



MOUNTAIN PRIDE MEDIA

To OITM's Readers:

All of us at Mountain Pride Media are very proud of the continued growth and improvement in *Out in the Mountains*. The participation of each additional volunteer brings a new strength, a new voice, and deepens our reflection of the complete community. *Out in the Mountains* is fundamentally a volunteer organization (though we'd be more than happy to pay ad salespeople - at competitive rates!), and all of us currently working on and in support of the paper acknowledge our debt to those who preceded us, who founded, nurtured, and struggled to develop the strong platform upon which we continue to build and improve.

As always, the driving force behind the paper is its editor, and we all benefit from the dedication of a creative, bright, passionate man who we fully expect to play the traditional role of lightning rod in the community for the paper's exploration of uncomfortable issues that challenge, inform, and represent us to ourselves and others. But the creativity and commitment at OITM don't end with Chris Moes; Barbara Dozetos, Don Eggert, and Tracy Komons share the sleepless nights and the stresses of satisfying dizzying deadlines. And long-term stalwarts Steven West and David Grist are joined by David Gramling, Micheal Albero, and Lenna Cumberbatch in consistent, steady support. If it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a community to put out this paper, and we extend our thanks to all who participate in making *Out in the Mountains* a success.

As we take stock of our past year and look ahead to the next, the Board of Directors of Mountain Pride Media is dedicated to improving the professionalism of the organization - ourselves as a Board, the staff, and the volunteers working on our behalf. Our mission is to facilitate constructive communication in our community, and this needs to extend beyond just printing a great newspaper. To these ends, the Board has established Guidelines of Responsibilities for Board Members, and we are developing personnel policies for our staff and volunteers that stress professional behavior of the highest ethical standards, constructive participation in the community, and respect in our interactions with all those in our community.

Mountain Pride Media lingers at the crossroads of moving from a grass-roots organization fully dependent on the continuing commitment of volunteers to one with a more professional framework providing the stable environment necessary to support the effort required to produce *Out in the Mountains* every month. It's a threshold we relish crossing. *Out in the Mountains* has more painful growth and development ahead of it, but with the active participation of the community it serves, the paper will thrive and flourish as the primary communication vehicle for GLBT Vermonters.

Thanks for your support. And keep reading!
Bennett Law, President
Board of Directors
Mountain Pride Media

WE'RE SO CRAMPED!

Out in the Mountains has outgrown the space that it shares with Outright VT at its Burlington location on the corner of College and N. Winooski Sts.

We're asking our readers to help us find low-cost or donated office space in the Burlington area that is preferably wheelchair accessible and includes available parking.

Any leads or ideas that can help our search committee will be graciously accepted at:

(802) 865-9294 or oitm@together.net.

OP-ED: Dean's No Opinion, No Answer is Wrong Answer

BY DEAN CORREN

The interview with Howard Dean (OITM May, 1998) let him off too easily. Not having an opinion on whether lesbians and gays should have equal civil rights, marriage or otherwise, is an opinion - a very low one.

Using the courts as a dodge is unacceptable. The courts have their job to do, executive and legislative elected officials have theirs. Basic political responsibility should require a clear position. Actual leadership would require much, much more.

He puts a chummier face on it, but morally, Howard Dean's position (especially to the degree expressed by his Attorney General's brief which could only be described as homophobic) is no different from his opponents'. While their positions might be summed up as, "We're not sure we like you enough to afford you the same rights and responsibilities as everyone else in our civil society," the Governor's position is "I'm not sure you're worth the price to my re-election campaign."

In the interview the Governor stated, "Since nothing is going to happen on this issue in the legislature until the court speaks there's no particular reason for me to take a public position on it." His attempt to link whether he makes his po-

sitions public to the actions of other branches of government is illogical and insulting. Failing any sense of responsibility on his part, the insistence of OITM and its readers' voting power should give him the "particular reason" he needs to decide to make his position public. Would environmental groups accept a refusal to take a position on clearcutting,

NARAL a demur from supporting or opposing abortion, or even Wall Street a "no opinion yet" on capital gains taxes?

