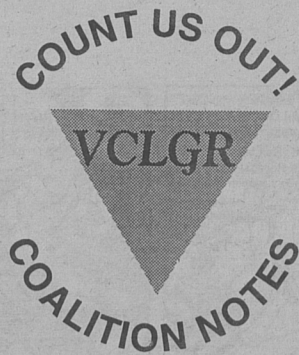
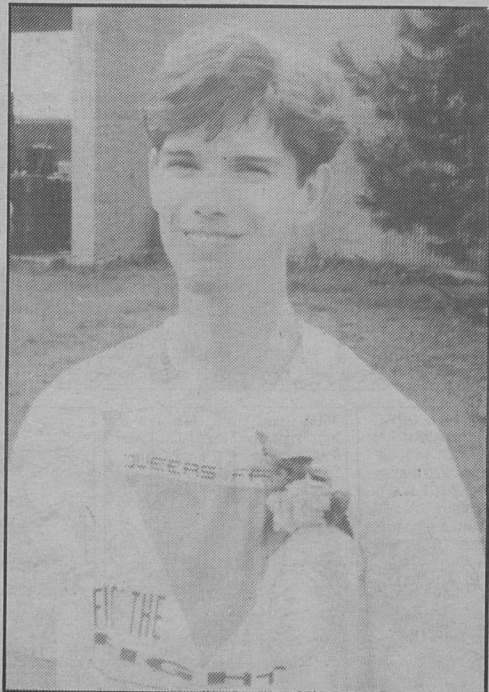


Peter Thomas, VT Pride Committee Member and Outright VT Board Member: I think (Pride Day) helps give (g/l/b/q youth) a sense of community ... For a young person who may be having difficulty coming out or feeling like they are alone in the struggle of coming out, (Pride Day shows) that there are a lot of us out there ... It's a rite of passage. It's a way to identify as g/l/b/q in a public way and join the community."



EAST MIDDLEBURY -- PRIDE DAY Are you dry yet? Sorry we didn't have a chance to meet more folks one on one, but the rain made gathering around the VCLGR table at the rally a little difficult. Thanks for coming out! Thanks for carrying those signs! Thanks for being proud!

CO-CHAIR RESIGNS We're sorry to announce the resignation of Mary Hurlie as Co-chair of VCLGR. Although the board will miss working closely with her, Mary will continue to work as a volunteer for the adoption reform task force. We can't thank her enough for her years of hard work.

ADOPTION REFORM The Adoption Reform bill is still being considered by the Senate Judiciary Committee and is expected to come to the floor of the Senate in January of '96. Over the summer, our Co-Liaisons to the Governor and the adoption reform task force will be holding county by county meetings with Senators to inform and educate them on adoption and the g/l/b/t community.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE The date for the third annual VCLGR Conference and Queer Town Meeting has been set. This year we'll gather at Montpelier High School on Saturday, October 28th. If you weren't one of the almost 500 people that spent the day in Middlebury last year, you missed a fantastic day of learning, socializing and organizing. Don't miss out this year; mark your calendars now! Planning for the conference is underway and we're looking for volunteers to help. We specifically need people in the Montpelier area to help with on-site coordination and food vendor booking. For more information, please call Laurie Labarthe at (802)223-8962.

RUTLAND FREE LIBRARY VCLGR has been tracking the controversy over the book *Daddy's Roommate* from the very beginning and keeping VCLGR members in the Rutland area involved and informed. Both Susan Aranoff, VCLGR Co-Liaison to the Governor and Judy Lashof, VCLGR Board Member from Rutland County, attended the public hearing held by the library's board of directors on June 6th. Judy noted that much of the testimony at the hearing and many of the letters to the editor of the *Rutland Herald* have been very positive and firmly support the Freedom to Read principle. Judy also believes that the reporting of the story by the *Herald* has been fair and informative.

As always, VCLGR members are welcome at board meetings. Various committees are working on fundraising, increasing membership, planning activities, networking with other groups, keeping a finger on the pulse of Montpelier and watching out for our interests there. Join us! Call for meeting times and locations.

If you need to contact the Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights (VCLGR), you may write to P.O. Box 1125, Montpelier, VT 05602, or you may call (802) 365-9139 or (802) 482-3927. ▼

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Attorneys

100 Main Street
P.O. Box 1124
Burlington, VT 05402-1124

802-864-4531
802-864-6400
FAX: 802-860-1565



Jen Muncil, VT Pride Committee Member: "Coming to a Pride event is very empowering, it's very supportive. That's why we need to have it. Being on the Pride Committee is in itself very empowering because you're planning something, and you're watching it happen, and you're seeing everybody enjoy it and loving what's going on, even with it downpouring. (That's what) makes it worthwhile." ▼

Daddy's Author and the Rutland Controversy

Bennett Law

BOSTON -- Michael Willhoite, author of the children's book *Daddy's Roommate*, feels "honored to be a trailblazer, though a highly unintentional one." Willhoite wrote *Daddy's Roommate* specifically for the children of gays. "I did not intend to become a provocateur."

Willhoite, though, is pleased that other children have shown interest in his book, and even welcomes the controversy that surrounds it. "It brings the topic up. There is no reason that people shouldn't face the fact that gay families, with minor differences, are like other families. Issues needn't remain in the closet either, and *Daddy's Roommate* is turning out to be a good tool for raising these issues."

Willhoite has been much in demand in defense of his book, and is always surprised at the shortsightedness of self-declared protectors of innocence. "I was on the Channel 7 news (Boston) last night, preceded by a woman who said 'their little minds can't accept these things.' My news to her was that children's minds are not little at all, but are expansive. If you can take a child early and show him that prejudice is wrong, it's inevitable that children pick up on this."

As has been the case in Rutland, Willhoite has found issues of homosexuality repeatedly confused with or lumped with pornography and child abuse. "It offends me very much when people intimate that the illustration of Frank reading to the son (they share a couch) suggests pedophilia. I think that a man who wants to love his lover's child as his own is to be commended."

Daddy's Roommate is often stolen from libraries, defaced, or found covered with obscenities. The New York City library system cited *Daddy's Roommate* as the fourth most frequently stolen book from its collections (Alyson Publications has a policy of replacing books stolen from public libraries free of charge). And the American Library Association named *Daddy's Roommate* the "most challenged" book two years in a row, and Willhoite suspects it will repeat for a third. "But it will not be the most challenged book in the following year, because I have written a sequel." Look for Alyson Publications to release *Daddy's Wedding* in June of 1996. "You do know what comes at the end of every wedding," teased Willhoite. It may yet prove to be the most powerful kiss in literature. ▼