

# State And Local News

8

(WASG, cont. from p. 4)

"Our aim is to make an atmosphere safe for the women to explore their feelings for other women, whether these result from actual experiences or desired ones."

Present participants are mostly from the Durham and Chapel Hill communities. The group, started in 1978, meets weekly in members' homes. Meetings are usually discussions, although guest speakers are under consideration for future meetings.

Interested women should call 929-7702 or 286-7880.

## Letters

It is suggested that social support can: aid recovery from surgery; protect against clinical depression in the face of adverse events; reduce psychological distress and physical symptoms following job loss and bereavement; protect against the development of emotional problems which can be associated with aging; and help keep patients in needed medical treatment; and promote adherence to needed medical regimens.

These studies are based on various hypotheses. They include that: social support has a direct effect on health; social support provides a buffer against the effects of high stress; social support stimulates the development of coping strategies; and the lack of social support intensifies the impact of stressful life events.

What does this mean to gay people? There are two particularly striking examples. Gay people who are placed in Intensive Care Units are not only disoriented because of the hospital environment but are isolated from their friends and lovers.

Gay people are also denied expression of feelings and appropriate emotional support following the death of a loved one.

There are many other situations in which gay people are under stress without the support they want and need from their gay support systems and without recognition of their painful situation by potentially supportive non-gays.

In working for our rights, let us not forget that we are not asking for luxuries, but rather pressing for the right to have what we need-- be it a place to live, a job, or the presence of significant others when we are under much stress.

Claire, from Chapel Hill

## gay stigma affects mountain

Gay Mountain isn't quite as gay as it used to be. Officially, Gay Mountain, NC doesn't even exist anymore.

It was renamed Misty Mountain by a recent vote of the property owners' association of the community 4 miles west of Blowing Rock.

According to the Charlotte Observer, things were never meant to be gay, in the homosexual sense of the word.

The development was named after Gaylord "Gay" Williams, Sr., a retired businessperson of Bal Harbour, Fla.

Williams, 71, said, "Some people I sold some land to years ago named it Gay Mountain, after me."

"I've been called Gay all of my life. But in the last four or five years we've had some snickering about the damn name. I thought I'd be quiet and it'd go away. But it didn't.

"The property owners wanted to change the name. I didn't argue. I have no regrets about the change. I'm planning to build a new home up there this year."

Forty of the approximately 60 property owners have built on their lots.

"We had quite a bit of dislike of the name in recent years because of the gay movement," said Mary Turner, a year-round resident.

Some real estate agents encountered customers who balked at buying in Gay Mountain.

"We've had quite a few negative comments from clients (potential buyers)," said Alex Hallmark, a partner in Hallmark Realty. "They'd say, 'Oh, ho. We're not going to live out there.'"

When the property owners' association voted on changing the name, not everyone wanted to change.

Mrs. Turner recalled, "One woman said, 'If we change the name, we won't have anything to talk about.'"

## gay aa to form

A gay Alcoholics Anonymous group is forming in the Chapel Hill/Durham area. For more information, call 967-5193 or 942-7941 in Chapel Hill or 688-6785 in Durham.