



letters

OITM, PO Box 1078, Richmond, VT 05477-1078 or oitm@together.net

Out in the Mountains welcomes your letters. Although we will withhold names from printing upon request, the letter must be accompanied by a verifiable name and address in order to be considered for publication. We try to print every letter we receive, but reserve the right to edit for space and clarity. Letters are also subject to the editorial policy stated in the masthead.

Clarification and Corrections

Editor:

I am writing on behalf of the Same-Sex Domestic Violence subcommittee of the Chittenden County Domestic Violence Task Force. We want to respond to several pieces of inaccurate information related to victim services in "Finding a Way Out: Part II of a Guide for Victims of Domestic Violence."

First, Ms. Miller states that the Same-Sex Domestic Violence subcommittee has a list of recommended therapists. While we can provide a limited referral list, we do not recommend one therapist over another. Individuals can also contact Women Helping Battered Women for this list of referrals.

Second, Ms. Miller states that the Vermont Center for Victim Crime Services provides counseling. While the center does provide some compensation, up to \$50 per session, for counseling, they do not provide counseling services. As Ms. Miller states, eligibility for compensation requires that the victim contact the police and that the police find probable cause.

Our final point is about the Abuse Prevention Act. We want to clarify that this Act does apply to casually dating couples who are under 18 years old, and to encourage anyone who feels that they need a Relief from Abuse Order to contact their local domestic violence shelter at 800-228-7395, your county courts, or the 24-hour hotline for obtaining Relief from Abuse Orders at 800-540-9990.

Kim Selig
Chittenden County Domestic Violence Task Force
Burlington, VT

Sharing Mary's Pain

Editor:

On May 4, 1999, Mary Schroyer wrote a letter to newspapers around the state concern-

ing the hate mail she received due to her public support of "traditional marriage." I am disturbed by her receipt of hate mail and do not in any way support this type of behavior. We should all be able to openly and respectfully discuss our differences on issues.

I certainly know how Mary must have felt when she read her mail, because, as a member of the gay and lesbian community, I feel the same way almost every day when I read the letters to the editor that continually degrade my lifestyle choices. It is very painful to read letters written by people who do not know me, but yet condemn me. Last Sunday, a letter in the paper stated, "Every great civilization's destruction was directly preceded by widespread homosexual promiscuity and its acceptance." I am certainly not out to destroy our society. Just like other productive members of our state, I work, I pay taxes, and I am very involved in the community, both gay and straight.

Not only do anti-gay letters to the Editor appear regularly, but some newspapers themselves support anti-gay positions as well. On April 25, 1999, the *Burlington Free Press* wrote an editorial supporting the position that gays and lesbians should not be granted the right to legally marry. They propose that we should accept something similar to marriage, but not quite marriage itself. That reminded me of the doctrine of "separate but equal" (which was subsequently struck down by the courts) in the treatment of African Americans back in the 1950s. Then, it was okay to grant one group of people different civil rights than another group of people. I had thought that we had come a long way since then, but it seems that the *Free Press* is advocating that we return to those separatist values. It is most disturbing to me that we are considered second class citizens by one of the largest newspapers in Vermont.

I hope that Mary and others will think about, and equally condemn, the hate letters that appear in newspapers across Vermont

almost every day attacking my lifestyle and who I am.

Virginia Renfrew
Montpelier, VT

Don't Need to Clean the Gene Pool

Editor:

The Food and Drug Administration is trying to prevent gay men from having children.

At its Human Tissue Seminar on April 8, 1999 the FDA announced proposed regulations which would make it illegal for gay men to be sperm donors, block medical assistance for infertility and almost eliminate the possibility of having biological children. Outlining the regulations was the FDA's chief architect of the proposal, Ruth Solomon, MD, Director of the Human Tissue Program, Office of Blood and Research and Review, Center for Biologics Evaluation and research (CBER) of the FDA.

The regulations, due to be finalized by the end of 1999, will do two things. First gay men would be banned from being anonymous sperm donors. Under these regulations heterosexual men may have multiple sexual partners and be acceptable. However, gay men in a long-term mutually monogamous relationship would not. Current fertility industry standards require anonymous sperm donations to be frozen and quarantined for six months, then donors are retested for HIV before their sperm is released for inseminations. The HIV window period; the time after infection until an HIV antibody test is positive, is one to three months. In 14 years of using the HIV antibody test, the Centers for Disease Control could only point to one case of a man who appeared healthy and went beyond this window period. He did not turn positive for 2 years. He was heterosexual and specialized tests conclusively showed he was infected by his

continued on page six

INSIDE

oitm

sections

- Health & Wellbeing14
- Gayity23
- Arts & Entertainment29

departments

AUTUMN Travel

PAGE 36

- Letters3
- Op-Ed4
- World News Briefs.....5
- health source.....18
- the source19
- community compass.....35
- calendar34

columns

- Skeeter Bites8
- Crow's Caws9
- Legal Briefs11
- Progeny12
- 20 Something13
- Dyke Psyche.....16
- Faith Matters17
- Stonehenge to Stonewall.....22
- Cybershark38

Whether you're buying or selling Real Estate



For the personal attention and professional service you deserve

Call Carrie Gelfan

218 Main St., Brattleboro, Vermont 05301
(802) 257-1111 or (800) 882-6364



inspirations

hand-blown glass • aromatherapy candles
scenic Vermont photographs

Taft Corners Shopping Center, No. 37
Williston • 872-8891

subscribe

By subscribing **now** to *Out in the Mountains*, not only will you get delivery to your mailbox (in an envelope), you also **help** underwrite the rising costs of publishing and distributing the newspaper. We welcome any additional contributions you can make to support **your community forum.**

name _____
address _____
town _____ state _____ zip _____
email _____ phone _____

- 1 year (\$20) 2 years (\$35) low income (\$10)
- Contribution \$ _____ (thanks!)

Make checks payable to Mountain Pride Media

VERMONT'S FORUM FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER ISSUES
OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS
PO Box 1078 • Richmond, VT 05477-1078



www.vtpride.org

A horse of a different color.