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VERMONT'S NEWSPAPER FOR LESBIANS, GAY MEN, AND BISEXUALS

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FREE

VCLG-ARTS: "The Hills Are Alive With Those Dykes and Faggots"

Bennett Law

RANDOLPH CENTER -- To the tune of "The Sound of Music"...

*"The Hills are Alive with those dykes and faggots.
They're milking the cows and they're growing hay.
They're changing their gender with a solar panel,
then climbing the hills to declare, 'I'm gay.'"*

*"You may not have heard there are lots of gays here,
artists and writers, and lumberjanes, too,
creating a culture with their friends and lovers.
They're here in Vermont, and they're here for you."*

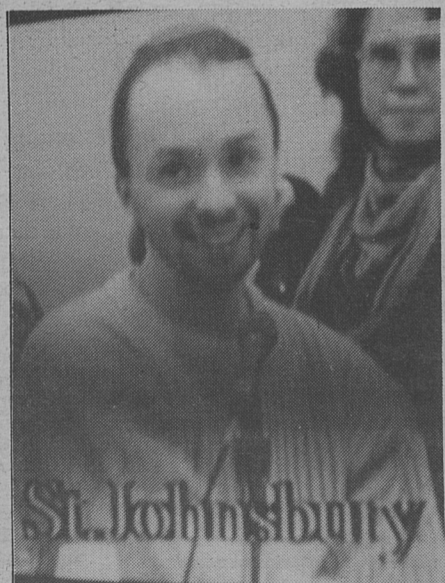
The Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights (VCLGR) closed its spring Fourth Friday series of meetings over Vermont Interactive Television on April 28th with a review of the contributions made by Vermont's g/l/b community to the state's culture. Rather than simply advocating diversity, this program placed diversity front and center with a staggering array of visual artists, poets, entertainers, and compelling personalities, each of whom actively contributes to the mosaic of Vermont culture.



Yolanda and Gabriel Q (l-r) crooning a queer tune in Waterbury

fable, entitled "A Fairy's Tale," which, as a call for the individual stories of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Vermonters, set the framework for the rest of the evening.

At seven sites from around the state, poets, drag queens, painters, singers, film festival organizers, actors, publishers, a female illusionist, and community leaders came together to share, in the words of host and Coalition Liaison to the State Legislature Susan Aranoff, "their art, their music, their lives, and their stories." Participants were treated to performances by singer/poet Craig Mitchell and female illusionist Noel, a review of paintings by Roger, and interviews with Laurie Labarthe, a transgendered Vermont-er, and Plainfield talk radio host DayGlow. A number of lesbian poets from all corners of the state shared their very personal writings including Maggie Black in St. Johnsbury, Sumitah Horwitz speaking from South Burlington, and Lynn Martin in Brattleboro reading from her recently published collection *Visible Signs of Defiance*.



Female illusionist Noel losing his illusion in St. Johnsbury

Pride Organizers Snub Snelling

Paul Olsen



(OITM file photo) Republican Lt. Gov. Barbara Snelling

June 3rd event at Burlington's Battery Park.

COLCHESTER -- Lieutenant Governor Barbara Snelling will not be celebrating Gay Pride Day this year. After accepting an invitation to speak at Vermont's "Queers and Friends Fight the Right" Pride Day celebration,

Snelling was later informed that she was not welcome at the

Peggy Luhrs, Burlington Women's Council's Executive Director, felt that Snelling's appearance would only play into her plans to appear more moderate. "The Republican Party is not a friend of gays," said Luhrs, "I'm sorry that she got dis-invited, however I would have protested her appearance." Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights (VCLGR) Board member Judith Beckett observed that Snelling's appearance "threatened to slit the community on Gay Pride Day." Beckett indicated that she believed Snelling's invitation was rescinded based on "Barbara's response to our community in the past" and that, given the circumstances, "it was handled as best we could handle it."

Lieutenant Governor Barbara Snelling expressed curiosity regarding the circumstances surrounding Pride Day. "I was surprised and wondered if there were preconceived notions of who was in favor of gay rights," Snelling said. She also indicated that she initially accepted the Pride Day invitation "because I'm totally supportive of rights for gays and lesbians." When asked what she would have shared with Pride Day participants, Snelling said, "in general terms, that all individuals deserve equal and just treatment which must be backed up by law."

While the Pride Day invitation of Lieutenant Governor Barbara Snelling generated controversy, all involved regret the way it was handled. In summarizing the impact of this event, VCLGR's Liaison to the Governor and State Government, Susan Aranoff said, "It is politically crazy to disinvite her ... I hope this event is not a bridge burner."

Snelling responded, "No damage done from my point of view ... I don't hold grudges." ▼

Promises, Promises ...
Stay tuned for OITM's interview with National AIDS Policy Coordinator Patsy Fleming in our July/August issue!

OITM HISTORY: June Through The Years

1990 ... Hundreds Protest Brutal Beating Almost a month after he was attacked near Pearls on Easter Sunday, Roger Macomber still lies hospitalized in Burlington in stable condition. News of the assault on Roger by Kevin J. Murray of Hinesburg left many people stunned by the severity of the beating. By week's end, however, an extraordinarily well-attended vigil at the Unitarian Church in Burlington signalled that such vicious hate crimes would not be tolerated.

1992 ... Civil Rights Bill Signed "This bill is now law." With those words Governor Howard Dean signed S.131, a bill to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, and added Vermont to the list of states with such legislation. Applause, hugs and cheers filled the Executive Chamber as the bill was signed.

1994 ... Anti-discrimination Bill Fails in NH An anti-discrimination bill designed to add "sexual orientation" to an existing law in New Hampshire failed to pass the Senate in April. House Bill 1432 easily passed the House in February, but the Senate voted to kill the bill which would have protected gays and lesbians in areas of housing and employment.