

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!*

**UVM Faculty File
Grievance**

Continued from Page 1

A similar case in New York City has been wending its way through the courts for several years. A group of teachers has sued the School Board of the City of New York, claiming that the policy of providing health insurance benefits only to families of married employees, violates the constitutional and civil rights of unmarried employees. Lesbian and gay employees are particularly disadvantaged because New York law forbids them from marrying. Most recently in the New York case a state trial judge ruled that lesbian and gay employees have a legal right to sue for health insurance benefits for their domestic partners. The ruling represents the first time a state trial judge has upheld a series of claims alleging sexual orientation and marital status discrimination for failure to extend benefits to unmarried domestic partners.

At least two companies in Vermont provide benefits for domestic partners. Ben & Jerry's health plan (Consumer's United) includes a definition of domestic partner in its covered categories and Gardener's Supply of Burlington provides a mechanism for employees to be reimbursed for the cost of purchasing health coverage for their domestic partner. Nationally, Levi Strauss and Lotus Development Corporation are among the larger employers who provide same-sex domestic partnership benefits. ▼


**Move to Center of
Presidential Race**

Continued from Page 1

Lesbian and gay issues were visible from the podium as well, as speaker after speaker (including Paul Tsongas, Ted Kennedy, Mario Cuomo, Tom Harkin and Jerry Brown, among others) included us in their speeches. Two openly gay or lesbian speakers appeared before the convention. San Francisco City Supervisor Roberta Achtenberg presented sections of the platform and included discrimination, anti-gay violence, family issues and AIDS in her speech. Bob Hattoy, the Clinton campaign's senior environmental advisor, who was recently diagnosed with AIDS, spoke to a prime time television audience and told them, "I am a gay man with AIDS. If there is any honor in having this disease, it's the honor of being part of the gay and lesbian community in America. We have watched our friends and lovers die, but we have not given up. Gay men and lesbians created community health clinics, provided educational materials, opened food kitchens and held the hands of the dying in hospitals. The gay and lesbian community is family in the best sense of the word." Hattoy's speech and the speech which followed by Elizabeth Glazer, a woman with AIDS, brought the restless audience to quiet attention and moved many to tears.

The final night of the convention marked a major milestone in American political history when Bill Clinton's acceptance speech included both a pledge to implement the report of the National Commission on AIDS and the use of the word "gay", the first ever in a candidate's acceptance speech. Clinton criticized the divisive policies practiced by the Republicans, saying that they have said, "...that what's really wrong with America is the rest of us. Them. Them, the minorities, the people with disabilities. Them, the gays...But this is America. There is no them; there's only us..."

The Republican Convention a month later in Houston was, by contrast, marked by overt anti-gay sentiment throughout the week. Only two openly gay alternates were in attendance at the convention, and they were invisible on a convention floor dominated by right wing and fundamentalist activists. In Houston, the signs on the convention floor said "Family Rights Forever/Gay Rights Never." The tone for the GOP was set the opening night of the convention when Patrick Buchanan lashed out at Clinton's support of civil rights measures, attacks which were followed by convention week speakers Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, Newt Gringrich and others. Even when Mary Fisher, a Republican woman living with HIV, eloquently appealed to delegates to put aside prejudice and combat AIDS,



**DAN
MALLAR**
FOR
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
CHITTENDEN 7-3 WARD 1 & UVM

- People First • ProChoice
- Health Care Reform, Universal Access

He'll work for all of us.