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news notes

Carolinas Shepard bill referred to Appropriations

RALEIGH, NC — A Senate judiciary committee hearing was held April 19 on *Senate Bill 392*, the *Matthew Shepard Memorial Act*. More than 20 supporters were present, five of whom had an opportunity to speak. Only one opponent rose to speak against the bill. The bill was referred to the Appropriations committee, because increased penalties could lead to additional incarceration expenses. Since the bill is now an appropriations bill, the April 26 deadline for crossing over to the House does not apply. Additionally, if the bill does not advance in this session, it will remain alive for the 2002 short session. Sen. Kay Hagan, Chair of the Judiciary II Committee, received more than 600 letters, emails, postcards and calls asking her to hold a hearing on the bill and to support it personally.

Azalea brunch beats goal

WILMINGTON — Equality NC Project's first major fundraiser was a huge success, beating the groups fundraising goal. The brunch, held on Azalea Festival Weekend in Wilmington, NC, raised over \$3500 for Equality NC Project. Host for the event was Wilmington's Café Phoenix, and sponsors included the Hon. Mike Nelson, State Legislator Julia Boseman (D-New Hanover), and Costello's.

More pride music

CHARLOTTE — Charlotte Pride, which will be held May 4-6, has added local band Violet Strange and nationally known lesbian folk singer, Phranc, to its lineup of performers for the celebration in Marshall Park on May 5. The event will also feature Angela Brightfeather of It's Time, NC, Seth Kilbourn of the Human Rights Campaign, Mandy Carter of NC Stonewall Democrats, Jo Wyrick of Equality NC, and

Charlotte City Council member Sara Spencer. The Saturday event will also feature a Pride Market with merchandise, information vendors from as far away as Toronto, Canada, and a DJ tent featuring DJ Richie Rich. DJ Joe Bermudez of Boston's Machine will also be in town, but one week earlier. Bermudez is spinning at Genesis for a Pride fundraiser on April 28.

TOY auction success

CHARLOTTE — Time Out Youth's anniversary auction fundraiser grossed over \$32,000 for the agency. Time Out Youth, which serves GLBT and questioning youth ages 13-21 in the MetroLina area, is marking its 10th year.

National

Carolinian at GLAAD awards

NEW YORK, NY — The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) honored the best in journalism, television and theatre at the 12th GLAAD Media Awards presented April 16 in New York City. Vanessa Redgrave received GLAAD's Excellence in Media Award from Natasha Richardson (Redgrave's daughter). Kathleen Turner presented journalist Liz Smith the Vito Russo Award, which honors a GLBT member of the media for their outstanding contribution in combating homophobia. Guests at the ceremony included *Survivor's* "fat naked fag" Richard Hatch, as well as North Carolina native Peter Paige and Randy Harrison from Showtime's *Queer as Folk*. Additional awards will be presented in Los Angeles, Washington, DC and San Francisco.

Hate based incidents increased

DETROIT, MI — Incidents of anti-gay violence in Michigan increased 26 percent last year to 121, according to a report compiled by the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs. Nationwide, the number of violent incidents against people due to sexual orientation increased eight percent to 2151. The coalition relies primarily on victim reports to compile the annual data, but some information is gathered from police and news stories. The hate crime report only hits 30 percent to 40 percent

of what's thought to be the total number, a spokesperson said, because people attacked often won't tell police anti-gay sentiment may have triggered the event. Victims of such crimes may not even be gay, but simply perceived as such.

Rally and vigil announced

WASHINGTON, DC — AIDS Quilt organization The NAMES Project has announced a march and vigil in Washington on June 3. The events will mark the 20th anniversary of the first Centers for Disease Control (CDC) report on what was originally labeled "Gay-related immune deficiency," and later called AIDS. Details on the event were still forthcoming at press time.

New bi guide

BOSTON, MA — The Bisexual Resource Center in Boston released the new fourth edition of the *Bisexual Resource Guide*, which can be ordered online from www.biresource.org. The new 300-page edition lists more than 2400 bi-inclusive organizations from 66 countries, as well as essays and commentary to empower the bisexual.

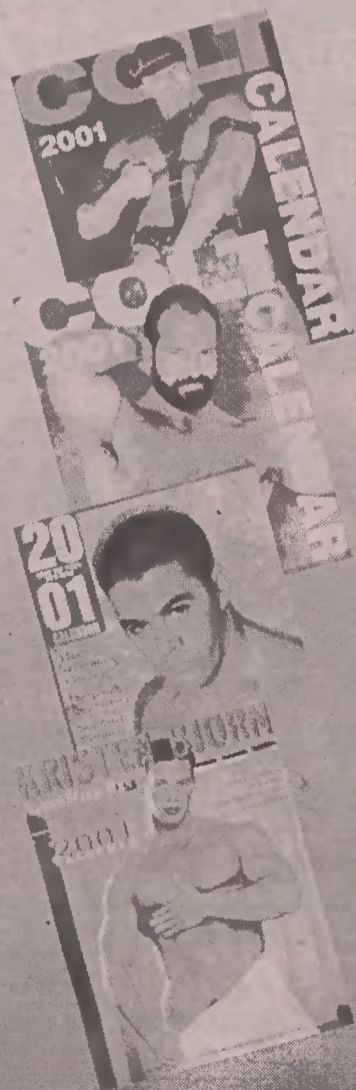
Spielberg leaves BSA board

LOS ANGELES, CA — Oscar-winning filmmaker Steven Spielberg stepped down from an advisory board of the Boy Scouts of America April 16, saying that he could no longer associate with a group that engages in "discrimination." Although he did not name the Boy Scout policy that he considered discriminatory, it appeared clear that he was referring to the organization's controversial exclusion of "avowed homosexuals" on the grounds that they violate the group's values.

Modern Easter vigil

FT. LAUDERDALE, FL — An Easter weekend prayer vigil outside the Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church by gay Christian activist Richard Murphy resulted in a meeting with the Reverend D. James Kennedy, leader of Coral Ridge Ministries in Fort Lauderdale. Coral
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