

# Served well

from page 17

Raleigh. He now works as an education consultant with the North Carolina Association of Educators Center for Teaching and Learning. His position as mayor is the first elected office he's ever held.

### Moving and shaking

One might think having an openly lesbian member of the State Senate would make the good ol' boys in Raleigh shake in their boots. Nope. They just keep pouring out the same old bigotry they always have.

But, that doesn't dissuade Sen. Julia Boseman (D-New Hanover). First elected to the Senate in 2004, Boseman is the state's first openly gay or lesbian member of the General Assembly. She didn't waste anytime getting to work for the people of her district. The North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research ranked her the 20th most effective senator out of 50 in her freshman year and said she was the second most effective freshman legislator in the 28-year history of their research.

This session, Boseman has taken on the responsibility of being the leading proponent of the School Violence Prevention Act, opening her to personal criticism from radical, right-wing colleagues.

In a House committee hearing on the bill on June 16, Republican Minority Leader Skip Stam of Wake County said same-sex parents were "more dangerous than second-hand smoke." He said protecting gay students would lead to the protection of pedophilia and gay marriage. All this in front of Boseman and her six-year-old son, who were both attending the committee hearing.

Prior to her election to the Senate, Boseman served one four-year term on the New Hanover Board of Commissioners.

### Making history in the Palmetto State

Nick Shalosky was only 21 when he was elected to the Charleston County Constituent School Board in 2008. Noticing no one had filed to fill the vacant seat in his district, Shalosky initiated a successful write-in campaign. His decision to take action and responsibility on behalf of his district made him the first-ever openly gay or lesbian elected official in the history of South Carolina politics.

At the same time, lesbian philanthropist Linda Ketner was vying for her chance to lead South Carolina's First Congressional District. Her long battle against incumbent Republican Rep. Henry Brown was well-fought, but ultimately unsuccessful. It wasn't all bad news, though. Despite her liberal stances and openness about her sexual orientation, Ketner received 48 percent of the conservative district's vote — a victory in and of itself, no matter the outcome.

2008 also saw the openly gay candidacy of James Akers, Jr., who ran unsuccessfully for an open seat on the Greenville County Council. Garnering only 40 percent of the vote, he lost the race to Republican challenger Liz Seman.

### Around Carolina

Other current openly gay or lesbian elected officials include:

- Ernest Fleming: Warren County Board of Commissioners, first elected 2006.
- Janet Pepin, Boone City Council
- Lydia Lavelle, Carrboro Board of Aldermen
- Jennifer Knox, Wake County District Court
- Nancy Caviness, Duck, N.C., Town Council

Other historic candidacies include:

- Lesbian Sue Henry's 1995 independent, write-in campaign for Charlotte mayor.
- Openly gay Jim Neal's 2008 bid for the Democratic nomination for U.S. Senate. He was defeated by then-N.C. Sen. Kay Hagan who went on to defeat then-incumbent Elizabeth Dole.
- Wade Boyles' 2008 Democratic challenge to incumbent N.C. Rep. Dale Folwell in western Forsyth County. Folwell, a Republican, carried 60 percent of the vote.
- Libertarian Chris Cole's several unsuccessful runs for the Charlotte City Council, N.C. Senate and House and U.S. Senate. ▀

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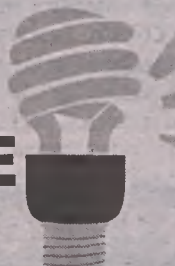
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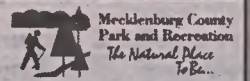


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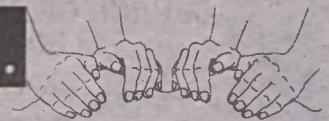
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