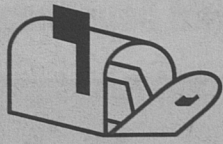


letters



OITM, PO Box 1078, Richmond, VT 05477-1078 or Editor@mountainpridemedia.org

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 reserve the right to edit for space and clarity. Letters are also subject to the editorial policy stated in the masthead.

All of a (long) sudden

To wait a decade for something — anything really, but especially something important — is so unrealistic, so beyond one's time frame. Yet we all waited, some of us even longer than others. I can look back to *OITM* issues from 1991 and read in some of my earliest articles my frustration, my anger, over being denied marriage rights.

And suddenly, or what appears suddenly, I stood in front of a Justice of the Peace with my partner by my side, and heard those all powerful words "in the power vested in me..." My mind froze; I heard little else.

Afterwards, watching the JP sign the document that said Marriage or Civil Union, I shook from the power of the moment. We did it, we really did! Without any hesitation, without any questions, we planned the day and time, arranged for the Justice of the Peace and the two-night mini-honeymoon in Montreal, the champagne and even two new flutes.

But the reality is this did not happen suddenly; people have been busy. Busy with letters, with collecting donations, with speaking to Legislators and Senators, with their Clergymen and bosses, busy with hard work. While I thought it would never happen, people stood out in cold nights and sang about justice and some of the bravest people outed themselves to thousands listening all over the state on their radios or TVs. Who could live through this past Vermont winter and not feel the power of the passing of the civil union bill? I know that in my home, in my partner's workplace, in almost everywhere we went, there was discussion and debate and much celebration when we all heard the civil union bill passed!

Perhaps we are lucky because we live in a town where our clerk treated us with all the courtesy extended to any couple. Perhaps we are lucky because our neighbor, the pillar of the church and our town, responded positively to our request to perform our ceremony. We are indeed lucky because our children are able to call my partner their stepmom, for real now.

We all lived through an education, an awareness, that is truly a gift to all the

Vermonters who followed the debate and watched as this political moment was realized.

I stand proud with all of you. I stand grateful for all the hard work done. I stand ready to continue.

Moira Donovan
Waterville

Other Agendas

Let's not even talk about the gay agenda (which only exists in the minds of closed-minded heterosexuals)! Let's in fact talk about another agenda — the Sheltra Agenda. Representative Nancy Sheltra started STARS - Standing Together And Reclaiming the State - says she's helping the civil union protesters take back the state, but by her own admission, she's really helping herself to your money. I quote: Sheltra, a divorced mother of two boys, had hoped to be able to draw a modest salary from STARS...since her legislative salary...is going to run out soon. Makes you think long and hard, doesn't it?

Dean Pratt
Burlington

Thanks, Peter

Our very own Green Mountain Freedom Band representation [at Pride] was the best ever. Kudos to Peter Thomas, without whom the band would not exist. Peter has spent nearly a decade trying to bring a group of size together to represent our community and state. He has spent many hours making phone calls, writing notes, researching appropriate music, and traveling to other states and Canada to participate in their Pride celebrations, all in the interest of bringing a great band together for us. He often times has spent money out of his own pocket to purchase sheet music and percussion instruments.

Up until this year, the same faithful original members have made a showing in the parade, only to be soon forgotten or barely noticed at all. Peter's determination and dedication certainly paid off this year. Our Vermont contingency was superb, and combined with the assistance that arranged from our friends from New York, everyone noticed and will remember "the band."

Thank you, Peter.
Carol Trombley
Williston

Maui congrats

Aloha *OITM*! Just a quick note to you GLBT people in Vermont. good for you, lots of hard work paid off. We couldn't do it in Hawaii (civil unions) but we tried, with lots of hard work. just a big MAHALO from us here in maui. we are hoping it will spread.

with aloha,
John and Steve

CU Study

Civil union is here. What impact will this new legislation have on our partner relationships and our families? What impact will it have on community perceptions of our relationships and families? How are current same-sex couples in Vermont deciding whether to form a "civil union" and what issues is this decision-making process raising for couples themselves? What issues does this legislation raise for bisexual and transgender members of our community? Will "civil union" be required in order for same-sex couples to adopt children or serve as foster parents to children? Should it be required? How might this legislation affect single-parenting families? These are just a few of the questions that civil union legislation may raise for our community.

The past 20 years or so has generated a growing body of research on LGBT relationships and families. This research was reviewed and presented as part of an amicus brief in the case of *Baker v. State of Vermont*, 170 A. 2d 864 (1999), the case that propelled the development of the current civil union legislation. Of course, available research findings only provide us with the information about our identity, relationship, and family experiences prior to civil union.

As researchers and educators at the University of Vermont who are also members of the LGBT community, we are interested in developing a collaborative research agenda to explore issues of concern to our community regarding civil union legislation. We are interested in moving beyond a comparative approach to research on LGBT relationships and families, and hope to generate

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.

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