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**Call for Submissions...**

I am the proud mother of an FTM son, Co-chair of PFLAG's Transgender Network, involved with the recent publication of our booklet "Our Trans Children", and active with trans issues in many ways.

I am planning to edit and publish a book of collected writings by parents, siblings, children, partners and other relatives of trans persons. More than one family member, close friends and employers are also invited. It will be similar to "Different Daughters", ed. Louise Rafkin, a book by mothers of lesbian daughters and very successful in that community. My working title is "Our Trans Loved Ones". There is no such book available for trans families.

Submissions should be positive and accepting of your loved one's trans nature, but may describe the journey getting to that place of acceptance. Writings may cover anecdotes about family reactions, the struggle to learn about and understand trans issues, your emotional reactions, dealing with other family members and friends. Families of TG, TS, CD, inter-sexed and all variations of gender benders are included.

Submissions should NOT be by trans persons, themselves, though they may assist and coach others. Submissions should be approximately 1000 - 2000 words. Poems and others lengths also considered. Prior writing experience is not required; we will assist. Send by e-mail (maryboenke@aol.com) or surface mail (Mary Boenke, 180 Bailey Blvd., Hardy, VA 24101) or call to discuss (540-890-3957). Inquiries invited.

Please re-post any place deemed appropriate.

**VCLGR COALITION NOTES**

As a community, does it feel we are suddenly under greater attack than we've seen since passage of the Anti-discrimination Law in 1992? More targeted than the ERA campaign of 1984? Do you feel at greater risk than you did before the Hate Crime Law was passed in 1987? Since Take it to the People made their first press conference on February 11th, there has been an increase in the number of incidents where the rights of GLBTQ people have been questioned and the inclusion of a GLBTQ presence challenged. Have we become too complacent with the political and social gains we have made in the past 16 years? Does it take this type of challenge to remind us that we are still a minority community whose rights can be subject to the political trends of the majority? I believe Vermont has a strong tradition of tolerance and acceptance for all its citizens. As a native Vermonter, and long-time activist, I have always felt welcome here. But we need to stand up and be counted to ensure we are always included here. Our strongest political asset has been our courage to be visible & to talk about the realities of our lives. This is a time when our voices need to be heard.

Keith E. Goslant  
 Co-Liaison

**Take It To The People (TIP):** See article on TIP in this issue of OITM. Both Co-Liaisons were present at the Statehouse when TIP made their first public press conference. The Coalition, in cooperation with other community resources, have been working closely with state officials and agencies responding to the TIP Flyer and their stated agenda. Of interest, most people seem to have ignored the TIP flyer as just an other piece of junk inserts, the same as most advertisements.

**Citizen's Initiative:** Please see separate article regarding this bill and its potential impact on our community.

**Complaint about SRS & lesbian foster parents:** Recently, the co-liaisons were informed that a mother wrote to all the legislators blasting the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) for placing her child with a lesbian couple. Rep. Nancy Sheltra was overheard in the State House calling for a complete investigation of SRS. The Commissioner of SRS, Bill Young, responded to key legislators concerning the letter. He defended the placement and stated that skill and commitment are the most important characteristics of foster parents.

house or talked with your legislator, you will want to mark Wednesday, April 15th, on your calendar. That is the date for this year's Visibility Day at the Statehouse. The Coalition is inviting all community organizations and individuals interested in the political process to join us for a day at the Statehouse. There will be an early morning, approx. 9 a.m., open reception with legislators and a tour of the Statehouse. If you are interested in participating please contact either the Coalition (888-825-4989) or the Co-Liaisons (Virginia 496-4333, Keith 454-8552). We have already received confirmations from OutRight VT, Freedom to Marry, PFLAG & OITM. Do your legislators know who you are? Do they know they have GLBTQ constituents? Do you want to know their position on issues important to you? Take this opportunity to participate in the legislative process.

**This is an election year:** We have seen the recent announcement of Bernard Rome as the GOP gubernatorial hopeful. Looking at his platform it is difficult to believe his candidacy or election would be beneficial to GLBTQ Vermonters. Mr. Rome is strongly anti-Act 60. This is where he has achieved the greatest name recognition and public support. However, the repeal of Act 60 is not his only political objective. Mr. Rome is strongly opposed to same-gender marriage and has stated he will make citizen's initiatives a central party of his campaign. He is already campaigning heavily on television so financial backing does not appear to be a concern. He is portraying himself as someone who supports and respects the local voter, something "those politicians in Montpelier" don't. As the election year progresses the Coalition will be interviewing and/or surveying the candidates for statewide office and reporting the results via OITM. As candidates, both local and statewide, solicit your support, ask them where they stand on issues. Do they support citizen's initiatives, same-gender marriage, GLBTQ positive curriculum in schools, funding for HIV/AIDS services? Please let the Coalition know the responses you receive or candidates who need more information on specific issues. Consider volunteering for campaigns, or consider running for office yourself. Also, remember our political allies and friends who are seeking re-election. They deserve our support for having supported us.

Planning has begun for our fall Town Meeting Conference, which VCLGR has hosted for the last five years. This is a time for our statewide community to come together, to attend workshops, hear dy-

amic speakers, and meet new people. This year, the Conference will be held in Burlington. We hope to have a strong showing. If you would like to be involved with the planning please call Virginia (496-4333) or our toll free # 888-825-4989.

These are some of the calls and concerns made to the Co-Liaisons: Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence: We have been contacted within the past 9 months by members of our community who were either denied, or had difficulties accessing, sexual assault and domestic violence resources. The Co-Liaisons will be scheduling a meeting with the new director of the Network to discuss these concerns. If you are interested in participating in long range planning, or are aware of any resources, please contact the Coalition (888-825-4989) or Keith (454-8552) directly. Harassment in schools: As has been reportedly in OITM, there has been a complaint of harassment filed with the Human Rights Commission. Both parties have agreed to mediation. Both Co-Liaisons will participate in the mediation process. Due to legal agreements related to the mediation process, no further details can be provided at this time. However, we need to remind GLBTQ youth and GLBT parents that there is a state law prohibiting harassment in public schools. If harassment occurs, and the school administration is unresponsive, a formal complaint can be filed with the Human Rights Commission, #828-2480. Calls for information: People have been using the new toll free number (888-825-4989) asking for information and support. We have made incredible progress in the past 16 years but there are still GLBTQ Vermonters who feel isolated and in need of support.

**WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT:** The Coalition needs volunteers & board members; we want you. The Coalition has made a commitment to working within the political system to advance, and preserve, the rights and social acceptance of Vermont's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning communities. At the last Town Meeting we talked about revising the Coalition organizational structure from a central board to regional caucuses. There seemed to support and interest in this plan. However, the most recent caucus held in Washington/Orange county had only 2 participants. For the Coalition to be truly effective and reflective of community needs, and for the Co-Liaisons to have direction, we need community involvement and input. Please, consider becoming part of the Coalition as a volunteer, a board member, organizer of a regional caucus or finance supporter. The Coalition's future depends on our community's ongoing support.

Visibility Day: If you have never visited the State-