

Out in the Mountains

established in 1986

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Statement of Purpose

The purpose of *Out in the Mountains* is to serve as a voice for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and our supporters in Vermont. We wish the newspaper to be a source of information, support and affirmation. We also see *OITM* as a vehicle for celebration of the goodness and diversity of the lesbian, gay, and bisexual communities.

Editorial Policy

We will consider for publication any material which broadens our understanding of our lifestyles and of each other. Views and opinions appearing in the paper do not necessarily represent those of the staff. This paper cannot and will not endorse any candidates and actions of public officials on issues of importance to lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals.

We will not publish any material which is overtly racist, sexist, anti-Semitic, ageist, classist, or homophobic.

All materials submitted must be signed. However, within the pages of the newspaper, articles may appear anonymously, upon request, and strict confidentiality will be observed.

To Submit Articles & 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. Thank you for helping out!

Materials should be sent to:
Out in the Mountains
PO Box 177
Burlington, VT 05402

How to Advertise

If you would like to run an ad in *OITM*, please contact us for rates, sizes, and information. Copy can be mailed to: *OITM*, P.O. Box 177, Burlington, VT 05402, or call Ellen at (802) 860-1922 Steven West at (802) 864-6399 or Bruce at BMH graphic design at (802) 658-1556.

Read *OITM*
Monthly

**From the Editor:
Pride in Pride**

Fred Kuhr

WINOOSKI -- In 1986, the third year of Vermont's Pride March and Rally, *Out In The Mountains* reported, "The largest Vermont Lesbian and Gay Pride Celebration yet took place in Burlington on June 14. Approximately 500 people took part in the rally and parade. Speakers throughout the event referred to the celebration's theme of 'No Turning Back!' Keynote speaker Gil Gerard, Executive Director of the National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays, told the crowd on the front lawn of the Unitarian Church that 'For us, there can be no turning back. We have come too far and learned too much to ever turn back, even if we wanted to' ... Governor Madeleine Kunin and Burlington Mayor Bernie Sanders, an independent candidate for Governor, both spoke to the rally. It was the first time either of them had attended a lesbian/gay pride celebration ... Kunin said that she supported 'full civil rights for all citizens, including lesbians and gay men. It is within the Vermont tradition of tolerance and liberty that discrimination of any sort is wrong.'"

Five years later, in 1991, *OITM* reported, "The largest contingency yet, well over 700 people, choo-chooed through the packed (Church Street) Marketplace. A profusion of pink triangles displaced yellow ribbons as the symbol of the day. In Burlington, after three years in Montpelier, marchers regaled a made-to-order throng of shoppers and (Green Mountain) Chew Chew festers with pithy chants like, 'We're here, we're queer, we're fabulous, get used to it.' For marchers grown accustomed to the broad, mostly deserted (Montpelier) streets, the trek through the chaotic Marketplace corridor was a sinus-clearing experience ... In his first official address to a Pride March, a spirited Burlington Mayor Peter Clavelle welcomed celebrants to the city. He thanked the gay and lesbian community for enriching the city's cultural life and stated his wish to work with community members to create a domestic partnership policy for city employees. 'Any politician that's not with you,' he said, 'should be out of office.'"

Perhaps the most meaningful recollection of Pride Day came from Rep. Bill Lippert (D - Hinesburg) during last year's rally in Burlington's Battery Park. "I can remember the first Gay Pride Day ... there were threats at the time from people who talked about throwing rocks and stones from second story windows on Church Street. The police were actually supportive, but those of us who organized the event were quite apprehensive. We had no idea how many people would turn out and when we first went to City Hall Park for the events there were all of like five or six of us. We looked around and went, 'Oh my goodness, what's it going to be?' But it turned out there were like 200 or 300 people that showed up. It was very, very exciting."

In the year that *OITM* celebrates its tenth year of publication, Pride Day puts a twelfth notch in its lipstick case. In those dozen years, Pride has grown from a couple of hundred participants to well over a thousand, from one day a year to an entire week of festivities, from a bold coming out step for its original organizers to a fixture in Vermont's cultural landscape. In fact, Vermont has gained a reputation throughout New England "as putting on good Prides," according to VT Pride Committee member Jen Muncil. She said she received

calls from people around the region telling her, "'Your event is not so big where it loses its personality.' It's a very personal event. People seem to enjoy that they don't get lost in the crowd."

