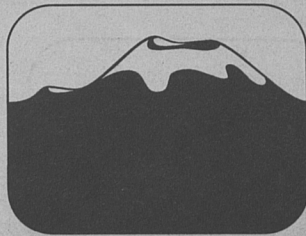


opinion

When We Speak Out



VOICES FROM THE MOUNTAINS
by holly puterbaugh

As I began to write this, I was trying to think of a way to address our entire community. GLBTQYA is all-inclusive, but a mouth full. Queer is offensive to some, especially older members of the community. Gay/lesbian leaves out some very important people. So, I have chosen to use "gay," but mean this, with all of my heart and all of my soul, to include everyone in our community.

Occasionally, especially during National Coming Out Week, I hear questions such as, "If they want to live like that, that's okay, but why talk about it?" "Why do

those people keep bringing up this subject?" "Why do those people need to talk about this?" "Why can't they just live their lives and be quiet?"

Important questions worth thinking about. Why is it important for us to speak out? There are many answers to this question.

Until we began to speak out, laws governing gay lives were made by straight people who were ignorant of us.

When we speak out or come out of our closets, straight people will learn that they know many gays.

When we speak out, people

will learn that "It's not okay to degrade people."

When we speak out, people will realize that there are gays among their coworkers, friends, neighbors, and family.

When we speak out, people will realize that there are gays in all walks of lives including teachers, mechanics, doctors, nurses, restaurant workers, lawyers, clergy, plumbers, grocery store clerks, and computer specialists.

When we speak out, young people will grow up knowing that they are not alone.

When we speak out as we grow

older, young people will have more role models.

When we speak out, people will learn not to label other people.

When speak out, people will realize that telling anti-gay jokes is offensive.

When we speak out, those who cannot speak out will have a voice.

When we speak out, we will dispel myths and stereotypes.

When we speak out, we make it easier and safer for others to come out of the closet.

When we speak out, our children will learn that it is okay to be

whoever they are.

When we speak out, we will make it a safer place for all.

When we speak out, people will learn to treat everyone as equals.

Speak out. Our voices need to be heard to make this a better world for all. ▼

Holly Puterbaugh delivered these remarks at the Speakout at University of Vermont during National Coming Out Week last month.

World continued from page three

couple in the rural community of Happy Valley.

Benjamin M. Williams, 31, and James T. Williams, 29, have been held without bail in the Shasta County Jail since July 8. They were ordered to appear in court Nov. 23, when prosecutor Gregg Scott is expected to tell the court whether he will seek the death penalty.

The Williams brothers face charges of robbing and murdering Winfield Mowder, 40, and Gary Matson, 50, who were

found dead July 1. The victims' home had been burglarized and their car stolen.

Scott said his office may seek the death penalty.

Falwell again

SAN FRANCISCO — Apparently, Jerry just can't help himself. He's just a recruiter.

Rev. Jerry Falwell is preaching against gays and lesbians again, this time trying to convert us.

Falwell lectured via satellite

last month to a group of gays and lesbians about giving up homosexuality. The lecture was broadcast to America's gay capital, San Francisco.

"God loves you and so do I," Falwell told the audience. "Just as people can come out of the closet, so can people choose to come out against a sinful lifestyle."

The presentation was designed "to reach out to the homosexual community in a spirit of love," said Allen Wildmon, a spokesman for the

American Family Association, a conservative Christian group that sponsored the event.

The speech was chosen to coincide with National Coming Out Day.

French partners

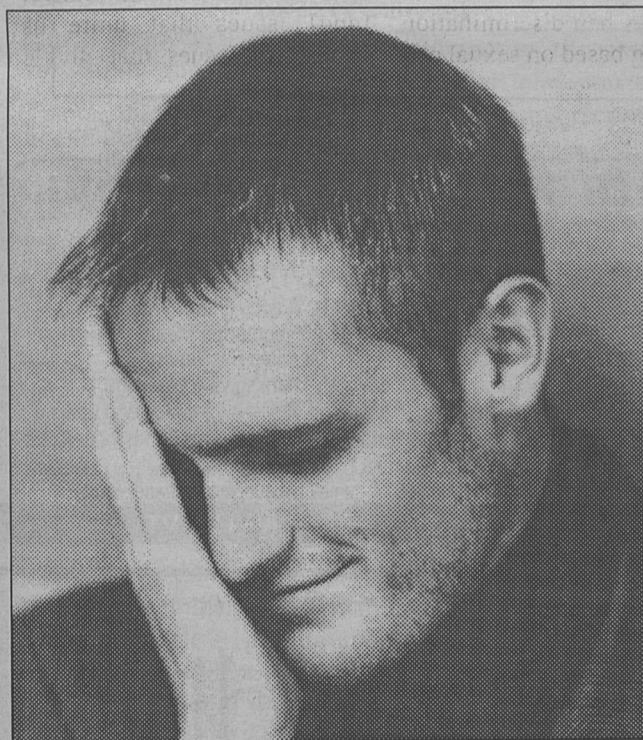
PARIS — It's not quite marriage, but it's a pretty big step. French legislators adopted a law that gives unwed gay and straight couples the rights previously limited to the married.

The National Assembly approved the law by a vote of

315-249 nearly a year after it was introduced.

Visibly pleased leftist lawmakers stood up after the measure passed. Justice Minister Elisabeth Guigou, a Socialist, said the law would help "diminish homophobia and intolerance."

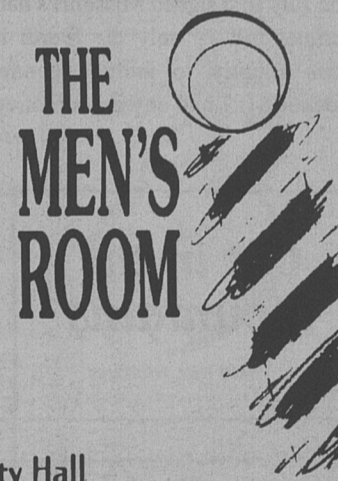
Conservative lawmakers immediately said they would ask the Constitutional Council to decide if the law was unconstitutional, in which case it would be void. ▼



Did you forget to use
The Men's Room?

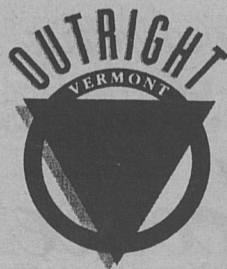
A FULL SERVICE SALON

AVEDA CREW



haircuts ♦ beardstyling ♦ shaves ♦ body hair removal
hair texturizing ♦ gray management ♦ coloring

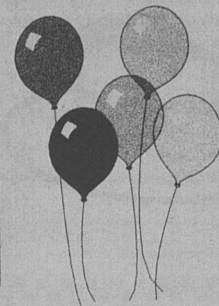
150 B Church Street - Burlington - 864.2088 - Across from City Hall



You're cordially invited to...

OUTRIGHT VERMONT'S

10th Anniversary Gala Celebration



- Hors d'oeuvres!
- Music!
- Silent Art Auction!
- Party!

November 12, 1999

7:30-9:30 PM

The Coach Barn, Shelburne Farms

Tickets \$15 to \$50
(based on what you can afford)

Call 652-7064 for reservations
and information.