

# I'D TURN BACK IF I WERE YOU!

This fabulous community survey begins on the previous page (21). Turn back now to find out how you could be eligible to win prizes for filling out and returning this quick questionnaire.

16 Do you feel your political views are being adequately represented by the VCLGR?

yes  no  
If no, why not?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

17 What means of communication would be beneficial in sharing information and perspectives on political and legislative issues?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

18 Are you currently a member of:

The VCLGR  Outright VT  
 VGSA  Amelia's  
 Brattleboro Area Dykes  
 Radical Faeries  Human Rights Campaign (HRC)  
 National Gay Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF)  BiNet  TRANS  
 other community-based organization: \_\_\_\_\_

19 How often do you go to a bar which is primarily gay or lesbian?

daily  weekly  bi-weekly  
 monthly  annually  never

20 Which of the following do you go to more than once a month?

Rainbow Cattle Company  
 Frontrunner  The Edge  135 Pearl  Blair's  Montreal bars or clubs  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_

21 Do you attend gay pride?

Vermont  New Hampshire  
 Boston  Montreal  Maine  
 New York  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_

22 How did you first hear about OITM?

picked it up  found it on web  
 word of mouth  referred to by hotline  referred to it by community-based organization  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_

23 How do you get OITM?

subscribe  pick it up  
 internet  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_

24 How many people read your copy?  
\_\_\_\_\_

25 Do you consult it like the yellow pages when shopping for goods/services?

yes  no

26 Are there any businesses or agencies where you would like to see OITM available?  
\_\_\_\_\_

27 What other newspapers do you read regularly?

Burlington Free Press  Times Argus  Rutland Herald  
 Brattleboro Reformer  
 Bennington Banner  Boston Globe  NY Times  USA Today  Caledonia Record  
 Valley News  Addison Independent  Vox  Seven Days  The Vermont Times  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_

28 What other GLBT publications do you read regularly?

Advocate  Out  Bay Windows  In Newsweekly  In the Life  Washington Blade  
 Curve  Girlfriends  
 Tapestry  Poz  A&U  
 Anything that Moves  Circles  
 RFD  Sojourner  GCN  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_

29 Should OITM refuse advertisements from:

Alcohol products  Tobacco products  Alcohol vendors  
 Phone sex services  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_

30 Do you prefer to have a health care professional who is GLBT?

yes  no  
If no, why not?  
\_\_\_\_\_

NAME (necessary for drawing) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

31 Have you ever patronized a business because you have seen it advertised in OITM?

yes  no  
Which one/s?  
\_\_\_\_\_

32 Do you own a computer?

yes  no

33 Do you have Internet access?

yes  no

34 Which of the following places do you visit more than once a year?

Montréal  New York  
 Boston  Provincetown  
 Ogunquit  Michigan Womyn's Music Festival  
 Québec City  San Francisco  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_

35 What would you like to see more of in OITM?  
\_\_\_\_\_

36 What would you like to see less of in OITM?  
\_\_\_\_\_

37 Do you feel OITM adequately represents your community?

yes  no  
If no, how can we do so?  
\_\_\_\_\_

38 Do you like OITM's layout?

yes

Care to elaborate? Send along a note and tell us everything you think we need to know:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Everything to Gain

BY DONNA WILLIAMSON

Sandra lives in a tiny, isolated Georgia town. She has lived there all her life, as has her mother, her children, and her grandchildren. She is 68, and spends her time visiting her mom in the assisted care housing, reading, going to church, and occasionally caring for her grandchildren. Typical small-town stuff in a typical golden years life, you think? Well, you'd be very mistaken.

Sandra discovered rather late in life that her true emotional and sexual orientation is lesbian. And she feels so alone, isolated in a world where people think they know her story inside and out, surrounded by openly heterosexual, homophobic neighbors, relatives, and friends. The one person who knows is her long-time best friend, a minister's wife, with whom Sandra has shared some passionate interludes, but who has no inclination to give up heterosexual privilege, no matter how drawn she is to Sandra's desire and devotion. And her friend is terrified that anyone could know about either her or Sandra.

Life seems to close on Sandra more every day. She feels a hollowness inside and is incredibly lonely. She only knows two other lesbians, and they live far away; though they are good friends, and they call her fairly often, they have busy lives so very far away. Every day getting up is harder to do, and she begins to wonder why she even bothers. She cries a lot, but tries hard to keep her spirits up, learning to use her new computer and finding some pleasure in email. But the isolation and loneliness persist, until one day, a packet arrives from her friends from so far away.

The packet contains information about an organization called Golden Threads and it contains letters (unidentified) from people just like her!! At last she knows for sure that there are others, women who have discovered late in life that they were unhappy for so long because they were trying to live a life that didn't fit them, that they have found friendship and companionship and even new love through this correspondence service.

Her hands tremble as she writes her self-description. Will anyone want to write to her? Will she make any new friends? She dares not even hope to meet a lover, though that thought lingers temptingly at the back of her mind. She puts the letter in the mail to Golden Threads, and waits tremulously and with great anticipation to see who will answer her lonely cry. She also writes letters to several of the

women that she has "met" in the pages of the Golden Threads newsletter.

Finally, the long-anticipated day arrives when her postal carrier brings her first letters from new Golden Threads friends. One from a woman named Jo especially catches her interest, and she rushes to her computer, anxious to make further contact.

After numerous letters and telephone calls, Sandra visited Jo. The weekend visit turned into a three week stay, and finally Sandra excitedly called her friends to let them know that she and Jo were going to Georgia for a brief visit to collect some clothes and tie up some loose ends. Who knows how long this "visit" will last!

A lifeline for many women like Sandra, Golden Threads provides friendship, companionship, and even new love for older lesbians. You can contact Golden Threads, billed as the "Discreet Contact Publication for Lesbian Women over 50, and younger," by mail at PO Box 65, Richford, VT 05476-0065, by e-mail at GOLDENTRED@aol.com, or on the web at <http://members.aol.com/goldentred/index.htm>

(Note: Although Sandra is a real person, her name and details about her life have been changed to protect her privacy.)

### "Queer" Wedding

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gift registries.

A consultation with Chef Rick of New England Culinary Institute, led to a three-tiered vanilla wedding cake with Batgirl and Mother Nature adorning the top. Travis Shore was secured to perform the ceremony in the role of a Native American medicine man, and two favorite childhood songs comprised the musical selections.

Finally the "big day" arrived and shortly after dinner, a rare moment of silence fell over the cafeteria, signaling the commencement of the ceremony. With some last minute prompting from Amy's best man, the wedding singer, Chuck Hussain, clad in a striking '70s disco ensemble, burst into a spectacular rendition of "All by Myself."

Accompanied by organist, Justin Hoy, the song progressed as the "flower" girl, Rachel Figura, led the rest of the wedding party into the "church," dropping multi-colored feathers from a clear, plastic bowl to mark a trail. After everyone successfully reached the altar, Shore gave a moving sermon about the current state of affairs within the college, drawing great applause.

The marriage of Alexia Blankenship and Amy Needleman failed to dispel any of the political questions which shroud the college. However, it did bring momentary relief and fun into the lives of students, perhaps too diverse for their own good. Right now, that is the only thing that matters.

CUT THIS OUT AND SEND IT TO US. IT WON'T DO US, OR YOU,  
ANY GOOD LAYING BESIDE YOUR TOILET. ☺