No one can argue the power of Pride, the way it personally empowers while showing the outside world that we are a force with which to be reckoned. The question then remains, why didn't more of us get involved in the planning and organizing of Pride. This year, the events rested on the shoulders of only two people, Muncil and her colleague Peter Thomas. "It's very difficult when just two people (organize) this event," Muncil said at the Post-march rally, "The more people involved, the bigger the event and the better the event. The more people, the more ideas, the more resources, the more time they have to devote to it. With just two people, it puts a great strain on us to meet everybody's expectations. There needs to be an ongoing Pride Committee. We can't lose this event!" When asked what she had to say to those who have not been involved in the planning of Pride, Muncil said, "I think everybody needs to know that if they want the Pride events, they really need to get involved."

Both Muncil and Thomas admitted that they would be stepping down as Pride organizers after this year's events. As Thomas said, "It's time for new blood." This leaves a huge void in Pride planning which, incidentally, takes almost a full year to put together. And I know what some of you are thinking; you didn't like the word "queer" or the phrase "fight the right" in the this year's theme - or you didn't like the invitation or the subsequent disinvitation of Lt. Gov. Barbara Snelling to speak at the rally. Well guess what? If you volunteer to serve on next year's Pride Committee, you will have a say and a vote on the theme and the speakers and many other aspects of the celebration. Help keep your pride in Pride alive!

For additional information about the VT Pride Committee, call Jen Muncil at (802) 865-0440. ▼

**VOICES FROM THE MOUNTAINS:
The Other Side of Babsgate**

Peggy Luhrs

BURLINGTON -- Where shall I start with all the problems I have with the last issue of *OITM*. The Babsgate piece (only in *OITM*'s mind), the uninformed and irresponsible editorial, or Mary Hurlie's confusing the trait of homosexuality with the choice of Republican politics. Well, I'll start where I came in on this, quite unintentionally. I was appalled to hear Barbara Snelling would be a speaker at Pride '95 given that there is only one party that has made anti-gay politics an issue at its convention, that has welcomed the religious right and played to homophobia whenever it meant gaining a vote. That is the party of Pat Buchanan, Bob Dornan, Dick Armye ("Barney Fag") and Newt Gingrich. That party is the Republican party. In fact, the gay Republican who wrote to *OITM* (four) issues ago had to reach back to the Lincoln-Douglas debates to find an example of liberatory thinking in the GOP. But what have they done for us lately - say this century? I realize that not all Republicans are anti-gay or all Democrats pro, but Republicans have set themselves up as the party of heterosexism and of the Christian Coalition which is determined to prevent gay rights.

I personally opposed Barbara Snelling because she voted against the minimum wage, not a gay issue, but a big one for women who are most of those earning minimum wage. I wasn't the only one or the one who made the decision to disinvite her. Paul Olsen called me about this and I spoke to him as what I thought of him as, another member of the community with a similar desire to improve things for lesbians and gays in Vermont. I spoke to Paul for probably twenty minutes before he mentioned writing about this for *OITM* at which point I immediately said, "You're going to write about this? What for? It doesn't make any sense to turn this into an issue." Paul should have identified himself as a reporter from the first. I spoke freely to him thinking we were discussing community strategy and I don't feel that it was fair to have been told of his intent to publish only after most of our conversation.

But Paul's piece is nothing compared to the anti-woman, anti-left editorial by Fred Kuhr. Fred refers to left fascism and accuses some unidentified left of being just like Pat Robertson and wanting to eliminate all who don't believe in the same agenda. This is not true. No one on the left is proposing death or criminalization of anyone. We are not even proposing the silencing of Republicans much as we might wish to stop the anti-gay epithets coming from that corner of our Congress.

I guess Fred wouldn't be too concerned with affirmative action, abortion rights or welfare reform. As a white man none of these affect him. Although he and anyone else who opposes abortion rights had best think a little before deciding this has nothing to do with being gay. Abortion rights, the right to choose, the right to own your own body are vital to our community. If the state has the power to control sexual behavior, such as forcing women to have unwanted children, it won't be a big step toward controlling the sexual behavior of lesbians and gay men. You can personally oppose abortion and not practice it, but if you are gay and work against choice you are working against the gay community and toward state control of

OUTSPOKEN:

OITM's Quote of the Month

"Let's play fair. Why does (*Out in the Mountains*) have to be out where children have access to it, somewhere between *Popular Mechanics* and whatever else starts with O?"

Karol Raiche, commenting on this newspaper's placement on the shelves of the Rutland Free Library (see front page story, "Who's Evicting *Daddy's Roommate*?") ▼

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