

Letters to the Editor

Union of Heart and Soul

Dear OITM,

Politicians certainly know the power of fiction possible today. Tell a story once and it transforms fact. Soon it replaces fact. If paid professionals utilize this rhetorical philosophy, I figure it could work for me. So while Beefy Billy in Washington says he will not sign my "For Better or Worse Bill" and hysterical men and women hate, I proceed undaunted.

Five years ago my Partner and I drove the long and windy ten hours to All Souls Church By the Sea along the northern most rocky coast of Maine and proclaimed *yes yes I do I do*, and ever since proceeded from that literal position. Fiction? Not if we actualize it. Declare we are family to blood relatives. Notes and conversations state the same to doctors, dentists, coaches, neighbors, violin and piano teachers, riding instructors, Principals, guidance administrators, summer camp personnel, sales help in pet stores or clothing stores or lumber yards. Joint bank accounts. Joint car insurance. Her name or my name written along the spouse line on the approved Costco application, AAA, VISA, anywhere we can.

My little son comes home from school with two Mother's Day macaroni and glue things. My daughter's arms hangs around both our necks screaming MELISSA! at the last Vermont concert. Both of us wait outside the operating room for news that the small appendix will hurt her no more. When the oldest goes astray, we both uneasily await the Judge's decision after countless hours speaking to lawyers, cops, lawyers, cops, teachers, administrators, lawyers. Both of us understand. Both of us forgive.

Is this a fictional marriage? Not a union? A partnership? A business that runs in the black? A family? I look at the long list of still denied benefits with scorn, for our union of the heart and soul needs no church or state sanction to be valid. Still, we believe in having all our rights, telling stories 'til all is true.

Moira

The Right to Decide

Dear OITM:

I felt strongly offended by the judgmental stand of D.B. Skeeter Sanders' article against gay/lesbian marriages. We have plenty of folks judging and condemning us already, so I suggest you just get in line with the rest of them! Nobody is asking for your approval or forcing you to participate should you decide against the marriage option.

For me the crux of the marriage issue boils down to a simple question of fairness. Why shouldn't my lover and I have the same options available to us as any other couple? If we decide marriage is what we want, why should the government, the church, or "queer" activists be able to tell us we can't?

Thanks for the advice, but I'd rather make my own decisions.

Chuck Kletecka
Waterbury Center

To VT, Bi Way of CA

Dear OITM,

As a bisexual man (formally only-gay until the right woman came to show me what else this world has to offer) and a recent visitor to your beautiful state, I applaud your efforts and encourage them from faraway California. As a young man I visited my father's family home in Hardwick and fell in love with the beautiful land that his relatives called home.

Since our trip earlier this summer to visit my wife's sister and brother-in-law, we have often thought about how wonderful living in Vermont would be. Now that I know that there is an active openness about sexuality in Vermont, the thoughts have become a little more than just thoughts.

I wish you the best of luck on your current and future endeavors.

Cliff
San Mateo, California

Homophobic Kolbe Deserved Outing

Dear OITM,

The recent stories about Congressman Kolbe's (R-AZ) "outing" only mention his vote against same-sex marriages. In fact, Kolbe's own Dec. 12, 1995 rider destroyed funding for an Indian AIDS prevention program and inserted a clause to withhold cultural, religious, and environmental protection laws that protect a sacred Apache mountain, Mt. Graham. Kolbe promoted these exemptions so University of Arizona telescopes could desecrate this sacred mountain.

I am an openly gay candidate who ran in the Democratic primary in the district of Rep. Regula (R-OH), Interior Appropriations chairman. Regula and Kolbe conspired to sneak the rider in at the last minute.

Kolbe erroneously claimed the homophobic and racist aspects of his rider were coincidence,

and the HIV study costly. In fact, he intentionally waited many months to inject his "coincidence" at the final 1995 joint Senate/House conference. The irony of this non-coincidence is that the AIDS study cost was minuscule compared to the billions in grazing subsidies, below-cost timber sales, and coyote killing for private ranchers in the Kolbe/Regula bill.

Every U.S. university has rejected or abandoned this U of A outrage against human rights, the environment, and due process. Only foreign partners remain.

Outing is likely for legislators who pursue homophobic, racist agendas.

Eric Resnick
Canton, Ohio

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR should be typed if possible and sent either by mail or e-mail to us by the 10th for inclusion in the next month's issue. You must include your name and phone number, even if you wish the letter to be published anonymously, so that we can verify content and authenticity. Send your thoughts and comments to: OITM, PO Box 177, Burlington VT 05402 or via e-mail at Oitm@aol.com.

Out and About...

IBM announced on September 19 that it would begin offering Domestic Partnership benefits to its employees. The new policy will take effect on January 1, 1997. The company also recently asked **P-FLAG representative Lil Venner** to speak to its employees on National Coming Out Day...The Brattleboro Area AIDS Project welcomes **Michael Fannon** as its new Volunteer Coordinator and **Kendall Clawson** as its new Women's Advocate...**The Burlington Women's Council** hosted a panel discussion entitled "The Rise of the Radical Right: Big Brother Masquerading as Family Values" on September 10th in Burlington...**Jacqueline Weinstock and Esther Rothblum**, both Professors at UVM, have just published *Lesbian Friendships: For Ourselves and Each Other* with the New York University Press. Look for a review soon in OITM...**Moira and Mary Jean** will celebrate their fifth wedding anniversary on October 12, 1996...**OITM staff member Stacianne Visco** has been named to the Vermont State Advisory Board on Tattooing following her recent feature story on the topic. She completed a day-long training with the State Police in Royalton as part of her position...**Drag artists Cherie Tartt and Yolanda** recently premiered their new television variety show on Adelphia Cable. Check your TV (TransVestite) Guide for local listings...**Biversity Boston** sponsored the 3rd annual BiCamp at the Red Mill Brook National Forest in southern Vermont on August 2-4.

If you have news you'd like to include in our monthly "Out and About" column (weddings, anniversaries, births, deaths, awards, promotions, etc.), please send them in to us at PO Box 177, Burlington VT 05402 or e-mail us at Oitm@aol.com. Don't forget to include your name and phone number in case we need to contact you for clarifications or verification.

Out in the Mountains

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