

Activists head to D.C.

from page 6

elected fair-minded politicians who can help make a difference here and in the U.S.”

Wilson is proud of the Palmetto State's capital city — Columbia is one of the most gay-friendly cities in the South. “But the rest of the cities in our state won't start supporting the cause if we all leave and go up to Washington; we should be on their doorstep where they and the local media will see us,” he said.

The contradiction between varying state and local laws and policies, along with federal statutes, is exactly why Jones is pushing for a federally-focused strategy. That state-by-state action, he argues, still leaves LGBT Americans with second-class citizenship, despite any progress on local levels.

“True equality can only come from federal action,” he said. “If we overturn Prop. 8 in California, we are still second-class citizens. If we win the fight in Maine, we will still be second-class citizens, just as we are still second-class citizens in Iowa. That is a fact, a reality of the structure of our government.”

Like other Carolinas leaders, Ed Farthing, a former co-executive director of Equality North Carolina, says a federal-only strategy is misguided, and that a combination of local, state and federal actions are needed. Even in North Carolina, he says, progress is being made.

“These state actions are crucial to winning over the hearts and minds of people,” he said. “When the federal government says, ‘This is

the way it will be,’ and it is mandated, people resent that. It doesn't become a part of their being; it becomes part of their negativity.”

Jones remains steadfast in his support for a federal movement. He believes the time is now.

“Barack Obama's election showed us clearly that real change is possible in America. That was a profoundly important election,” he said. “Simultaneously, Prop. 8 showed, particularly our young people, that many of the freedoms and rights we take for granted could be taken away.”

He says there is an “expectation from newer generations who simply aren't willing to settle for anything less than full equality under the law.”

“I understand where [Jones] is coming from,” Farthing said. “It makes it so easy if you can just push a button at the federal level and make it all happen. It doesn't work that way. The success of the African-American Civil Rights Movement took 30, 40 or 50 years of work on the local level, by the NAACP and other organizations working to make that political support possible.”

Despite the criticisms — something Jones said he's come to expect and learned how to live with — the march is happening. Jones says the National Equality March will be a positive step forward for the community. “Movements will grow or die. We should always be looking for strategies that will grow the movement and bring more people into the movement.”

On the record: Cleve Jones

National organizations

“We need new leadership and we need good strategy. I think it is just the nature of things as organizations get older they tend to become more cautious, that every now and then we need to reinvigorate the

vide them with the resources and information they need. We need to respect them and listen to them.”

National march budgeting

“We're going to spend very little money. These people who talk this way seem to believe there is a finite and limited amount of money for this movement and a finite, limited number of volunteer hours. If movements do not grow, they will die. There is no limit on the amount of money we can raise. There is no limit on the number of volunteers. The only limits are those we impose on ourselves with our lack of confidence.”

Effective lobbying

“It is important to understand how lobbying works. To really make an impact you have to lobby in all the 435 districts. That is where the most effective lobbying can occur, in the district level by people who live and work and vote in that district and go into those offices and build relationships with the staff.”

'Milk' and public opinion

“Public opinion has clearly drifted dramatically in our favor and I think the film, ‘Milk,’ had something to do with that. During this time of great change and focus on the issue we had this powerful film come out that informed people of a history they'd never been taught in school and reminded some of us older people what we were fighting for in our youth. Include the fact that this is the 40th anniversary of the beginning of our movement — all those things came together to create a unique opportunity.”

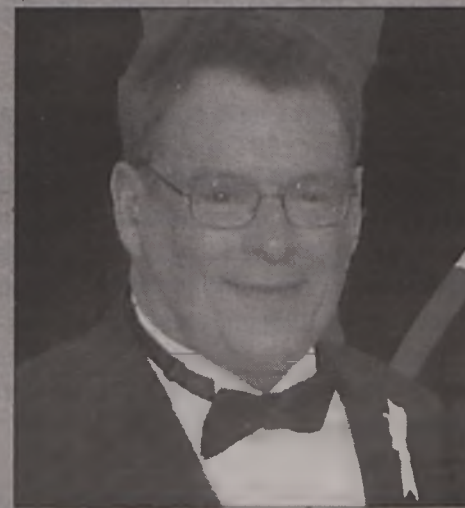


Photo Courtesy: Greg Hernandez

movement and organizations and take stock of where we're at. All of the people in the national organizations are working hard. I think they are good people, but I question some of the strategies and I do so with respect and affection for the people doing the work, but I think we need to change the strategy and I most definitely think we need to make room for renewed leadership and encourage them and pro-



WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TOOLBOXNC
WWW.TOOLBOXNC.COM

2325 Burnett Blvd.
- Wilmington, N.C.

Gaston County's only Gay Night Spot!
Drag Shows Friday Saturday and Sunday
Nightly Drink Specials
Night Owls Of Gastonia
 Open Wed 8pm-2am Thurs - Sun 7pm-2am
 2719 Main Ave. Gastonia NC 28052 - www.nightowlsogastonia.com - 704-866-1333



KEELEE J. MACPHEE, M.D.

**SPECIALIZING IN
MALE, FEMALE AND
TRANSGENDER
RECONSTRUCTION
OF THE
FACE, BODY
AND
BREAST.**

RENAISSANCE

Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery, PA

KEELEE J. MACPHEE, M.D.
919.341.0915
REX MEDICAL PLAZA
RALEIGH, NC

RALEIGH'S ONLY
FEMALE PLASTIC SURGEON

www.renaissanceNC.com

