

Out in the Mountains

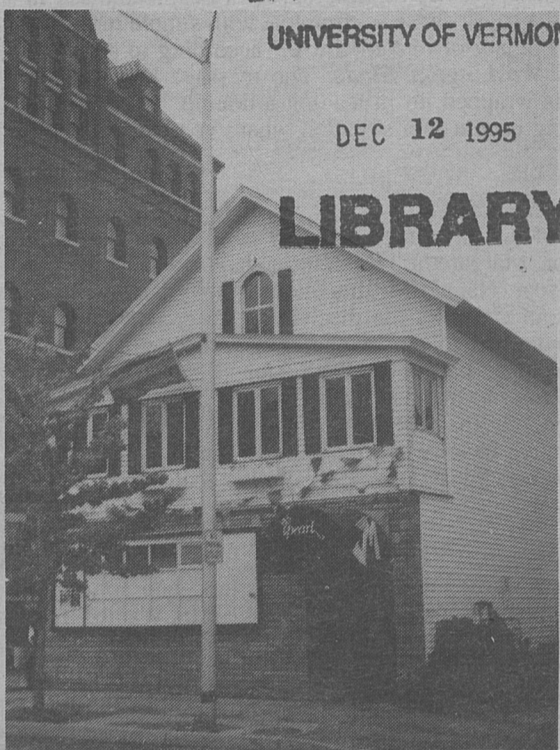
VERMONT'S NEWSPAPER FOR LESBIANS, GAY MEN, AND BISEXUALS

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FREE

If Santa Were Gay: A Queer Holiday List



(Photo: Kip M. Roberson)
Burlington's 135 Pearl: Santa promises to bring peace to the Pearl

Paul Olsen

NORTH POLE/COLCHESTER -- As the holidays approach and the spirit of goodwill and giving enters our hearts, 'tis the season once again for *OITM's* holiday gift list. If Santa were to take my advice, here's what he'd deliver this holiday season:

Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights (VCLGR):
Success in the adoption reform bill debate

Burlington's 135 Pearl:
Air conditioning ("air-conditioning neutral" is not chic in July)

WIZN's Corm and the Coach:
Low ratings

Burlington Women's Council Executive Director Peggy Luhrs:
An honorary membership in the Log Cabin Club

Vermont Lesbians:
Funding for a Women's Health Project to combat HIV transmission

Northern Vermont's g/l/b community:
A gay bar

Governor Howard Dean:
A budget in the black

Lieutenant Governor Barbara Snelling:
An invitation that isn't rescinded

State Senator Susan Sweetser:
An understanding of HIV transmission so she can withdraw her support for irresponsible HIV testing legislation

Vermont Gay Social Alternatives (VGSA):
Political activity

Long time lesbian and gay activists:
A new generation to carry on the struggle

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"It All Started With ..." An Exploration of Leadership in the Community, Part 3

Bennett Law

BETHEL -- "It all started with Pat Buchanan. I literally credit his speech at the 1992 Republican National Convention with my active involvement in the gay community. I figured if he could spew that much hate on national television and get that much applause for it, then something had to be done." (Chris Tebbets, Burlington)

The one question in the leadership survey, chronicled in the October and November issues of *OITM*, to which the respondents submitted a wide divergence of responses was, "What motivated you to assume or accept a leadership role in the l/g/b/t community?" The respondents reported being motivated by a variety of personal factors, in many cases reflecting their affiliations with specific branches of the larger community. Most reported that their experiences substantively enhanced their lives, and respondents took satisfaction in the resultant improvement in the lives of others made along the way.



(*OITM* file photo)
Randolph's Susan Aranoff was "motivated by the dual forces of anger and idealism"

"I moved to Vermont when there were few social groups for l/g/b people, and no bar. I started attending Integrity (the gay and lesbian ministry of the Episcopal Church) meetings, not because I'm particularly religious, but because it was about the only social organization for l/g/b people. I met a lot of l/g/b folks; some were political and this was really my first exposure to community organizing and lobbying. I admired these political organizers for their bravery ... I learned that information was a form of power that could be used to the community's advantage." (anon.)

"I got involved to alleviate my own sense of isolation. I think being bi can be somewhat isolating in itself, but in a rural area it is doubly isolating. I don't want to think that anyone else will have to be as isolated as me." (Kirsten Isgro, Burlington)

"Whenever I'm given the opportunity to speak up about heteropatriarchy and its manifestations, I take the chance and say what I think without compromise or apology. Speaking out and taking action are my responses to injustice ... Members of my

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Babsgate to Roommate: 1995 in Review

Kip M. Roberson



(Photo: Bennett Law)
Terje Anderson, member of President Clinton's Advisory Council on AIDS/HIV

WINOOSKI -- Vermont, the most rural state in the nation, proved once again in 1995 that small means anything but sleepy or uneventful. The news and events that shaped Vermont's g/l/b community were as varied and unpredictable as the weather in January. Ranging from the coming out story of Ed Flanagan to the frightening as well as uplifting story of *Daddy's Roommate* to the scandalous Babsgate to the scoop on Howard Dean's reelection plans, 1995 has proven to be a very queer year.

Narrowing the past year's events down to a Letterman-esque Top 10 list was not an easy task. The list contains surprising, angering, heart-warming and history-making stories. True, some of these stories may not be remembered much past February or March of next year but they were nonetheless significant to 1995. Instead of trying to predict what 1996 will hold for our community, let us reminisce over 1995 one final time. Let the countdown begin!

10. Mr. Anderson goes to Washington
Early this past summer, Vermont Department of Health AIDS Program Chief Terje Anderson was named to President Clinton's Advisory Council on AIDS/HIV. "Everything the council is going to be looking at is the question of what the president can do personally," said Anderson, "Even though he has certainly talked about AIDS more than any other previous president, there's a lot more he can do." Perhaps the most important aspect of Anderson's appointment is his ability to advocate for rural-specific needs created by the epidemic. Anderson stressed the power of each person's ability to know the facts and to discuss HIV and AIDS issues both within and outside their own communities. Anderson pointed out the need for individuals to take care of themselves through safer sex, attention to personal health, and concern for partners and

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OITM HISTORY: December Through The Years

1989 ... Massachusetts Passes Gay Rights Bill Groundbreaking gay rights legislation has passed the Massachusetts legislature. Vermont's southern neighbor has become the second state in the nation to pass gay rights legislation, setting a precedent which will influence numerous states considering similar bills.

1990 ... Squires Wins Bid For Legislature Of greatest interest to the g/l/b community were the bids of two openly gay candidates for office: Ron Squires of Windham County for a spot in the State House of Representatives, and Howard Russell of Chittenden County for a State Senate seat. Squires will now resume office in Montpelier with the added honor of being the first openly gay legislator in the State House.

1991 ... Hamilton Custody Case Finally Settled The two and a half year custody battle over three-year old Collin Hamilton has ended. Custody was awarded to Susan Bellemare of Duxbury, surviving partner of Susan Hamilton, Collin's biological mother, in an out of court settlement. Hamilton's parents, Philip and Elsa Hamilton, retained visitation rights.