

# letters

The Burlington Womyn's Council under the present director, Jennifer Matthews has been a valuable resource. She earned our respect by creating refuge from the misogyny and homophobia of the every day "normal" world. We have come to expect complete inclusion regardless of orientation, respectful dialog and genuine commitment to issues affecting all womyn today from her office. For this we appreciate the dedication to womyn's community that Jennifer has demonstrated time and again.

Ty Robinson  
Joy Griffith  
Lynn McNicol  
Kara DeLeonardis  
Farar Elliott  
Nat Harrison

I am responding to Peggy Luhrs story in the September issue of Out In The Mountains "Dykebaiting and Heterosexism at the Women's Council".

As many of your readers may be aware, lesbian rights is one of the National Organization for Women's four priority issues. (The others being Combating Racism, Reproductive Rights and Economic Rights.) I have worked with Jennifer Matthews in Vermont NOW for some eight years and at no time has she not been supportive of all of NOW's priority issues. I have not seen any evi-

dence that Jennifer is homophobic. I urge those who would attack by calling people names to look at the real enemy and get down to the work at hand. I assure you, the enemy is not Jennifer Matthews, folks. Let's work together for our rights.

Yours For Equality,  
Judy Murphy,  
State Coordinator,  
Vermont NOW

I am writing in response to an article written by Peggy Luhrs- Sept. 1997. Does Ms. Luhrs really seem to suggest that as gay people no one has a right to criticize or disagree with us? Are we above responsibility for our actions? Because it would be bad for the gay community? That sounds a bit repressive to me. Sandy Baird is a democrat with political ambitions? By all means lynch the woman. As I understand it one needs only be a woman who lives or works in Burlington to be a member. Yes Democrats too. It seems Ms. Luhrs would like to control us all straight and gay alike. I don't intend to tell anyone what to do. I, however, reserve the right to voice my opinion.

I've been criticized as sharply as she by her cronies for attending a BWC meeting and then stating my perception of what I saw there. Since I am a gay man, should I start yell-

ing "homophobia"? "sexism"?—but then if she criticizes me she'll be damaging the gay community. Don't blame me that's her logic- not mine.

Michael Brennen

In response to the piece written last month to Out in the Mountains concerning the Burlington's Women Council, this letter is written in support of Jennifer Matthews, Director of the Council. I have had the pleasure of working with Jennifer on many different issues concerning women, including, pay inequities, same gender marriages, health care, and child support.

I can think of many words to describe Jennifer such as, dedicated, knowledgeable, and caring but never would I use the word "homophobic".

Some have said that Jennifer's involvement with women's issues is "politically motivated". I have seen nothing less than sincere care and concern about women's issues. She works toward tripartisanship and realizes that in order to best support women's issues all political parties must be involved.

I thank you, Jennifer, for the heartfelt work that you have done and will continue to do to improve the lives of all women.

Sincerely,  
Virginia Renfrew

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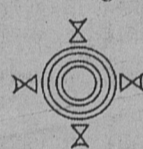
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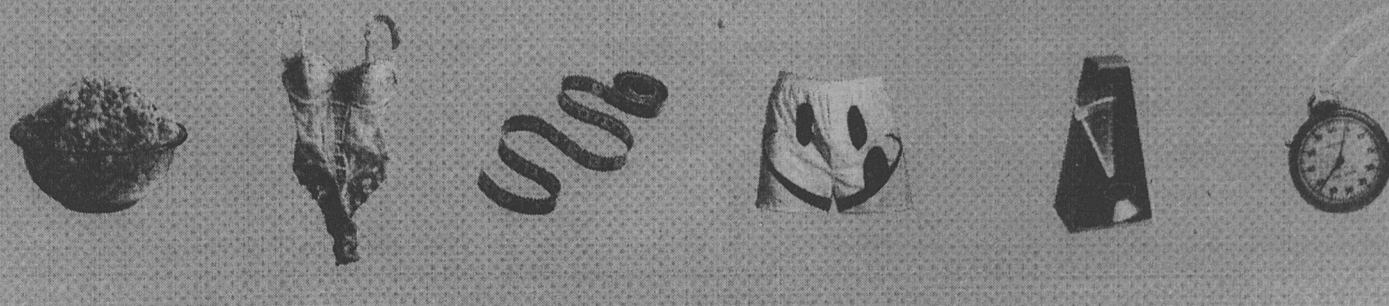
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