

EDITORIAL

This Continues Our Test of the Emergency Broadcast System

Last month, our front page featured a wake-up call about a bill in our legislature that would define marriage as a union between one man and one woman. While we were fairly certain that the bill would never again be seen outside the committee room where it now gathers dust, we thought a reality check was in order.

While we are fortunate to live in the most liberal state in the union — the one where the GLBT community is better protected by legislation than in any other — we must stay alert. Although legislation of this type has been introduced in Montpelier many times over the past several years and never gotten anywhere, it was important that we take a long look into the eyes of the opposition — or at least at their names.

Complacency is, I fear, our most dangerous enemy at the moment. I'm almost grateful that a large and financially sound organization like we all heard from last month in the "Aloha, Vermont" flyer has helped to sound the alarm. I've watched over the past few weeks as even the most comfortable and sleepy of us has jumped to attention. The phone at the office has rung off the hook and the email box is full of "What are you going to do about this? What do we do now?"

Well, first of all, a deserving

few amongst us should be taking a fraction of a moment to say, "I told you so." The deafening silence up until now from the opposition wasn't fooling them for second. They've been cajoling

towns for the right to marry the person they love. This is no surprise and certainly no overnight sensation to any of these people.

Stop for just a second and think about the uncountable hours

nicer people than I am. But I'll say it for them. They told us so; they said our opponents in the struggle to gain equality would not go quietly into the night.

Not only were they right, but they also have a plan for what to do next, and they didn't just put it together two weeks ago when the now-infamous 'Aloha Letter' hit Vermont or even last fall at the Supreme Court — the last time we all got excited and ran around asking, "What do we do now?"

So, by all means, let's capitalize on the galvanizing effect this assault from the right has had upon us, but let's use our heads — and our valuable existing resources. I've said it before and I know I'll say it again: we must stop trying to reinvent the wheel. We didn't acquire the rights we enjoy now by osmosis. There are systems in place. There are many people within our community who know what to do next, so when we ask that question, we should be asking them.

Get involved, participate, donate money, educate yourself so you can educate others, and thank your lucky stars that we have accessible resources available and do not have to start from scratch. This is not the beginning of the fight by a long shot, but your assistance in the current battle will, most assuredly, be welcomed. ▼

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and begging and pleading for the rest of us to get off our duffs and pay attention.

If "What do we do now?" is the question on your mind, then perhaps you should ask the dedicated, under-funded, and over-worked group known as the Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force what they have done already. They have been working on this issue since 1995 — two years before the lawsuit was filed. Speaking of the lawsuit, ask any one of the six people who have endured the tedium and scrutiny that has gone along with their decision to sue their respective

the attorneys have invested in this effort. This isn't just a job for Susan Murray, Beth Robinson, or Mary Bonauto. They are, I'm sure, eating, dreaming, and breathing this topic more than they care to admit. It's also not without the support of the law firm of Langrock Sperry and Wool that this *pro bono* work is happening.

So, having said all of that, I should add that you aren't likely to hear anything even faintly self-righteous from any of these people. They won't say, "I told you so." Knowing them, they might not even have thought it — they're

OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS

Established in 1986

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*Out in the Mountains* was founded in 1986 with start up money from the Haymarket People's Fund. Current funding sources include the Green Mountain Fund for Popular Struggle, Samara Foundation of Vermont, Haymarket People's Fund, and individual private donations.

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.

*Out in the Mountains* (ISSN 1081-5562) is published on the last Tuesday of each month by Mountain Pride Media, Inc. It is printed at The News and Citizen in Morrisville, VT.

The newspaper maintains offices on Bridge Street in Richmond, Vermont.  
The subscription rate is \$20 per year within the United States of America.  
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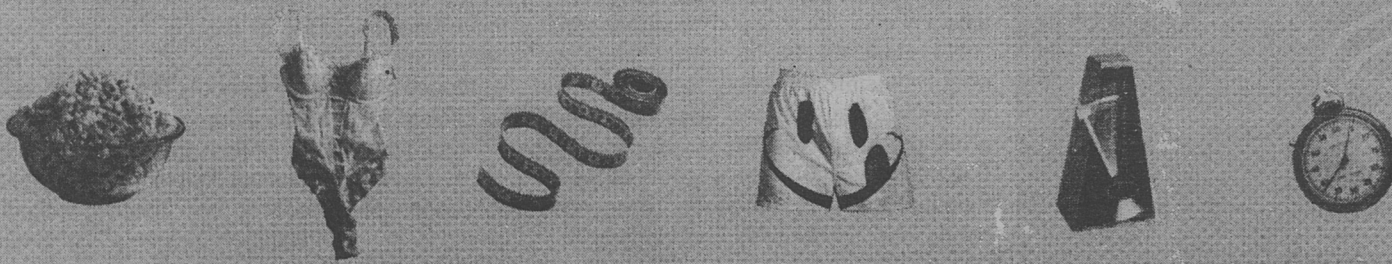
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We may feel safe in Vermont, but we're not immune to AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Don't take a chance...  
take a condom



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