

OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS

Established in 1986

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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 *Out in the Mountains*. 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.

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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EDITORIAL

Vermont Must Prepare for Attack from the Right

Imagine if you will for a moment, turning on the television and seeing an ad about how a group of out-of-state homosexuals are taking advantage of a liberal supreme court to further their agenda of getting special rights at the expense of hard-working Vermonters with families to support.

As hard as that is to imagine it is not that impossible. If the marriage battle moves from the courts to the legislature or the "The People" this is the type of attack that will become a mainstay in the Vermont media. In Hawaii and Alaska, the right wing has been funneling money in to amend state constitutions to make same sex marriage unconstitutional. The money is being spent on advertising and PR to show gay people as seeking special rights, as outsiders, as less than human, as the cause of the breakdown of the family. This is the same attack that was used successfully in Maine to repeal the hard won gay rights law.

In Vermont, Take It To The People has already spent a great deal of money despite the very small number of people who will actually admit to being a member of this group. TIP has been tutored by experts on fighting "the homosexual agenda" from the Catholic and Mormon churches, two of the big players in the fight against gay marriage in Hawaii. Right now, this fight is just barely getting started and TIP will be getting a great deal of money as this issue heats up and becomes one of swaying the opinion of Vermonter's against GLBT people.

In Maine, the right was able to hone its message and to figure out how to exploit the fears of the voters. Vermonters will need to pay very close attention to Maine, because the question was overwhelmingly defeated in Portland, but in the rural parts

of the state, enough people came out to carry the repeal statewide. The HRC and the NGLTF which helped in that battle proved that the national GLBT movement doesn't have a clue when it comes to organizing in rural areas.

Vermont has a few things that Maine did not have. We have a generally progressive population which is interested in preserving rights. We have a statewide nonprofit paper which strives to be the forum of its community. We have a strong community and strong organizations. But these groups, Outright, Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force, Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights and *Out In the Mountains* are going to need as much support and participation as we can get in the next few years. When the right-wing steps up its activity in an area, violence increases, and this means that the work for safe schools and for safety in general will become more difficult and will further stretch our already limited resources. Now, more than ever, our community needs our organizations and our organizations need our community.

I want to take a minute to respond to the AIDSride issue that I addressed last month. While I think Dan Palotta is an opportunist, the people who expend their time and energy raising money for the Fenway Community Health Center are acting beautifully and with their hearts in the right place. All acts that are done to help people in our community should be commended and I apologize if my editorials had made anyone with this goal feel attacked. I would hate to think that any-

one gave up volunteering or fundraising for a cause because of anything I said.

OITMnews...

■ A BIG THANK YOU to Dennis and Club Toast for hosting The Faery Home Companion OITM benefit on Pride Night. Also thanks to the performers and supporters who came out to make the event an overwhelming success.

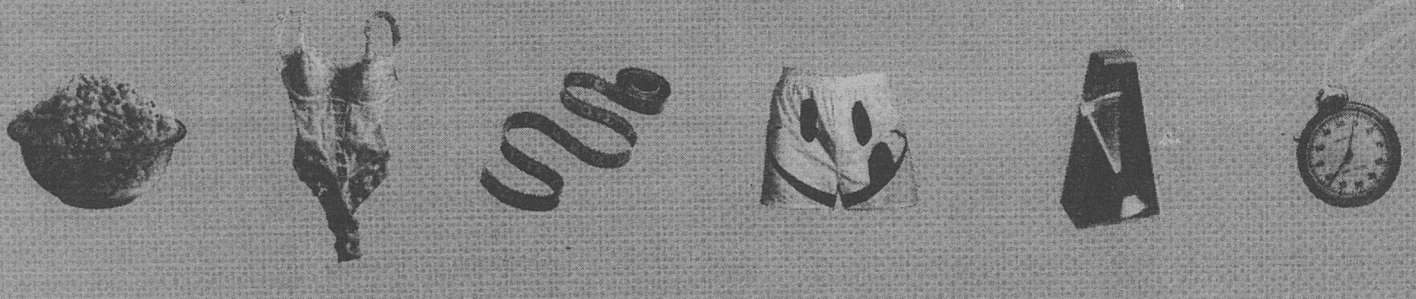
■ *Out In The Mountains* and Goddard College's GLBT alliance will sponsor an organizers summit open and free to all people who work organize and participate in the GLBT community in Vermont. People from all parts of the state are encouraged to come, people from different perspectives are encouraged to come. The all day meeting will feature a panel "Diversity in VT, what does it mean to us." and an open forum called "working together." We hope to be able to come up with a list of goals for our community to achieve over the next year. People who do not work or volunteer in the community but are interested in doing so are encouraged to come as well.

The summit will begin at 10am July 18th in the Hay barn theater at Goddard College in Plainfield. Wheelchair accessible. Please indicate need for an ASL interpreter. For more info, or to help organize, please call 865 9294.

■ OITM is need of a Brailist to donate their services so that we can continue to serve all of our readers. Please contact us at 865-9294 if you know anyone who can help us out.

■ Become a Part of *Out In The Mountains*, Help your community, and get paid for it! OITM is looking for advertising representatives to sell ads for Vermont's fastest growing Newspaper. Full or part time, no experience necessary. Must be self motivated, personable. Does not need to live in Burlington. FMI call 802 865 9294.

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

Vermont AIDS Hotline 1 800 882 AIDS

TTY 1 800 319 3141