

CHASSMAN & BEM
BOOKSELLERS

Open 7 days *Special orders welcome*

We are proud to carry the area's largest selection of gay, lesbian, and bisexual books and magazines.

81 Church St., Burlington, VT
802-862-4332 1-800-NEW BOOK

BETH ROBINSON
LANGROCK SPERRY & WOOL
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
15 SOUTH PLEASANT STREET
MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT 05753

Burlington Office:
275 College Street
Burlington, Vermont 05402
802-864-0217

Area Code: 802
Telephone: 388-6356
FAX#: 388-6149

Feminist Therapy
Sheila D. Rawls, M.S.C.

Pathways for self-discovery and growth

addictions ▼ coming out ▼ relationships ▼ spirituality ▼ ACOA

(802) 865-2609 2 Church Street, Suite 4E
*sliding fee scale Burlington, Vermont 05401

Tax & Accounting Services

JMM

Browns Trace Building
P.O. Box 910
Richmond, VT 05477

Julie M. Miller
Certified Public Accountant

802-434-6466 TEL.
802-434-6465 FAX

Marion Tredeau RN CS LCSW

Psychiatric Nurse — Clinical Specialist

P.O. Box 13
N. Montpelier VT 05666
(802) 454-1432

Quite Simply...

The finest collection of
Furniture, Carpeting & Accessories
in Vermont

Rutland House Ltd.

162 south main street rutland, vermont 05701 (802)775-2911

H

rts. 11/30 - in the heart of manchester center, vermont (802)362-2001

from all over vermont: (800)649-2911

Dr. Shoshanna Shelley
Licensed Psychologist

Helping Individuals & Couples With Depression,
Anxiety, Abuse, Sexual Identity, Addictions,
Self Esteem & Relationship Concerns.

Over 20 Years Experience
Most Insurance Accepted
496-496
WARREN, VERMONT

News from Out Yonder

IBM Joins Growing List of Companies Offering Domestic Partnerships

ARMONK NY — On September 19, IBM, one of the Burlington area's major employers, announced that it would extend domestic partnership benefits to its gay and lesbian employees. The move makes IBM the largest corporate business in the United States to offer such benefits.

In addition, IBM recently contributed a gift of \$3,000 to the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) to support that group's "Honoring Our Allies" event, to be held December 4 in Washington DC. The annual gathering "recognizes the work of gay and non-gay individuals who have championed fairness and equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people."

This year, NGLTF will honor members of the South African government and the African National Congress who have advocated on behalf of inclusion of civil rights for gays in that nation's new Constitution.

More than 400 American companies, universities, associations, municipalities, and other groups now extend domestic partner benefits to their gay and lesbian employees, including IBM's peer companies Apple, Microsoft, Intel, Xerox, and Hewlett-Packard.

"More and more companies are doing what the U.S. Congress and the Defense of Marriage Act won't do: give recognition and benefits to same-gender relationships," said Robert Bray, Media Director for NGLTF and a former employee of IBM. "Now, more and more gay and lesbian people are coming out in board rooms and on assembly lines and are creating real change in the American workplace."

Such forward momentum was also evident last month in Maine, where the University of Maine became the first public employer in the state to offer domestic partner benefits to same-sex couples. The school's Board of Trustees voted to accept the policy on September 30.

Supreme Court Declines to Test "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" Policy

WASHINGTON DC — The Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal from Lieutenant Paul Thommasson which would have challenged the legitimacy of the current "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy in the United States military.

Enacted by President Clinton earlier in his first term, the policy served as a compromise on his previous vow to end discrimination against gays and lesbians serving in the armed forces. Under the new rules, the military cannot ask whether a service person is gay or lesbian, but it does not prohibit them from discharging those individuals known to be lesbian or gay.

Thommasson had been a personal aide to Rear Admiral Lee F. Gunn, who testified that Thommasson was "a true front runner who should be groomed for the most senior leadership in tomorrow's Navy." Gunn himself is the senior officer in charge of supervising the enactment of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy within the Navy.

Thommasson came out to Gunn in a memo addressed to him and three other Navy officials, including Rear Admiral Albert Konetzni, who succeeded Gunn as the Navy's chief administrator of the policy. In support of Thommasson, Konetzni wrote that he "commands the respect of his subordinates and seniors alike through honesty, integrity, and forthright communication."

Ironically, those same virtues and characteristics led to Thommasson's discharge.

The Navy argued that Thommasson's admission constituted a "homosexual act" in and of itself, and as such violated the policy and threatened the stability of the armed services. The Family Research Council, widely known for its homophobic attacks, was permitted to make both oral and written arguments as a "friend of the court" on the case.

In a brief filed the same night that President Clinton signed the "Defense of Marriage Act," his administration requested that the Supreme Court not hear Thommasson's case, as that would have brought the President's policy into question during an election year. News that 722 discharges under the current policy set a four-year high during 1995 has done little to restore the faith of gay and lesbian servicemembers under the Clinton administration.

Which Gender, DeGeneres?

LOS ANGELES, CA — Will she or won't she? That question has been on the minds of a number of gays and lesbians around the country as Ellen DeGeneres, star of the popular television sitcom "Ellen," unleashed a torrent of rumors that the title character of the series, known for her failed and/or non-existent relationships with men, was about to come out of the closet.

On several talk show programs, DeGeneres has claimed that the character has already come out as "Lebanese," owing to her fondness for certain ethnic cuisines. In response, talk show hostess Rosie O'Donnell quipped that since she also liked Middle Eastern foods, she might be "Lebanese" too.

Despite the media's current amusement over the issue, hate mail has already begun piling up at the ABC studios which produce the "Ellen" show, most of it from the radical right, who argue that such a development would further contribute to warping the minds of innocent youth in America and speeding the moral decline of society. Further connections between the show and the Disney corporation have complicated matters. Disney is also currently under assault from the radical right owing to its sponsorship of films such as "Priest" and events such as Gay and Lesbian Days at their theme parks.

Activists have called on television viewers everywhere to write to ABC in support of Ellen's eventual outing. Letters and postcards should be sent to: Ms. Jamie Tarses, Programming Director, ABC Studios, 2040 Avenue of the Stars, Los Angeles, California, 90067.

Pennsylvania Says No to Same-Sex Marriages

PHILADELPHIA, PA — Pennsylvania became the seventeenth state to enact legislation prohibiting same-sex marriages and unions.

The measure, signed into law on October 17 by Governor Tom Ridge, further denies the recognition of same-sex marriages performed in any other state, even if they were considered legal in that state. Such measures have been popping up all around the country as so-called "family values" politicians rally for the endorsement of the radical right during election campaigns.

Here in Vermont, initial inquiries into the idea of same-sex marriages have been tabled until the next legislative session at the earliest. The Freedom to Marry Task Force, an ad hoc component of the Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights, has been busy working with elected officials and candidates as well to help better inform and educate them about the issue and its subsequent effects on the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered communities.

Because of its progressive reputation in the country, Vermont may well be an important testing ground for efforts to recognize same-sex unions, particularly those performed in Hawaii, which stands poised to become the first state in the country to make such marriages legal. ▼