

EDITORIAL

OITM Hits Puberty, The Damage Appears to Be Minimal

Excerpt from the debut issue...

page 3 • February 1986 • Out in the Mountains

# Finding our voices

For too long, lesbians and gay men have been denied our voice. Our existence has been defined by others - the medical, psychiatric, religious and legal authorities gained power over us through their ability to name us. The names they called us were neither pretty nor true - "sick, disturbed, immoral and dangerous." Their names kept us isolated from each other, ashamed of our own selves, and frightened of the world around us.

Somehow, almost miraculously, that has changed. In the decade and a half since Stonewall, lesbians and gay men have taken power over our own lives by defining our own existence. We have changed our own, and society's, perception of who we are.

As far as we have come, however, there is still far to go. Lesbians and gay men still face the challenge of living in a world which is essentially homophobic

and sexist. The reality of life for most lesbians and gay men still involves a significant amount of fear - fear of being discriminated against, fear of physical violence, fear of being found out.

Yet, against that background, there is a significant amount of joy - the joy of being part of a loving and caring lesbian and gay community, the joy of discovering new ways of living and loving, the joy of simply finding and recognizing each other. Our community is full of creative, talented, dedicated and wonderful people. Anything which ties us together is a step forward: a way of fighting the myths and lies about us, a way of building a stronger community, a way of giving strength and hope to ourselves.

"Out in the Mountains" looks forward to being part of that community building

process in Vermont. We recognize the special challenges lesbians and gay men face in a small, rural state - as well as the special opportunities.

We hope that you will think of this as your newspaper -- whether you're just now "coming out" to yourself or you're "out" on the evening news. As the paper grows and evolves, it will be up to you to shape and mold it to fit your needs and concerns.

We make no special claim to speak for all lesbian and gay Vermonters. What we hope to provide is a mechanism for your voices to be heard.

The diversity of our experience is incredible. The voice of our community is not the voice of any small group, but rather a rich and varied, sometimes discordant, cacophony of countless men and women. We hope you'll join with us and add your voice to that beautiful chorus.

## RECONFIRMING OUR MISSION

At first glance, our making a big deal out of a 13th birthday may seem like a grandstanding cry for attention. But then, having reached its teens, what else would you expect from our child?

The paper has grown by leaps and bounds from infancy to adolescence and is looking quite mature these days. This is the natural progression. Each stage is vital and presents opportunities to develop and grow. Its next challenge will be learning to act as grown-up as it looks.

Thirteen is recognized in many cultures and religions as the beginning of adulthood. We are confirmed or *bat mitzvah*-ed. We take charge, at least symbolically, of our lives and our futures at this juncture. We examine the choices our parents have made for us since birth; confirming those we like and fighting like hell against the rest.

In that spirit, OITM is renewing the commitment made to the Vermont GLBT community in 1986.

It will continue to provide a forum

for our collective voice, striving to make sure each of our diverse accents is heard.

It will keep an eye on our future, never losing its respect for the past.

It will work to overcome the obstacles we face as citizens of a rural state with a scattered population, remembering what we like about Vermont's non-urban and open spaces.

It will be the community's paper, welcoming the participation of all of us. ▼

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.

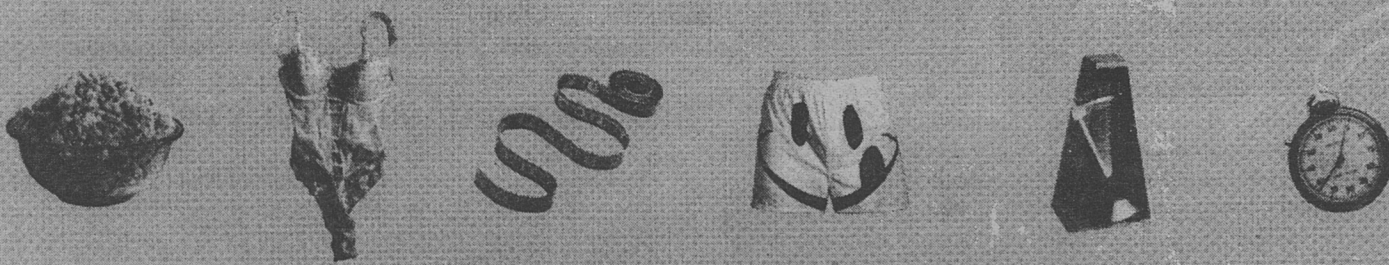
Articles, letters, and artwork should be sent to us by the deadlines indicated in each month's calendar. This is normally in the middle of the month prior to publication (i.e. mid-February for the March issue). We encourage and implore our readers to do what they can to make OITM a paper which truly 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 on Bridge Street in Richmond, Vermont. The subscription rate is \$20 per year within the United States of America. ©1999, *Out in the Mountains*

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# What do you take to bed?



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take a condom.



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