

Out in the Mountains

VERMONT'S FORUM FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER ISSUES

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FREE

Pride '96: Burlington Without Borders

On Saturday, June 15th, Burlington's waterfront will be home to thousands of gay men, lesbian women, transgendered people, drag queens, radical faeries, bisexuals, leathermen, HIV+ people, bull dykes, and even some homosexually-challenged people as Pride '96 comes to Vermont.

This year's theme is "Pride Without Borders" and echoes the cross-cultural emphasis being promoted in Pride celebrations around the world. (For a list of other area Pride Days, see the calendar section.)

Group-sponsored floats and decorated automobiles will highlight the parade through town, which will be led by a Bread and Puppet Theater construction. Twenty-five volunteers are needed to assist with the Bread and Puppet float; if you are interested, please contact the Pride '96 organizers. Peter Thomas will also be assembling a g/l/b/t Marching Band; if you'd like to take part, give him a call at 802.878.1123.

The Pride Parade will leave from Battery Park following a mid-day rally, and end up at the waterfront for the afternoon festivities. At press time, speakers and entertainers were still being finalized. Various groups and organizations will also be on hand to sell crafts, distribute information, and offer services throughout the afternoon.

Other Pride Day activities include an ecumenical worship service in the Unitarian Universalist Church at 10:30 and a benefit concert by folk singer Carole Eaglehart at 8:00 in the evening. 135 Pearl will also be the site of a "Dance For AIDS" benefit the following day from 2-6 p.m.

Organizers are still scrambling to find last-minute volunteers and funders for the massive celebration. If you can offer assistance in any way, please call Bob at 802.865.3734 or Craig at 802.658.1602. ▼

Bill Restricts Marriage

by Hugh Coyle

Georgia Republican Representative Bob Barr has introduced legislation that would strictly limit marriage under federal law to "one man and one woman." The bill, still in draft form at press time, would also allow individual states to disallow marriages performed in any other state, despite their legality there. Rep. Steve Largent (R-OK) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner (R-WI) are listed as cosponsors of the bill. President Clinton has said that he would sign the bill if passed by the legislature.

The bill comes in response to Hawaii's continuing court hearing on the topic of same-sex unions. It is expected that the Aloha State will pass legislation within the next two years permitting same-sex couples to file for legal marriage.

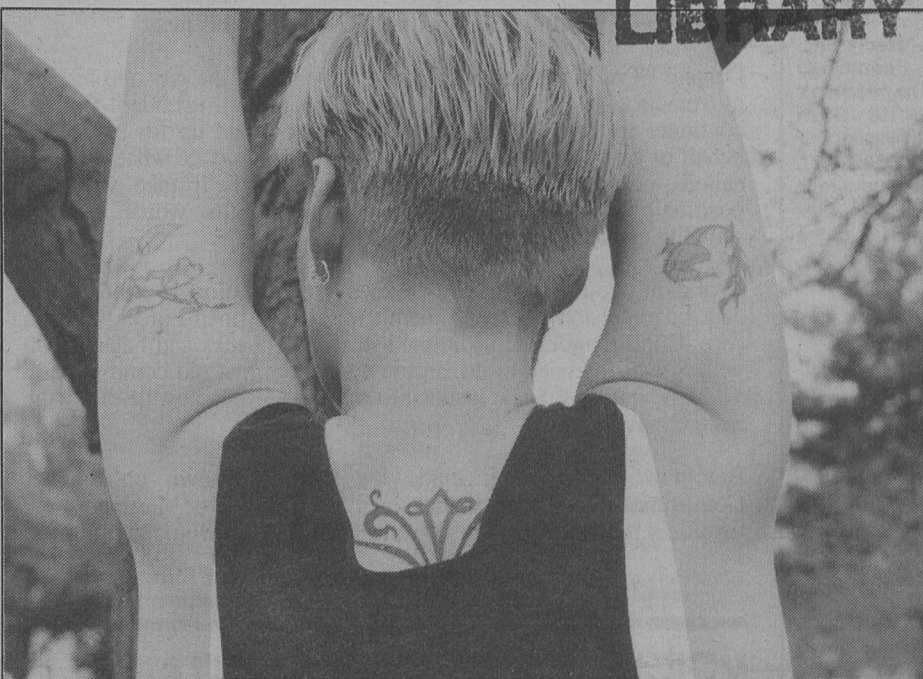
A number of states have already considered legislation which would prohibit such recognition of same-sex unions. Though a number have either struck down the bills or tabled them for further study, Alaska, Arizona, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Utah have all passed such laws. Vermont lawmakers tabled the issue when it presented itself late in the legislative session this year.

