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Chambers fighting own denomination

by Jim Yarbrough
Q-Notes Staff

CHARLOTTE - Infamous homophobe Rev. Joseph Chambers, pastor of Paw Creek Church of God and the president of Concerned Charlotteans, has added the Church of God denomination to his lengthy list of foes. Chambers stated that the Paw Creek congregation voted to leave the denomination due to the fact that "extreme liberals" were leading it toward a more "worldly" stance. One of the cited instances involved the denomination's sanctioning of choreographed dancing.

According to a statement from Robert Daugherty, State Overseer of the Western NC Church of God, Chambers was charged with a number of infractions of church policy and bylaws.

Chambers submitted to a trial conducted by a denomination ecclesiastical court on August 28. At that trial, he was found guilty of several violations, including 1) withholding tithes from the denomination, 2) insubordination, 3) holding meetings to withdraw the denomination, and 4) changing church property deeds without authorization.

Based upon the guilty verdict, Chambers had his pastoral license stripped that same day and was told to stay off the church property. He was also given fourteen days to vacate the parsonage.

Daugherty's statement also noted that the church's Board of Trustees was removed and another Board of his own choosing was put in their place. An interim pastor was also named.

The new pastor, Rev. Lawrence Leonhardt, was to take over the church on the evening of September 2, but when he and Daugherty arrived at the church, they were denied entry by three sentries Chambers had posted at the door.

Daugherty stated that "to avoid confrontation and conflict" he had hoped to personally relate to the church membership what was happening to both it and its fallen leader. However, once he was disallowed to enter the building, Daugherty realized that the only way to settle the dispute would be in court.

Immediately thereafter, the Church of God denomination filed a petition with the Mecklenburg County Superior Court attempting to gain control of the Little Rock Road property which consists of the church, a school, the parsonage and the parcel of land it sits upon. The total value of the items in question is estimated at \$2.5 million.

Chambers responded to the lawsuit by counterfiling for autonomous control of the property.

The cases were scheduled to be heard on September 24, but were postponed.

Gov. Campbell's bloody hands cleaned by court

Cuts affecting almost 60% of AIDS patients were sought

by Dan Van Mourik
Q-Notes Staff

COLUMBIA—Citing the recession and preservation of South Carolina's AAA credit rating as reasons for trimming the state budget by \$136 million, Governor Carrol Campbell and the State Budget and Control Board ordered a \$20 million cut in the state's Medicaid program. Medicaid's highest numbers of patients are the elderly, the disabled, and people with AIDS.

The cuts, issued in August, targeted those agencies receiving the greatest amount of new funding in fiscal '92 - '93. However, the cuts would require much more than the elimination of new funding alone. Many existing programs have grown to the point where new funding was necessary to keep them in operation. The hardest hit were the Department of Education and Health and Human Services (Medicaid is administered by Health and Human Services).

To implement such deep cuts in the Medicaid program, some proposed revisions were: elimination of the prescription drug program as of February 1, 1993 with a limitation of two prescriptions per month through January 1993 (most people with AIDS need five or six medications just to survive); a limit of one

hospitalization per year; reduction in the reimbursement levels to doctors and a limit of three doctor's visits per year; and elimination

Some proposed revisions were a limit of two prescriptions per month, one hospitalization per year, and only three doctor's visits per year.

of many optional services such as eye and dental exams and transportation to clinics.

Because agency budgets were not trimmed across-the-board, as had been done in previous years, three groups facing severe cuts sued the five-member Budget and Control Board. The South Carolina Education Association, the South Carolina Hospital Association and Richland Memorial Hospital filed the suit on the basis that the Board exceeded its authority by cutting some agency budgets more than others. The South Carolina Supreme Court agreed, stating that the Board

only has the power to make across-the-board cuts. Based on this ruling, the Board trimmed nearly four percent from every agency in the state.

The Board has come under attack because two of its members are legislators. Many view this as a violation of the constitutional principle of separation of legislative and executive functions, although the Supreme Court has not found that sufficient reason to disband the Board.

Joseph Hall, Executive Director of Low Country AIDS Services, stated in an August 28 letter (before the Supreme Court found the Board's action illegal), "These budget cuts will make it impossible for people with AIDS who are not currently receiving Medicaid to be admitted to the program. Someone will have to die before any new admissions are accepted. We must not allow the Governor of South Carolina to murder people with AIDS."

After the issuance of that letter, it was learned that a total freeze was to be placed on new admissions. Since the court ruling, the Department of Health and Human Services will need to trim a total of only \$8.4 million from all programs it oversees. It is now unclear as to what cuts, if any, will be made in the Medicaid program.

Initiatives target gays

by Gordon Rankin
Q-Notes Staff

With what many gay-rights activists consider to be far more serious implications for the gay community than the Gantt/Helms 1990 North Carolina senate race, voters in two states and a city in a third state will make decisions on November 3 that may well have a far-reaching impact on the future of the national gay community.

Human rights organizations face battles ranging from an attempt in Portland, Maine to repeal the city's recently-passed gay rights ordinance; to an effort in Colorado to amend the state's constitution to declare gay rights ordinances null and void; to an attempt in

Oregon to amend that state's constitution so that homosexuality is legally declared "...abnormal, wrong, unnatural and perverse."

Portland (Maine) City Code, Chapter 13-A, which was adopted on May 12 of this year after an overwhelming vote of 7-1 by City Council, was the first civil rights legislation in Maine to prohibit discrimination in housing, credit, employment and public accommodation based on sexual orientation. However, an attack launched by the small but vocal Concerned Portland Citizens (CPC) resulted in a successful bid to obtain 1,604 signatures in petition to temporarily prevent

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P-FLAG produces national PSA

by Dan Van Mourik
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Washington, DC—The Federation of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (P-FLAG) has produced a 30-second public service announcement (PSA) which has been distributed nationwide. A PSA is a short, informational television or radio spot produced to highlight an organization, an event or to disseminate important information deemed to be in the public interest. The video spots for the National AIDS Hotline are one example of a PSA. Television and radio stations are required by FCC regulations to broadcast a certain number of PSAs at no charge.

P-FLAG distributed their PSA to over 80 cities, and by the end of July, it was airing on at least 43 stations in 22 cities. The PSA features more than 40 P-FLAG members representing a diverse "family," and provides a voice-mail number (1-800-4-FAMILY) for viewers to call. More than 300 calls per day were logged during July.

No resistance to broadcasting the PSA was encountered at any television station in the Charlotte market. Each of the Public Affairs Directors stated that the gay and lesbian theme would not be reason to deny broadcast. Not all stations had received the PSA and some had not yet reviewed it. Jeff Johnson of WJZY (Channel 46) called it a "wonderful tape" and felt certain it would air as soon as the general manager had an opportunity to view it. Caroline Metz of WBTV (Channel 3) said it was a "great spot" and plans to schedule it for broadcast.

While the PSA could be scheduled to air at times when few viewers would see it, that has not been the case. Many of the airings have been in prime time, and some have been during popular local shows. One station in Boston broadcast the PSA during the fundamentalist "PTL Club."

According to Walter Roberts, a Federation volunteer who is monitoring the program, if all stations broadcast the PSA, it will reach two-thirds of the national population.

National Coming Out Day
October 11, '92
Year Five



If AIDS has taught us anything, it has made it abundantly clear that we will only achieve equality if we are out and visible. We will only be treated with dignity if we demand it.

Twenty-three years after Stonewall, one fact remains: We cannot achieve equality from the closet

