

Gay and Lesbian Rural Culture

A new group hopes to bring together gay men and lesbians interested in farming, gardening, ecology and other aspects of rural living. Organizers of an open planning meeting to be held on Valentines Day at Christ Church Episcopal in Montpelier, stress that they envision an inclusive group and welcome anyone wishing to join. However, certain common values are what have motivated the group to form. In particular, organizers mention a common desire to bring together gays and lesbians who presently or in the future plan to live close to the land and wish to strengthen rural gay/lesbian culture.

The purpose of the meeting on the 14th of February is to generate interest, bring people together and have some discussion of ideas. A newsletter will follow the meeting and provide an ongoing means of communication. The newsletter will be of particular importance in that the group will be farflung and hard-working members may have little time to travel or meet. One focus of the organization will be to bring together natural resource workers in the region. Another will be to link agrarian lesbians and gays from many different regions and cultures.

The main challenge says Andrew Whittaker of Brunswick is getting people to follow through on initial interest. Many people responding to ads in *OITM* and other publications did not take the subsequent steps - perhaps a matter of priorities or time, says Whittaker. "It is important for people who believe that something like this is necessary to participate, otherwise it won't happen. Being gay or lesbian and wanting to farm or somehow live close to the land, you either give up because of isolation or accept loneliness. This group would be an alternative to either situation."

The meeting will be an open house from 2-5, there will be food and no formalities. A suggested agenda includes beginning the newsletter, encouraging contributors, extending common goals for socializing and networking into various projects already ongoing in Vermont, in support of rural culture or a philosophy and life style supporting all life on the planet, and a pen pal listing in Russia to connect with those of an ecologic gay/lesbian bent in the former USSR.

Other ideas put forth so far include a job network for members, promotion of economic self-sufficiency in rural areas, and bringing together prospective homesteaders. For more information come to the meeting on the 14th or write PO Box 157, Underhill, VT 05490-0157. ▼

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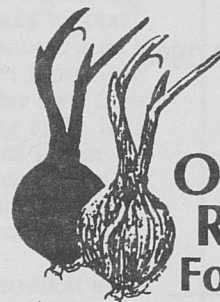
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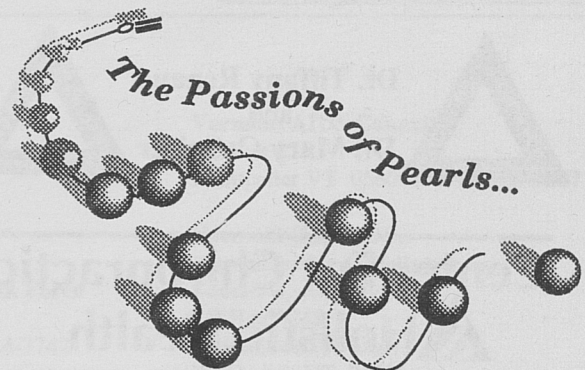
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Friday, February 5

Women's Dance

\$6.00 5-9 p.m.

Sunday, February 14

Valentine's Day Dance

D.J. No cover Reg. hours

Thursday, February 18

Juice Bar

\$3.00 cover 9 p.m.

(All other Thursdays of the month, Free D.J.)

Friday and Saturday Night Door Cover Policy

Before 9:00 pm. Free • 9:00 - 10:00 pm \$1.00 After 10:00 pm \$3.00

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