Barr emphasized that the bill, despite its "Defense of Marriage Act" title, "does not outlaw same-sex marriage." It would, however, withhold federal tax, welfare, pension, health, immigration and survivors' benefits, thereby denying gay couples many of the civil advantages of marriage.

The American Civil Liberties Union has already criticized the bill, citing its obvious disregard for Article 4 of the United States Constitution, which states that "full faith and credit shall be given in each state to the public acts, records and judicial proceedings of every other state." Other critics of the bill have called it election year grand-standing — blatant attempts to exploit a hot topic for the purpose of winning campaign dollars. "This is just clearly a calculated, election-year assault on the lives of gay and lesbian Americans," said Kim I. Mills, a Human Rights Campaign spokeswoman. ▼

Tattoos and You

JUN 7 1996



Local singer, Tamah, displays three of her tattoos.

Photos and text by StaciAnne Visco

BURLINGTON -- They're no longer just for the bikers and the sailors. No longer for circus freaks, rock stars and Maori warriors. "Mom" may not just be tattooed on someone's arm, but may be tattooed on mom herself.

In its most basic terms, tattooing is the process of puncturing the skin and depositing pigments under the surface. The modern method involves an electric, hand-held tattoo machine, a lightweight metal tool that looks like a mutant ballpoint pen and sounds like a dentist's drill.

Tattoo needles are actually fine pins bound and soldered to form a group that holds ink. The type of design and personal style dictate the number of needles used during the process, but anything from a single needle (used in fine line tattooing) to a

chunkier bundle (for large-scale tribal motifs) is common.

The area to be tattooed is cleaned, disinfected, and if necessary, shaved. The selected design is then, transferred by one of several means, including free-hand drawing and a variety of stencil techniques.

Tattooing isn't gory. If it were too bloody, the ink would wash out of the skin. After the tattoo is completed and bandaged, some blood and

ink will normally seep out. Within a few weeks the skin heals completely, and the owner is ready to flaunt the new tattoo.

The level of discomfort experienced depends on both the placement and the receiver's pain threshold. Soft, fleshy areas like the biceps, buttocks and shoulders are less sensitive than protected spots like the underarm and inner thigh. Bony areas like the ankle and spine are usually more painful. Everyone has a different tolerance for pain, so reports vary wildly.

The easiest way to find a reputable and talented tattooist is to ask someone who has a tattoo you admire. Visit the local shops and look at photos of completed works to see if they reflect a style you like. Make sure that the workspace is clean and

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Supreme Court Supports Gay Rights

by Hugh Coyle

WASHINGTON -- On May 20, the United States Supreme Court voted against a Colorado constitutional amendment that sought to repeal and prohibit legislation protecting the rights of gay people. In a ruling of 6-3, the Justices found in *Romer vs. Evans* that such an amendment violated gay people's right to equal protection under the Constitution.

The decision has been hailed as a major civil rights victory by nearly every gay and lesbian organization in the country. "We are jubilant," said Elizabeth Birch, Executive Director of the Human Rights Campaign, adding, "This is an outstanding moral victory. All the way to the Supreme Court the tone of this country has changed with regard to gays and lesbians...Gay people are full citizens of this country and have to be treated as such."

News of the ruling quickly spread via phone trees and Internet posting lists. As if to echo Birch's feeling of elation, spontaneous parties and celebrations took place in many major cities.

Justice Anthony M. Kennedy wrote on behalf of the Court's decision, stating, "We must conclude that Amendment 2 classifies homosexuals not to further a proper legislative end but to make them unequal to everyone else. This Colorado cannot do. A state cannot so deem a class of persons a stranger to its laws."

Kennedy further stated that the Colorado amendment "identifies persons by a single trait and then denies them protection across the board. It is not within our constitutional traditions to enact laws of this sort...It is a classification of persons undertaken for its own sake, something the Equal Protection Clause does not permit."

Joining Kennedy in support of the decision were Justices John Paul Stevens, Sandra Day O'Connor, David H. Souter, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen G. Breyer. Opposing the decision were Justices Antonin Scalia, Clarence Thomas, and Chief Justice William Rehnquist.

In his opposing remarks, Justice Scalia resorted to overused and misinformed rhetoric, claiming that

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