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## Q-POLL

After recent victories in the White House, Senate and Congress, do you fear an anti-gay backlash from conservatives?

yes no

## FBI says hate crimes on rise

Gay-bashing second highest reported offense

by Mark Shields

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Sexual orientation-based bias crime is now the second highest category of hate crime offenses in the U.S., according to new information from the FBI. Previously the third category behind race and religion, 1,430 hate crime offenses based on sexual orientation were reported in 2003. Six murders were reported based on sexual orientation — the highest category followed closely by four murders based on race bias.

"Hate crime continues to be a national scourge," says Human Rights Campaign President Cheryl Jacques. "The current federal hate crimes statute needs to be strengthened immediately to give law enforcement the tools they need to combat these crimes."

According to the FBI report "Hate Crime Statistics: 2003," more than 8,500 criminal offenses were identified as being motivated by hate. Of these offenses, 1,430 — or 16.4 per-

cent — were crimes based on the victim's actual or perceived sexual orientation. Offenses based on race account for the highest category of bias crime at 52.5 percent. The third highest category is crimes based on religion — also at approximately 16.4 percent.

"The new statistics only offer a glimpse of the problem," said Jacques. "Reporting these crimes is voluntary for local jurisdictions and hate crimes often go unreported by victims due to fear and stigmatization."

The data also does not track crimes based on bias against transgender people. Nov. 20 marked the Sixth Annual Transgender Day of Remembrance which marked the loss of 21 transgender individuals to hate violence over the past year.

This summer, the U.S. Senate amended the defense authorization bill to include a strong hate crimes measure — the *Local Law*



Is anti-gay violence on the rise in America? A report from the FBI shows that 1,430 hate crime offenses based on sexual orientation were reported in 2003.

Enforcement Enhancement Act (LLEEA) — on a bipartisan vote of 65-33 with 18 Republicans voting in favor. On a procedural vote in September, the House voted in favor of keeping the hate crimes measure in the defense

see **HATE** on 19

## Charlotte Pride facing trouble inside and out

New board optimistic about challenges

by David Moore  
Q-Notes staff

CHARLOTTE — Last year's annual Charlotte Pride festival — according to organizers — attracted the largest crowd to date: an estimated 8,000. Along with the throngs of LGBT participants came a handful of protestors who gathered on the sidewalk just outside the edge of Marshall Park.

But their activities didn't stop there — members of the anti-gay religious group set up a tent right along with LGBT vendors and organizations.

"We didn't have any choice, they submitted the proper forms just like everyone else, we had to let them have their booth," then-Pride

co-director Alex Forrester said at the time.

Kris Conyers, Charlotte Pride's new president, tells a different story.

"We didn't know who they were when they requested the space," says Conyers, indicating that organizers were unaware of the anti-gay message the religious group would be doling out.

Their tent seemingly served as a sort of ground zero for the protestors — many of whom would later be identified as members in an anti-gay religious organization known as Operation Save America (OSA).

The small group of individu- see **CHARLOTTE** on 18



Charlotte Pride

Charlotte Pride's new logo

## National LGBT funding organization picks Charlotte to receive grant

Greensboro, N.C., also to be recipient

by Charity Perkins

In response to requests from members of Charlotte's lesbian and gay community, Foundation For The Carolinas announced Nov. 22 that it has applied for and received a \$100,000 matching grant from the National Lesbian & Gay Community Funding Partnership.

The grant will be used to increase community awareness and funding for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender concerns in the community.

The Foundation will manage the grant, working closely with a newly-created Charlotte Lesbian & Gay Fund Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will be charged with raising \$100,000 per year locally over the next two years to meet the requirements to receive the National Partnership's matching funds. The committee already has received an initial grant of \$10,000 from the John S. & James L. Knight Foundation Donor Advised Fund.

Initial goals of the Board are to increase awareness and understanding of the LGBT community and to expand resources and programs available to serve the unique needs of LGBT people. In this first stage, UNC Charlotte's Urban Institute has conducted a series of focus groups in Charlotte to determine local grantmaking priorities for lesbian and gay issues.

Long-range goals include: support of LGBT programs and services focused on strengthening infrastructure and capacity, building bridges with social service agencies to provide outreach services, cultivating relationships with the non-gay community and building relationships between LGBT and non-LGBT leadership across our community.

In addition, the local Board will explore creating a permanent endowment with Foundation For The Carolinas.

According to Tom Warshauer, Economic see **GRANT** on 21



Tom Warshauer