

# THE MILLENNIUM MARCH ON WASHINGTON:

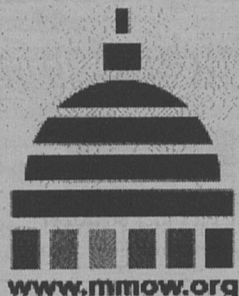
## What's All the Fighting about?

We in Vermont don't seem to be talking very much about the Millennium March on Washington. Given the controversy and strong opinions surrounding the event, it is difficult for someone just coming into it to get to the facts and form an opinion of her own. In an effort to start a local discussion, this issue of OITM offers you some groundwork.

On these pages you will find press releases from inside sources on both sides of the issue. First is the announcement of the March date from the organizers themselves, then the Call for an Open Process from the Ad Hoc Committee of the same name. Next we have a press release from the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches outlining their continued support of the March. Finally, there is a letter from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Executive Director, Kerry Lobel in which she resigns from her position on the board of directors for the March. We urge readers to consider the source in all of these pieces and realize that this is just the tip of the iceberg. In future issues, we'll pursue the topic further and we welcome input from you.

### From MMOW organizers:

#### Millennium March On Washington Set For April 30, 2000



www.mmow.org

In the Year 2000,  
March comes in April.

Organizers for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community's fourth March on Washington today [April 30, 1998] announced the event will be held on April 30, 2000. The March aims to articulate the concerns of our community and focus our nation's attention on our quest for equality in all aspects of life.

"We expect one million of my gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered sisters and brothers and our enlightened allies to stand on the Mall and call upon our nation to live out the promise of equality under the law," said the Rev. Troy D. Perry, long-time gay activist and founder of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.

Organizers took steps this week to begin incorporation of a non-profit entity to handle planning, production and financial arrangements. Efforts are underway to make sure this is a democratic process where all segments of our community are represented.

"The Millennium March promises to continue its bold commitment to all people of color. I am hearing from Native Americans, Asians, African Americans, Latinos and Pacific Islanders who are ecstatic about participating," said Martin Ornelas-Quintero, executive director of the Latino Latina/o, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Organization.

Organizers also expressed their support today for the "Equality Begins at Home" actions on all 50 state capitals set for 1999.

"The Equality Begins at Home" actions enjoy the full and enthusiastic support of the organizers of the Millennium March," said Elizabeth Birch, executive director of the Human Rights Campaign. "It's imperative that we focus our energies as a movement at both the state and federal level. These two events will complement each other as together we build the momentum to achieve equality in the next century."

"I am glad to see both of these events moving towards a more collaborative process," said Jubi Headley, executive director of the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum. "This is a positive sign of progress."

"Our greatest hope as a movement lies in our commitment to work together for social change. Our passion for justice and our pledge to lift up every voice has the potential to transform town halls, state houses, and our nation's capitol," said Kerry Lobel, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

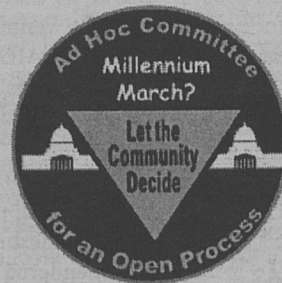
"I remain hopeful the the "Equality Begins at Home" actions and the Millennium March will help build our grassroots moment at the state, local and national level," said Dianne Hard-Garcia, executive director of the Lesbian Gay Rights Lobby of Texas and co-chair of the Federation of Statewide Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Organizations. "I believe that working together these actions can strengthen the state and federal organizations that fight daily to end discrimination.

Paula Ettlbrick, legislative director of the Empire State Pride Agenda and the other co-chair of the Federation added, "The Equality Begins At Home actions will fortify our strength at the statewide level and set the stage for the millennium march event in Washington in 2000."

"Now that there is a growing consensus to gather in Washington, DC, in April, 2000, let's decide how that time can be used, not just to inspire each other, but to change the minds and hearts of friends and foes alike," said Dr. Mel White, noted author and UFMCC's Minister of Justice. "Let's use the "soul force" teachings of Gandhi and King to guide us. Their commitment to the principles of militant nonviolent resistance to injustice gave moral authority to the civil rights movements that they led. What a wonderful opportunity we have to rediscover those principles as we prepare for this new millennium."▼

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### From the Ad Hoc Committee for an Open Process: Call for an Open Process



The Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender people of the USA have organized three national marches on Washington, in 1979, 1987, and in 1993. These marches raised the visibility and advanced the issues of our communities.

But the real importance and success of these mobilizations can be measured by the effect they had on our own communities. Grassroots organizing raised issues locally, spawned lasting coalitions and turned many of us into activists.

On state and regional levels, new links were forged. Nationally, constituency organizing resulted in the emergence of national organizations and networks. The marches on Washington have been unique organizing tools that helped build a larger, stronger and more unified movement.

#### GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY AND INCLUSION ARE KEY

Each march was very different as were the times during which they were organized. However, each one was run democratically with mass, grassroots involvement, and each followed a similar organizing scenario. A committee (which dissolved after its work was done) organized a national meeting to which representatives of all lesbian and gay (and later expanded to include bisexual and transgender) organizations — local, state and regional as well as national — were welcomed. Organizational representatives voted, but otherwise, all in attendance were invited to participate in these open meetings.

Here, the primary decision whether to have the event was made first, followed by deliberations on the name of the event, the politics, structure, leadership, and the organizing strategy. Then, throughout the country, open, democratically run meetings selected delegates, with mandates to include women and people of color, to a national steering committee, the highest decision-making body.

Constituencies were also represented in the national steering committee and every national organization in our community was invited to join. Many of these meetings were at times contentious and chaotic. But in the end the decisions were accepted

AD HOC, P14

## DID YOU KNOW...?

...that in Vermont...  
GLBTQ high school students are:

- ▼ nearly 3 times more likely to attempt suicide.
- ▼ 4 times more likely to use cocaine.
- ▼ 3 times more likely to use inhalants.
- ▼ 3 times more likely to become pregnant or get someone pregnant.
- ▼ nearly 3 times more likely to skip school because of feeling unsafe

\* In a 1997 VT Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) comparison between students reporting same sex activity and students reporting opposite sex activity.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO...?

find out more about becoming an Outright youth group facilitator or speakers bureau member at our upcoming open house to be held on:

Tues. Sept 14, 4-7PM

Come tour our facilities, enjoy light refreshments, & meet with staff & current volunteers to learn more about these exciting volunteer opportunities.

For more information call us at 1 (800)GLB-CHAT/865-9677 or e-mail at Outrightvt@aol.com

RSVP is encouraged but not required.

People of color, bisexuals and transgender people are encouraged to attend.



Resources for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender & questioning youth and the people who work with them