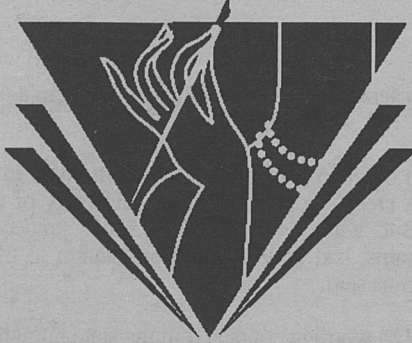


WRITE YOUR
AUNTIE PEARL



Dear Auntie Pearl: I have a problem that's tearing me up. I hope you can help me. I have wonderful twin nieces, age 5. Ever since they were born, I've set aside Monday nights as "Niece Night", when they come over for the evening. I've been single since the girls were born, but I just started a relationship with a woman who loves kids. She started sharing Monday nights with us, and it's so much fun.

Well, my brother-in-law, "Pete" - who I never came out to because he's such a homophobe - found out that my "friend" was helping with the kids, and he asked my sister "Paula" who my friend is. My sister says she covered for me, but that if Pete finds out

I'm a lesbian, he won't let me see the kids anymore. So now Paula says it's best if I just come over to their house alone on Mondays and spend time with the whole family. My sister says she's just trying to keep my relationship with the kids together.

Auntie Pearl, I stand up for myself in this world, but I know that if I do in this case, I could lose seeing the kids altogether. If I go over to my sister's house for some kind of forced "family" time, I'll either go nuts or strangle my brother-in-law. I'm so angry at him that I can't think. Please help me sort this out.

A Desperate Reader

Dear Desperate: If someone doesn't stop behaving as if the world revolves around your brother-in-law, Auntie will positively be forced to say something unbecoming.

Get on the phone and tell Paula that you expect Niece Night to continue at your house, with your lover. Tell her that you'll handle the flack. If she refuses, it will be her decision to end Niece Night. Old Paula is praying you'll tuck tail and comply so that she won't have to deal with hubby dearest. You don't have to play.

And don't tell Auntie that your silence is in the best interest of the children. When are shame, hatred and deceit proper family values? Teach the girls courage! Don't volunteer your services to help raise the next generation of homophobes.

Sure, it may be hell, but it will be everyone's hell - not just yours. Remember that when we're faced with homophobia, Auntie Pearl's family does not suffer alone. We share.

Dear Auntie Pearl: This might be too weird to figure out, but here goes. I was lovers with "Bill" for a few months. Last month I broke up with him and now he started hanging out with my friends - who he hated while we were together. He shows up everywhere: at the bar he hates, at the parties he hates, etc. The last straw was showing up at our Sunday bike rides. He's a superjock marathoner, and my friends and I can hardly make it 10 miles!

It's not like Bill has nothing better to do. Part of what broke us up was that he was too busy with his friends to be with me. The worst part is that at some point, Bill always tries to get me alone to talk. It always ends in a fight unless I talk to him. But then we end up rehashing all the reasons why I broke up with him. How do I get this guy out of my life?

Man With Weird Ex

Dear Man With Weird Ex: All Bill wants is - how shall Auntie put this gently - to get a rise out of you. Remember Auntie's Motto #34: "To The Passion-Seeker, A Fight Is As Good As A Fling" Bill won't stick around if he can't get some emotion out of you. Don't speak alone with him. Do remain calm and polite. Walk away if necessary. It'll take time, but eventually he'll see that you're emotionally closed to him, and he'll get back to his own life.

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Wife and Wife: One Couple Fights For The Right To Marry

Continued from page 1

also at stake. It is for this reason, as well as the need to place homosexual and heterosexual relationships on the same moral level, that they do not believe that legalized same-sex domestic partnerships go far enough. "It's been important for families in our community to see us as a family, as a couple, as parents with the same concerns and problems all partners and parents have. We are normal," states Pasha. While not denying the advantages of marriage, legally and morally, Dudley takes a more moderate stand. "Ultimately, we want equal rights, including marriage," she states. "That doesn't mean that we are not going to fight for the issues surrounding domestic partnerships. We feel we can have both," she continues.

In the end, the Rivers-McMahons and Dudley would agree that recognizing the rights of homosexual couples is an evolutionary process. "We went through a lot of frustrations in our relationship not being able to express feelings for

each other in public. Finally, we couldn't hide it anymore and we went beyond that safe wall," Pasha recalls. Both Pasha and Penny believe that gradual steps, such as being a couple and, in their case, creating a family by cross-adopting their two boys (a process which has a precedence in Vermont and is presently working its way through the judicial system) followed by seeking to have their marriage legally recognized, will build toward society's eventual understanding and recognition. "It's been an eye-opener for the community to see that we're not a threat. We would love to have a nice quiet life, but the people who come behind us would not be able to do that unless we stand up now and say that we want the same rights," exclaims Pasha.

At present the Coalition and the Rivers-McMahons are waiting to hear the results of a Hawaii case in which a same-sex couple sued the state for discrimination after not receiving a marriage license.

The state supreme court ruled that these actions were discriminatory, and charged a lower court with the task of presenting a legitimate argument for the discrimination, or permitting homosexual marriages. Dudley suggests that it is quite possible that the state could decide not to argue, and thereby open the doors to same-sex marriage. If that is the case, as Dudley predicts, "states will start to scramble" in order to deal with the outcome.

Even though Penny and Pasha Rivers-McMahon are eagerly awaiting the result of the case in Hawaii as well as their own battle to adopt each other's children, they have not put their lives on hold. When asked how far they intend to take their battle for acceptance, both women simply smile and quickly say, "As far as we need to take it to make it a reality." In a largely homophobic society that often talks about family values, but rarely understands their meaning, a lesbian couple and their sons seem to have things pretty well figured out. ▼

Susan McKenzie MS.

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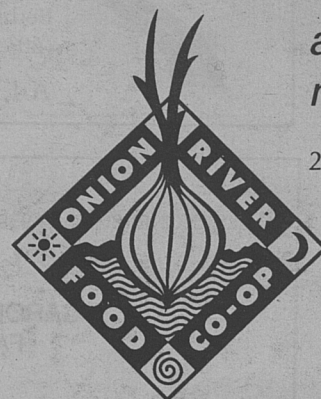
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MAY CALENDAR

WEDNESDAYS: dee jay cRAIG MITCHELL 18+

THURSDAYS: dee jay ALAN PERRY 21+

FRIDAYS: dee jay cRAIG MITCHELL 18+

SATURDAYS: ms. MELO GRANT w/ alan perry 18+
802-863-2343

friday 5th FIRST FRIDAY WOMEN'S DANCE--dee jay KIM KING \$6

saturday 6th COLLEGE NIGHT no cover with valid college ID
(this will be an 18+ saturday) w/ Masspool band led by Dan Shaw

sunday 7th cRAIG MITCHELL & TERENCE MICKELSON live acoustic performance \$3 cover 8 p.m. (to benefit Outdoors Vermont)

saturday 13th TAMAH CD RELEASE PARTY 8 p.m.

UNITY WEEKEND CELEBRATION '95 JUNE 2,3 & 4
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FRIDAY 5p.m.-until SATURDAY 1p.m.-until SUNDAY 2p.m.-until
watch for more details in the coming weeks