

## "It All Started With..."

Continued from page 1

family that have struggled with my lesbianism would do so regardless of my public behavior." (Joy Livingston, Hinesburg)

"To be honest, I enjoyed the job (serving as editor of *Out in the Mountains*) more than my daytime work, but sadly enough, one paid well and the other paid nothing." (Hugh Coyle, Ripton)

"I went for the social activity. I became a leader because I got tired of it being so boring. I was exasperated at how things were going, and decided I would try to help." (anon.)

"My big part was I wanted to be the most that I could for people who were HIV positive." (Travis Randall, Lyndonville)

"I have assumed a formal role within the g/l/b/t community to become familiar with the community in all its diversity, to advance the celebration of diversity within all of society (my own 'safety' as a woman, lesbian, transgendered person and father rests on this) and to help move the g/l community to g/l/b/t. I am sustained by a lessening need to remind our community that Vermont has moved to dealing with a broad concept of homosexual community. Nationally, I have seen Integrity, the gay and lesbian ministry of the Episcopal Church, begin to acknowledge the transgendered precisely because I am present and speaking out on all issues, not just transgendered ones." (Laurie Labarthe, Worcester)

"I hope I make an impression on people who need one." (Noel Benoit, St. Johnsbury)

"I have never experienced a down side to stepping forward ... It has opened me up professionally by allowing me to be out at work to an even wider audience and thus more comfortable. It has served to legitimize me, my family, and my life in a way that straight people take for granted. It demonstrates to those who know me professionally that I am a straightforward, determined individual who will work hard for what I believe in." (Jane van Buren, Burlington)

"I've been on the social end, trying to help people have a good time." (Cliff Dow, Burlington)

"What kept me going back was the work itself -- just the obvious, glaring stuff that needed to be done and could be done." (anon.)

"When Mary Hurlie contacted me and asked me to work with her and Terje (Anderson) and others in the 'revitalization' of VCLGR back in the spring of 1993, I couldn't imagine not agreeing -- it sounded exciting to try to make 'us' a much more coherent, and therefore more powerful, community." (Susan Murray, Ferrisburg)

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Individuals throughout our community continue their call for community building. Should we/may we/will we have a community center? Can we shore up our regional social organizations, and envision, create, and develop new and different meeting places, not just in Burlington, but in Montpelier, Bennington, St. Johnsbury, Springfield, and Rutland?

Our community needs a revitalized Pride Committee, with committed members ready, willing, and able to plan, organize, and execute our annual rally and celebration of who we are and why we chose to live in Vermont. The AIDS service organizations (ASOs) around the state, the Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights, Outright Vermont, *Out in the Mountains* -- all of our community organizations need sustained support. They all struggle, each at different stages of development, and each can be improved through financial donations and the devoted attention of volunteers willing to give of themselves to forward the organizations' missions.

As the ASOs grow, a community in desperate need calls for a wider range of more professional services. For *Out in the Mountains* to expand, in size, in readership, and in quality, it needs a solid foundation of subscribers and advertisers. For VCLGR to continue to expand its effectiveness, both in addressing the legislative concerns of the l/g/b/t community and in its community building activities, it needs the participation of new members and volunteers eager to devote necessary time and resources to its committee work. And Outright Vermont, in its services for questioning and troubled youth, needs the support of each and every one of us who at an earlier time in our own lives struggled with coming out.

While you consider the forces which led the participants in *Out in the Mountains*' leadership survey to get involved in creating a better Vermont for its gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered citizens, think about what it might take to inspire you to join them.

As Jane van Buren of Burlington responded, "We are asked frequently to be the grist of senior theses, class projects and background material for newspaper stories. We assume that role without question because somebody needs to talk to these people about our lives and struggles, joys and triumphs. We need to debunk myths and educate people as to the ordinariness of our lives as well as the uniqueness. What sustains me and allows me to repeat the stories over and over is the absolute necessity of it all. Without our stories our children suffer and the world will not, in fact, evolve to a better, more caring place. We must continue to maintain a vision of a better place for our children, indeed even for us, and continue to support and encourage leaders in our community." ▼

## A Good Vibration: The Good Vibrations Guide to Sex

by Cathy Winks and Anne Semans

An *OITM* Review by Dudley

**STRAFFORD** -- Ever had questions about sex and didn't know whom to ask or where to go to find the answers? Ever been curious about sex toys or a new sexual technique but been too embarrassed to ask anyone you know if they've tried it or done it? *The Good Vibrations Guide to Sex* is a must for you and anyone who's interested in good sex and the many ways of achieving it.

Cathy Winks and Anne Semans are workers at San Francisco's Good Vibrations sex toy shop and as such have been fielding questions about sex and toys for many years. This book grew out of their concern that, while there are many excellent sex books available that focus on particular topics, there seemed to be no one source for reliable and useful information about the many ways people of all sexual identities enjoy sex, both alone and with a partner or partners; about the selection and use of the many toys that can add to their pleasure; and about safer sex techniques and information. This book is their contribution to that void and provides a wealth of information in a very readable, inclusive, and non-judgmental way.

Most sex books approach sex from a heterosexual viewpoint with a mention here and there about homosexuality and maybe bisexuality, but hardly ever about transgendered individuals or people with physical disabilities that may preclude "normal" intercourse. *The Good Vibrations Guide to Sex* is a refreshing change from that approach, as illustrated by this from their introduction:

*We've arranged the chapters according to types of sexual activities which can be practiced by one, two, or sometimes more people. Where appropriate, we describe the technique as it works for different gender pairings. For example, whereas most sex books will discuss penetration in a male/female intercourse section -- usually billed as the ultimate sexual experience -- we describe the variety of ways to penetrate a partner of either gender (vaginally, anally, with toys, fingers, etc.) and as one of the many ways to enjoy sex. Where physical limitations might hinder an individual's enjoyment of some of the techniques or toys described, we've tried to suggest adaptations which might prove helpful.*

In addition to the factual information they provide, the text is interspersed with actual quotes from Good Vibrations customers talking about what they like and don't like about particular techniques or toys. I found these quotes to be some of the most interesting reading, expressing the huge diversity of what we like and want as well as what we actually do to achieve sexual satisfaction.

The early chapters of the book deal with essential information and ingredients for good sex: Sexual Self-Image, Sexual Anatomy, Communication, and Masturbation. The following chapters cover Lubrication; Creative Touching; Oral Sex; All About Vibrators; Penetration; All About Dildoes; All About Anal Toys; Fantasies; Books, Magazines and Videos; High Tech Toys; S/M and Power Play; Where Sex Toys Come From; and Safer Sex. In addition there is a bibliography and videography of recommended books and videos plus a resource guide offering notes on shopping for toys, magazines and computer bulletin boards, sources for products such as leather and latex, and other sources of sex information and referrals. Over thirty line drawings are included throughout the book illustrating both toys and techniques.

I highly recommend this book to anyone wanting a comprehensive source of information about sex and toys. It's easy, conversational style and wonderfully non-judgmental attitude are truly refreshing, and there's something to be learned by even the most jaded among us. It's a great resource for those just beginning to experiment with their sexuality, those looking for something new to spice up their sex lives, and those who strive to better communicate their desires to a partner.

*The Good Vibrations Guide to Sex* may be available or can be ordered through your local bookstore. Or you can order directly from Good Vibrations, 938 Howard Street, Suite 101, San Francisco, CA 94110. Phone orders: 1-800-289-8423. Cost is \$16.95 plus \$3.75 shipping. Good Vibrations also offers mail order sex toy and book and video catalogs. ▼

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