

news notes

Carolinas

UUF marks 50 years in W-S

WINSTON-SALEM — The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship celebrated its 50-year anniversary the weekend of May 4-6 with a coffee-house, games, a banquet, a special service and the "Mother of All Potlucks." Unitarians adhere to religious principles drawn from world religions, but do not have a set creed or doctrine. This openness has led Unitarians to be more welcoming of GLBT people than most traditional religious groups, and has stirred them to practice their beliefs through social action. Unitarians in the Triad have been doing just that since the Woolworth sit-ins in 1960.

Baptist Church ousts BSA

CHAPEL HILL — After 39 years sponsoring Scout troops, Binkley Memorial Baptist Church has severed its ties with the organization over its discrimination against homosexuals. Binkley has been open to gays and lesbians since its formation in 1958. But it didn't officially adopt an inclusive policy until 1992, when it licensed a gay divinity student to preach and was subsequently ousted from the Southern Baptist Convention. Since then, the church has joined The Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptist Churches in America.

National

GLBTs value online banking

ROCHESTER — A survey conducted in April by Harris Interactive and Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc. reveals that financial consumers who self-identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender are more likely than others to prefer financial institutions that offer their services via the Internet. Half of all GLBT consumers (51 percent) said that offering financial services via the Internet was a key factor in deciding where to conduct their financial business, as compared to 43 percent of non-GLBT respondents. According to the study, GLBT consumers care more than non-GLBT consumers whether or not a finan-

cial institution practices non-discrimination and has inclusive policies for people like them. Over half (57 percent) of GLBT people said, when deciding where to conduct their financial business, it was extremely or very important that a financial institution has inclusive policies and banned discrimination against people like them. The correlative percentage for non-GLBT respondents was 49 percent.

First TG legal fellowship set

WASHINGTON DC — The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force will be home to what is believed to be the nation's first legal fellowship specifically aimed at addressing discrimination against transgender people, thanks to a grant awarded earlier this year by the National Association for Public Interest Law (NAPIL). Lisa Mottet, a former NGLTF legal intern graduating with honors from Georgetown University Law Center in May, will work as an Equal Justice Fellow for two years on a project designed to ensure that existing and future laws result in equal treatment in employment, education, housing and public accommodations for transgender people. The Transgender Civil Rights Project is one of 75 NAPIL Fellowships for Equal Justice scheduled to begin in September 2001.

MS ends segregation

JACKSON, MS — In a breakthrough for prisoners with HIV, Mississippi's top prison official announced last month that educational and vocational programs will soon be available to all eligible prisoners, regardless of HIV status. Mississippi is one of only two states in the country that still segregates prisoners with HIV in both housing and programs. This segregation and the resulting lack of program access has resulted in HIV-positive prisoners serving longer sentences than their HIV-negative peers, because participating in programs is viewed favorably by parole boards. Local activists, inmates' families and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) formed a coalition to help persuade Mississippi Department of Corrections Commissioner Robert L. Johnson to appoint a state HIV/AIDS Inmate Task Force last year. One of the recommendations of the task force was giving HIV-positive prisoners access to the programs. Johnson announced April 30 that he will begin

implementing all of the recommendations.

Governor should correct error

LANSING — Gay rights groups have asked Michigan Governor John Engler (R) to clarify remarks made by his press secretary that erroneously indicated that federal laws currently protect people from discrimination based on sexual orientation. Susan Shafer made the remarks following an April 17 rally in which Michigan State University students and community members showed support for legislation that bans discrimination based on sexual orientation. Currently, it is perfectly legal in 39 states — including Michigan and both Carolinas — to fire a person based on their sexual orientation.

FL suit goes national

MIAMI — Court documents reveal that a national extreme right-wing conservative organization, the American Family Association Center for Law and Policy is now involved in the legal struggle by the local "grassroots" Take Back Miami in its battle to repeal the sexual orientation amendment to the Miami-Dade Human Rights Ordinance. Based in Tupelo, Mississippi, the American Family Association (www.afa.net) includes in their mission statement that they "exist to motivate and equip citizens to change the culture to reflect Biblical truth."

