

Rep. Barney Frank Scheduled for Flanagan Fund-raiser

BURLINGTON -- On Thursday, August 8, Representative Barney Frank, an openly gay Democratic legislator from Massachusetts, will be the special guest at a fundraising event for Vermont State Auditor Ed Flanagan.

Flanagan, the country's first openly gay statewide elected official, noted both professional and personal reasons for inviting Frank to Vermont. "The two of us went to law school together," Flanagan said, noting that he graduated a year later than Frank from Harvard Law School.

Frank has been outspoken in Washington on a number of issues of importance to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people around the country. Most recently, he challenged those in support of the "Defense of Marriage Act" in a nationally broadcast interview.

The fund-raiser will take place at the Boathouse in Burlington from 6:30-8:00 p.m. Suggested donation for admission will be \$19.96. For more information, call 802-828-2185. ▼

Party Conventions Held in Burlington

by Paul Olsen

BURLINGTON -- Democratic and Republican party activists recently gathered in Burlington to attend their respective state party conventions. Partisan sniping, the election of national convention delegates and party officers, consideration of various resolutions and speeches designed to rally the party faithful characterized both 1996 state conventions.

At the Democratic convention, Democrats heard from former House Speaker Ralph Wright, Governor Howard Dean, U.S. Secretary of Labor Robert Reich, openly gay State Auditor Edward Flanagan and other candidates for statewide office. Shortly after being named honorary convention chairman, Ralph Wright addressed the audience. Wright described choice, opposition to capital punishment and human rights as the three principles that politicians should be prepared to die for politically.

Wright indicated that during his ten-year tenure as House Speaker, more than two thousand bills passed his desk. According to Wright, the bill he was most proud of passing was Vermont's Gay Rights Bill. The Gay Rights Bill was "about equality in housing and employment ...not a big deal" Wright said. The Gay Rights Bill debate was about "the deep respect for the differences between us as human beings and the courage to stand up to those who would oppose us."

Vermont Republicans heard from Lt. Governor candidates John Carroll and Dennis Delaney, U.S. House candidate Susan Sweetser, New Hampshire Governor Steve Merrill and other statewide GOP candidates.

In his keynote address, Merrill touched on classic GOP themes. Smaller government, welfare reform, criminal justice reform and criticism of Bill Clinton highlighted Merrill's address. "I believe Bill Clinton is capable of saying or doing anything to get elected" Merrill said. "The Republican Party is a party of ideas. We care about people. We care about future generations," Merrill added. When asked if the Republican Party had room for openly gay men and lesbians, Merrill indicated that it did.

With candidates nominated, delegates selected and the party faithful energized, Democrats and Republicans throughout Vermont now turn their attention to fund raising and their respective national party conventions in Chicago and San Diego. ▼

Coalition Notes: Town Meeting Update

BRATTLEBORO -- Yes, the 4th Annual Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Right's (VCLGR) "Our Town Meeting" is still being planned for Brattleboro, Vermont, only the date has changed. If you picked up a club card at Pride '96 with a date of October 26 on it, throw it away. The date has been changed due to conflicts with national gay and lesbian conferences on the same weekend. "Our Town Meeting" will now be held on November 23.

The conference committee members are busily planning for "Politics As (Un)Usual:" an exciting keynote speaker; a wide variety of workshops from auto mechanics to self-loving; child care and children's programming; afternoon caucusing opportunities; raffles, vendors, and a gay and lesbian art and artisans' show.

Look out for the Priscilla Lavender Line Bus touring through Vermont from Essex Junction to Brattleboro that weekend. Or perhaps you'd prefer to take the train? More details on this later.

Rumor has it that CabarAIDS will be happening the night before "Our Town Meeting." In the past, CabarAIDS has featured gay a cappella singers "Sons and Lovers" and Vanessa Vale, former Miss Gay New England. Maybe you've seen her in Boston or Provincetown.

We plan to make Brattleboro "Our Town" for the weekend of November 23-24. Conference committee members are working on dinner and housing options so we can "spend over" if we want to.

Join us! We need to hear about your child care needs now for optimal planning of your child(ren)'s day. Possible activities include a Peace Mural, Weaving, Mask-Making, Juggling, and lots more fun stuff. Please write to Pajj Wadley-Bailey at PO Box 152, Plainfield VT 05667 for more information and a registration form or call her at 802-454-1135.

Meanwhile, we can use your help. Here's your opportunity to make new friends, share your talents and skills, and make this fabulous weekend happen. To volunteer or for more information, call Carey Johnson at 802-258-2826 or Gabriel Q at 802-257-4871. ▼

Nominations Sought for VCLGR Awards

BRATTLEBORO -- The Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights will continue its tradition of recognizing individuals for their service to our community. The awards will be presented at the VCLGR annual conference in Brattleboro this November. VCLGR seeks nominations from the community in the following categories:

The VCLGR Volunteer of the Year Award is given annually to a VCLGR member who, by giving of his or her time, energy, and talent, has contributed to the programs and activities of the Coalition during the past year.

The VCLGR Pride Award may be given to an individual who, through an act of courage in the face of criticism, difficulty, or danger, embodies the spirit of gay pride.

The VCLGR Leadership Award is awarded annually to an individual who, through his or her leadership, activism, and dedication, has demonstrated a long-term commitment to advancing the civil rights, personal empowerment, and social acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered Vermonters.

In 1995, The Coalition presented Community Service Awards to Beth Robinson (VCLGR Volunteer of the Year Award); Paula Baker and Ed Flanagan (VCLGR Pride Award); and David Curtis (VCLGR Leadership Award).

To nominate someone, please submit a letter describing how the person is deserving of one of these awards to: VCLGR Awards, P.O. Box 117, East Middlebury VT 05740. All nominations must be received by September 30, 1996. ▼



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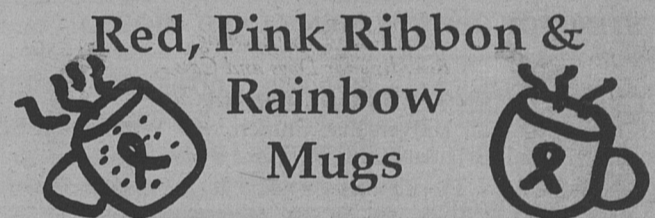
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