cathy Inglese and her wild and wonderful athletes. Last Thursday a friend described to me how she rented a hotel room so they could get cable and invited over a group of friends to see that last game against George Washington University. Another friend suggested that we start a post-season support group to help deal with the withdrawal.

With the excitement over for this year, we are turning our thoughts to next year's season, wondering if the UVM Athletic Department will be able to pay Cathy Inglese enough to make it possible and worthwhile for her to stay at UVM. We talk about the attributes of our favorite players: Jen Nielsing's intense scrappiness, Sue Marsland's quiet leadership, Sharon Bay's graceful command, Sheri Turnbull's stalwart strength, Missy Kelsen's fluid agility, Kari Greenbaum's loping swiftness, Carrie LaPine's mature artistry, Maureen McCarthy's reassuring stability. Even the players we have seen less of are talked about. We all express our gratitude that as we sadly bid goodbye to Missy, Mo and Sue, we can turn to a bench that includes the strength and potential shown by Betsy Brothers, Jackie Demaris, Crissy Sears and Carrie McKuinn.

Cathy Inglese and her players have become celebrities among many people in the Burlington area. Much of the flurry in the lesbian community comes from the same kind of admiration for hard work and brilliant accomplishment, and appreciation of precision and teamwork that is felt and expressed by the wider community. The "right ingredients," of this team include a solid and unified coaching staff, a friendly and articulate head coach, and a sense of unpretentious modesty among players and coaches alike. All of these things, not to mention a 29-1 season, make it easy to get excited these days about women's basketball.

There is also something different about the admiration felt by the lesbians I know. Our conversations about the Wonder Cats inevitably turn to wondering who on the team or on the staff might be a lesbian. We also talk about which ones we think are especially cute or beautiful. When I overhear and participate in these conversations, I always wince a little about the double standard that I know is applied to lgb people concerning our love and admiration from a distance. For lesbians and gays, it is assumed that admiration of same sex people is a sign of our lascivious natures or our maliciousness, or even immaturity. All around us movie and television industries are built on the creation of screen heroes and love objects, men and women whose role is first and foremost to be attractive to the opposite sex and to portray ideals that are "universally" desirable. When the Cats play "Let's Talk About Sex Baby, Let's Talk About Sex," as their warm-up song, no one thinks this is shameful or immoral; they are just being healthy, normal young adults, that is, as long as the sex they are singing about is sex with the opposite sex. What is normal for heterosexual people is seen as sick, bad or wrong for homosexual people.



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