

Out in the Mountains
Established in 1986

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Out in the Mountains (ISSN 1081-5562) is published monthly by Mountain Pride Media, Inc. The newspaper maintains offices at 109 South Winooski Avenue in Burlington, Vermont. Our mailing address is PO Box 177, Burlington, VT 05402-0177. Our email address is oitm@together.net and our website is located at <http://www.vtpride.org>. The subscription rate is \$20 per year within the United States of America.

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Statement of Purpose

The purpose of *Out in the Mountains* is to serve as a voice for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgendered people, and our supporters in Vermont. We wish the newspaper to be a source of information, insight, and affirmation. We also see OITM as a vehicle for the celebration of the culture and diversity of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered communities here in Vermont and elsewhere.

Editorial Policy

We will consider for publication any material which broadens our understanding of our lifestyles and of each other. Views and opinions appearing in the paper do not necessarily represent those of the staff. This paper cannot and will not endorse any candidates or actions of public officials on issues of importance to lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgendered persons.

We reserve the right not to publish any material deemed to be overtly racist, sexist, anti-Semitic, ageist, classist, xenophobic, or homophobic.

Writers' guidelines are available on request. All materials submitted must include a name and a contact number. However, within the pages of the newspaper, articles may appear anonymously upon request, and strict confidentiality will be observed.

Articles, letters, and artwork should be sent to us by the 20th of the month prior to the month of publication (i.e. February 20th for the March issue). We encourage and implore our readers to do what they can to make *OITM* a paper which truly represents the many voices of our communities.

Materials should be sent to:

Out in the Mountains
PO Box 177
Burlington, VT 05402-0177
phone: (802) 865-9294
email: oitm@together.net

OITM now available in
braille format!

Contact Chris Moes
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more information.

EDITORIAL:

Is Anyone Paying Attention?

Occasionally I'll come across someone from the city, Boston, NY, or San Francisco, who will find themselves in Vermont for whatever reason. And some times this person will act as if they have landed in some remote place where queers are invisible and horribly oppressed by a lack of options for night life. They will be surprised to see two men or two women holding hands on Church Street, or the rainbow flag bumper sticker here and there.

The irony is of course that VT, while a rural state has far more protections than either NY or California. We don't have Governors hostile to our community (clueless, but not hostile). We have a Republican senator that sponsors ENDA, despite the lack of a Log Cabin Chapter within his own state. In Vermont we still are the only state with domestic partner benefits for state employees. We have the only statewide openly gay elected official in the country, as well as a number of other visible openly gay officials. (We have for years.) To put that in perspective, just this last year, Virginia, New Hampshire, and Ohio all had their first openly gay elected official—Ever.

Recently, the NJ supreme court said that the state cannot discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation in adoption. An event that both the gay and main stream press covered pretty extensively. In Vermont this had already happened, and same sex parent adoptions are almost common place in our community.

Beth Robinson pointed out to me that she doesn't mind the lack of attention that we get in the movement. It has so far kept the religious right out, and kept at bay most of the backlash that comes with advances in rights. She does have a point.

Why is it that no matter what Vermont does we don't get any attention? One reason is population. With somewhere over half a million people, the mayor of Philadelphia has more constituents than Howard Dean. Presidential candidates don't campaign here because no election has ever really hinged on our 3 electoral votes.

But the real reason I think, at least the more interesting one is that the GLBT culture in the United States is almost entirely urban. It is how our community came into existence. Gay people found in the city a community of people like themselves. I too did the same thing, I moved to Boston and came out. I found a culture that I belonged to, people I could identify with—hell, people I could date. People still move to large cities to be among others like themselves, and all of our organizations are based in these cities.

But the urban gay culture revealed itself to have some serious drawbacks. Urban culture at its heart has anonymity, coldness and attitude. I have always longed for a more rural experience, but at the same time want the mindset that is present in the city:

progressiveness and culture.

This is why Vermont is unique. There is no other rural area where you will find not only a community, but an absence of hostility. We are not there yet though. There are still threats of violence, still a Nancy Sheltra and still pockets of fundamentalism. We still have unsafe schools, domestic violence, alcoholism and a myriad of other problems. We have other problems Urban culture doesn't have: Geographic isolation, a lack of visible community in some more rural areas, a lack of available information of where to get help when needed.

A huge thanks should go out to everyone that helped with the OITM benefit, and to the brave souls who came out despite falling trees and unreliable electricity for the benefit on January 9th. Many thanks to Steph Pappas Experience, and Yolanda and the Plastic Family as well as our friends at Club Toast, and Seven Days for that fabulous plug. For those who didn't make it, don't worry we will do it again. Preferably in the spring.

Out in the Mountains

VERMONT'S FORUM FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER ISSUES

By subscribing now to *Out in the Mountains*, not only will you get delivery to your mailbox (in a discreet envelope), but you also help underwrite the rising costs of publishing and distributing the newspaper. We welcome any additional contributions you can make to support this and other important publishing projects. Checks should be made payable to Mountain Pride Media, and sent, along with this card, to:

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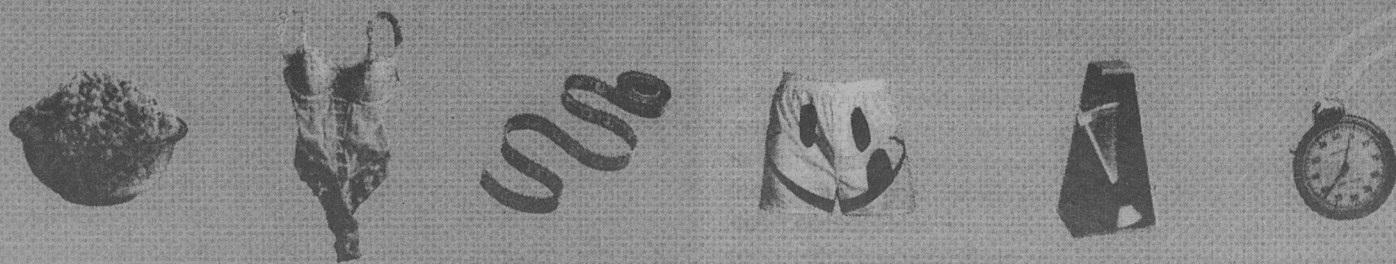
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What do you take to bed?



Whatever you take along for pleasure, consider this: We may feel safe in Vermont, but we're not immune to AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Don't take a chance...
take a condom