Clearly, Dean is either still waiting for the polling data to tell him his position, or he's seen it, and knows you wouldn't like it. But on an issue of fundamental civil rights, shouldn't "no position" or "secret position" be just as bad as the wrong position? The Governor is either with the GLBT community or he's against it. So far, he sure isn't with it.

Similarly, on the issue of physician-assisted suicide, he tries to take no position. As the

author of the bill that would ensure the right of the terminally ill to decide when to end their lives and have the competent, caring professional support in that decision, I find his head-in-the-sand support of the current situation similarly immoral.

It's a lot like abortion rights with a critical difference: unlike abortion, the Supreme Court left it entirely to the states, so we must act.

Government can't "stay out" of such decisions when it is the fear of

prosecution by government that stops many caregivers from helping when they know it is the right thing to do, and drives them into secrecy when their moral drive to care for their patients exceeds their personal fear. Clarifying the legality of physician assisted suicide, while enacting careful procedures and protections, would end the status quo of secrecy, stigma, potential for abuse, and the immense unnecessary physical and psychological suffering for patients and their families.

Here too, no position is just no good.

The Governor is either with the GLBT community or he's against it. So far, he sure isn't with it.

20.s - A Project of Men's Health Project and Vermont CARES

BY THOMAS HENNING

Twenty something. The Generation X crowd. The generation obsessed with fast, yet politically correct, lifestyles. Throw being gay into the mix and you have a generation obsessed with fast, yet politically correct, lifestyles dressed by Tom Ford or Banana Republic. That's the rhetoric at any rate.

I grew up in rural Vermont with a father raised on a farm in Iowa and a Mother raised in a villa in Athens. I have three brothers, one passed away close to six years ago. My experiences make me unique. I don't feel that I am like the "other boys". I don't think any of us do. In fact, we are unique and we recognize the fact that we are different. We have distinct perspectives and opinions on being in our twenties, being men who have sex with men, and HIV/AIDS, to name just a few.

The young queer men's community is different from the older queer men's community. Our experiences are no where near alike, our comings of age are truly different. I think you would be hard pressed to find someone who would not agree that becoming sexually active in the late 80's and early 90's is drastically different than

those same experiences in the 70's.

As young men, who have sex with men, we need to have open discussions around all aspects of HIV and sex. We have to examine our practices and ourselves and determine just how committed we are to stunting the growth of this epidemic.

It is the younger community that is fast becoming the highest group at risk. HIV incidence-the number of new infections within a group is greater in young men who have sex with men (YMSM). I was blown away to read that YMSM accounted for 35% of ALL reported AIDS cases through December 1994, not to mention that AIDS cases in rural areas are on the rise. I am not down with that, sister, I'll tell you right now. We don't need the studies to show that a major reason that MSMs are becoming infected with HIV is due to high-risk sexual behavior. I don't know about you but "Trojan Man" has not been riding up on his stallion whispering sweet prevention nothings in my ear every time I'm hot for a man. Maybe he should be according to the government (I know not always a great source but pull up a chair sweetie 'cause this info is solid) As of 1995, the twenty-some-

thing community, accounted for over 100,000 AIDS cases in this country. There is a need for us to come together and address these problems, see how that works, and that's why we've formed 20.s. It is an initiative to address the needs of 22-30 year old men who have sex with men, and I'm psyched. 20.s will be a program designed and driven by us. That means we are in charge, baby. We, as twenty-somethings, are accustomed to being told what is best for us by our older counterparts. We have all been there and we have all done that. With 20.s we have the opportunity to come together, talk about our needs and then deliver the goods. HIV and AIDS may not be our first priority, but in 20.s we have the real opportunity to establish what needs are important to us and then, together, find real ways to address them. Let get together and talk about us, and you know that's one of our favorite topics.

Alright, I'm starting to get a nose bleed so I'm stepping off my soapbox. I know what you may be thinking. I can hear you now. "Puh-