

# letters

We have just read the letters in the October issue regarding the ongoing debate within the Burlington Women's Council. We have attended only one meeting of the council: the now infamous one in July 1997. We have no personal experience of whether Jennifer Matthews is homophobic or not and therefore are unable to comment on that issue.

However, it is unfortunate that that issue has seemingly overshadowed what we see as the major flaw in Jennifer's leadership style: she makes unilateral decisions without communicating with or consulting the Council as a whole. That was the major issue in July and should be the major issue now. When Jennifer hears that a large number of Council members object to her leadership decisions, she should be strong enough to address the issues with them and consider a possible change in style that better serves her ego.

Even more unfortunate is that Peggy Luhrs' direct and honest reactions to hurtful remarks and insinuations about her, personally and professionally, have backfired to make Jennifer appear to be the vic-

tim. (This is the common reaction of our culture to strong, outspoken, passionate women.) And it has certainly taken the heat off Jennifer and the issues that are really at the core of the continued positive progress of the Women's Council.

And, for all the outpouring of support for Jennifer, let us not forget that the 10 years Peggy spent being a strong, outspoken, and passionate leader laid the foundation for the Council's very existence. Peggy has every right to voice strong opinions and question the workings of the Council, and every right to expect respect from those who have followed her.

Sincerely,  
Autumn Venezia  
Alison Hilber

I recently finished reading the latest issue of OITM — and I was extremely impressed at how the newspaper has grown in the last year and a half.

I was initially struck by OITM's new look, making the newspaper much more eye-catching and inviting. Then, as I opened up its pages, I found a smart and sensible layout

with more news coverage than ever.

Particularly, your coverage on the Vermont same-gender marriage case was the most complete I have seen — covering the issue from various perspectives, including your on-going series interviewing the plaintiffs.

Every time the editor of OITM makes the decision to move on, an entire community wonders — and worries — whether their newspaper will survive a transition, or even find someone new to take over the editorial reigns.

Luckily, this time OITM has found an editor that will not only sustain the newspaper, but has obviously assembled a team to make it bigger and better than ever.

Keep up the good work.

Fred Kuhr  
Staff Reporter  
Bay Windows  
Boston, MA

(Fred was editor of OITM from 1994-1996.)

• Letters to the editor can be sent via email:  
oitm@together.net or snail mail:  
PO Box 177, Burlington, VT  
05402-0177

## around vermont

### BINET

Binet is looking to form a contingent that will go down to the 5th International Bisexual Conference will convene April 3 - 5, 1998 in Boston. This conference features workshops, speakers, panels, a dance, and the chance to meet bi people from several countries. Sponsored by the Harvard Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Graduate Students, it runs Friday through Sunday afternoon and is open to all bi and bi-friendly people. Conference facilities are close to the subway, and wheelchair accessible. The conference language is English, with some sessions in Spanish. For additional information call (617)424-9595, email info@biconf.org, or visit the IBC5 web site at: <http://www.biconf.org>. Or locally check under the Binet listing in the source.

### HIV DATING

This from the web, a HIV positive computer dating service: "Dating in the 90s is difficult enough, add being HIV POSITIVE into the equation and dating becomes even harder. Meeting people with common goals and needs is a difficult game. However, FRESH START INC. has just made it a little bit easier. Fresh Start Inc. is proud to announce the establishment of the first ever ON-LINE computer dating service directly geared for men and

women infected with the HIV VIRUS. We at FRESH START DATING SERVICE are aware of the needs for HIV POSITIVE men and women to reach out to one another for LOVE, COMPANIONSHIP, and SUPPORT. Here we give people the opportunity to meet others with similar needs and interests. For more information please check out our web site at [www.webspinner.net/fresh-start](http://www.webspinner.net/fresh-start), and contact Joshua Albuquer, president of Fresh Start Inc. for a phone interview at (608—) 259-9972."

### 1998 PRIDE DAY

Vermont's GLBT Pride Day '98 takes place in Burlington on Saturday, June 20, but NOW is the time for individuals, organizations, groups of friends and businesses to start making plans!

New things will be happening this year - most notably the afternoon Festival will take place on Burlington's beautiful waterfront. This change of venue is necessary to accommodate our growing numbers and to avoid conflicts with recent city ordinances that prohibit events such as ours at Battery Park. However, with the change in venue more funds need to be raised. It will cost us \$1,000 just to get a permit to hold our events at the waterfront. It will take another \$1,000 to erect a stage, rent tents, provide sound and light systems and meet other requirements.

While the Pride Committee is making sure that all permits are secured and the basic needs are met, it is up to YOU and your friends, organizations and businesses to see that this is the best Pride celebration ever. And you can do that by committing yourself to work on a committee, by organizing a Pride-related event, by getting a group together to create a float, by buying an ad in the Pride Guide, and/or by writing a check.

For anyone interested in working with the Pride Committee, there will be a MAJOR meeting on a Sunday, in January, call Bob Bolyard (802) 865-3734 for more information. Every group or organization should consider sending a representative to this meeting. This is a great time to come and make suggestions, ask questions, or just to get involved in the process.

For more information:

Bob Bolyard (802) 865-3734  
Cheryl Carmi (802) 860-7527  
Peter Cimino (802) 864-9960  
Tracy Komons (802) 864-3455  
Craig Stevens (802) 658-1602

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vtpride97@pwsolutions.com

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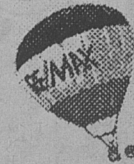


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