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The Outside Track

Paul's Predictions for 1997

Editor's Note: This column is rated TV-PG-14

by Paul Olsen

Along with Dick Clark, the first gayby of the year, the Vermont Gay Social Alternatives (VGSA) annual New Year's event, W-2 forms, and dead car batteries, the welcoming of a new year typically brings predictions for the upcoming year. While *Out in the Mountains* would never want to be confused with a supermarket tabloid, the possibilities for Vermont glbt predictions are endless.

I may be no Jeane Dixon, but here are my predictions for 1997:

At a public hearing of the Senate Transportation Committee in Montpelier, members of the Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights (VCLGR) will testify in favor of opening interstate rest areas.

Cherie Tartt and Dame Edna will be reported missing. The Burlington Police Department will question Amber and Marguerite LeMay.

Current and former members of the Vermont Controlalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights (VCLGR) will get mad because I didn't ask them if I could do this list.

The VGSA Board will vote to disband when they realize that having a gay social organization is political.

Peggy Luhrs will protest something.

Dropping its "economic neutral" policy, 135 Pearl will raise the cover charge to \$5.

Amber and Marguerite will celebrate their 82nd birthday at The Pillars.

Peter Kurth will piss somebody off with something he writes in his *Seven Days* column.

The Pride Day Committee will invite Champ (the Vermont Expos mascot) to be the keynote speaker at Pride Day. The invitation will be rescinded when the Pride Committee learns that Champ is a Republican. Unlike Barbara Snelling, Champ will never get over the snub.

State Representative Ricky Westman (R-Cambridge) will announce his 1998 reelection campaign at the Jeffersonville Falls.

OITM Editor Hugh Coyle will edit this list and not allow me to out [redacted].

A bill prohibiting same-sex marriage will be introduced by Representative Nancy Sheltra (R-Derby) in the Vermont House of Representatives.

Vermont Agricultural Commissioner Leon Graves will testify in favor of the anti-gay marriage bill and then publicly indicate that he was "just kidding."

Claiming that the book is "unnecessarily disrespectful," members of Vermont's Adoption Reform Task Force will call for a boycott of the book *Rush Limbaugh is a Big Fat Idiot* by Al Franken.

Vermont's northern gay and lesbian community will survive another year without a gay bar.

The Vermont chapter of the gay republican Log Cabin Club will fold when its lone member moves to New Hampshire to join the staff of U.S. Senator Bob Smith.

A new coffee shop will open on Church Street in Burlington.

After losing her campaign for Congress, Susan Sweetser (R) will change the name of her cable access television show from "Upfront Vermont with Susan Sweetser" to "Down in Back with Susan Sweetser."

The 1997 VCLGR annual town meeting will be held in Fairlee and nobody will come.

U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy, a long time Batman fan, will change his position on gay marriage when it is revealed that Batman and Robin are lovers. "I would have voted differently on DOMA," Senator Leahy will explain.

The VCLGR glbt visibility day at the Statehouse will now be referred to as "Our Visibility Day."

As a result of Hawaii First Circuit Judge Kevin Chang declaration that same-sex partners have the legal right to marry, queer Vermont couples will flock to Hawaii to be married.

Cross dressing teen Matt Stickney will enter the fashion design industry by marketing a line of back-to-school dresses.

More Vermont firms, including IDX Corporation and the Chittenden Bank, will join IBM in the move to extend benefits to the same-sex partners of its gay and lesbian employees.

Vermont's very own ATF (Adoption Reform Task Force) will launch another attack on this writer for not reporting something before it happened. This will be consistent with the ATF lashing I received last year for not reporting that Leon Graves reversed his position on his anti gay adoption amendment in spite of the fact that, when *OITM* had gone to press, Graves had not yet changed his position. Now I know how the Branch Davidians felt.

A queer pot luck dinner will be held somewhere in Vermont.

Thousands will attend Vermont's Pride Day celebration. The crowd will be estimated to be 250 people by the *Burlington Free Press*.

"The Rocky Horror Show," a spin-off of "Saucy Jack and the Space Vixens," will open in Burlington.

The gay community will publicly support the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy when they realize that if you "do tell, you don't serve."

Controversy will arise when it will be revealed that Cherie Tartt is not a drag queen, but that Steven West is actually Cherie's drag character.

UVM political analyst Garrison Nelson will reveal that the political defeats of Joan Conant (R-Colchester), Thomas Macaulay (R-Rutland), and Susan Sweetser (R) were a result of being labeled "dim bulbs" in *OITM*.

Pride Day will be political this year as organizers realize that not being political is literally killing members of our community.

Vermont's Christmas 1997 toy craze will be the "Tickle-me Cherie" doll. When touched in the groin, the doll will say "Ooh that tickles."

Under pressure from Bill Clinton, *OITM* will adopt a rating system for the paper.

A few *OITM* readers will take this list seriously and write letters to the Editor. ▼

Women's Rape Crisis Center Seeks Volunteers

BURLINGTON — The Women's Rape Crisis Center seeks volunteers to work with survivors of sexual violence on their hotline and advocacy programs, as well as to provide community education and assist with WRCC's development and administrative support. Their bi-annual training session will begin on Tuesday, February 11, at 6 p.m.

The Women's Rape Crisis Center is a not-for-profit social change feminist agency founded in 1974 to provide services to survivors of sexual violence, their families, and their friends. The WRCC provides a 24-hour crisis hotline, support groups and advocacy, and violence awareness and prevention workshops throughout Chittenden County.

According to the Department of Justice, a woman is raped every 45 seconds, yet 95% of these rapes are never reported to the police. WRCC receives over one hundred calls per month on their hotline, representing a 34% increase over the past year. WRCC has also had a 46% increase in requests for education workshops from local schools, colleges, and community groups.

For more information about volunteering with WRCC, or if you would like to schedule a workshop or presentation for your organization, contact the group at 864-0555 (Voice/TTY). If you have been victimized by sexual violence and need assistance, call the WRCC hotline at 863-1236. ▼