Union cuts off BSA

NEW YORK — The Communication Workers of America, one of the largest member organizations of the AFL-CIO, has resolved to sever ties with the Boy Scouts unit "its leaders reverse their policy of excluding gays from membership or volunteer activities in scouting." The resolution indicates that they are ending a long tradition of support for scouting because the policy is regressive at a time when other American institutions are moving "in a more enlightened direction."

Gender bill passes RI House

PROVIDENCE, RI — By a 46-41 margin, the Rhode Island House of Representatives passed a bill May 1 that would clarify that Rhode Island non-discrimination laws protect transgender people from discrimination. The bill codifies federal and state court decisions

which have held that it is not legal to discriminate against individuals simply based on traditional notions of masculinity and femininity. The bill would add the phrase "gender identity or expression" to Rhode Island's non-discrimination laws. It defines "gender identity or expression" as including "a person's actual or perceived gender, as well as a person's gender identity, self-image, appearance, expression or behavior, [even if] different than that traditionally associated with the person's sex at birth." Consistent with the United States Supreme Court decision in the case of *Price Waterhouse v. Hopkins* in 1989, the bill outlaws discrimination on the basis of gender stereotypes.

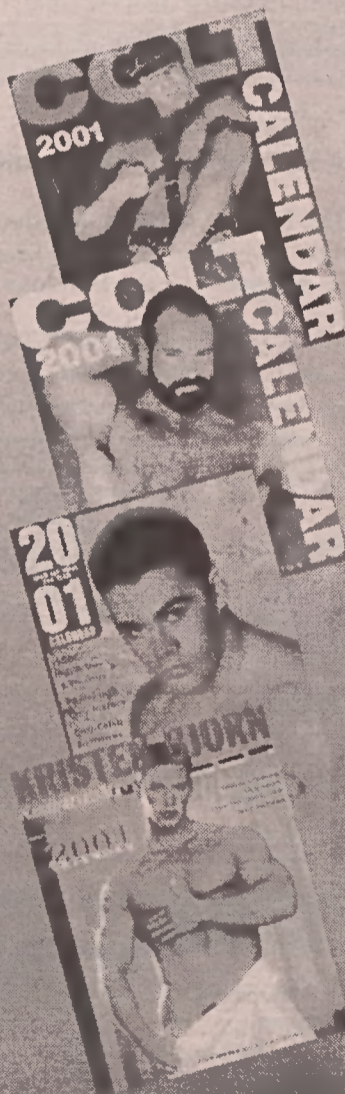
TN high court backs lesbian

NASHVILLE — The Tennessee Supreme Court ruled unanimously May 2 in favor of a lesbian mother, thus increasing protections for gay parents who live with their partners and have full or partial custody of their children. In one of the few cases it has ever considered involving lesbian or gay parents, Tennessee's highest court overturned an appeals court decision that barred a lesbian mother from having her partner in their home when her two daughters would visit. The appeals court ordered the restriction following arguments from the former husband, who said he wants his children to live by the Biblical mandate that unmarried adults should not live together. Ruling 5-0, the Tennessee Supreme Court said there was no reason why Julia Eldridge should be required to have her partner, Lisa Franklin, leave their home during visits with her daughters, noting that the women's living together caused no harm to the children.

Email brings secret service

PENSACOLA, FL — A Florida woman outraged by state Rep. Trovillon's remarks to students during Equality Florida's Youth Lobby Days got a visit from two Secret Service agents after sending Trovillon, Governor Jeb Bush, and President Bush email messages saying a firing squad would be lenient punishment for the legislator's comments. The 58-year-old seamstress said she had been writing to Presidents and elected officials since Nixon, but had never before had a visit from the secret service. Trovillon told four gay youths that God would "destroy" them. ▼

2
0
0
1
C
A
L
E
N
D
A
R
S



Large Selection of
2001 Calendars
Now In Stock!

Independence News

- Gay Video Rentals as low as \$5⁰⁰
- New Shipment of Gay XXX Videos as low as \$10⁰⁰
- Gay DVDs
- New Releases
- Novelties

We buy used magazines
in good condition for 25¢

Open
Monday - Saturday
9:00 am - 12:00 am
Sunday
1:00 - 9:00 pm

(704) 332-8430
3205 The Plaza
Charlotte, NC

