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## North Carolina ends anonymous HIV testing

by David Jones  
Q-Notes Staff

RALEIGH—Anonymous HIV testing will no longer be available in North Carolina after September 1, 1994, the state Commission for Health Services decided at its August 3 meeting in Raleigh. The commission meeting ended with activists complaining about broken promises from the state, questioning the value of the new state AIDS Advisory Council and going to court.

In 1992, the commission accepted a recommendation by the state health department to end anonymous HIV testing on September

1. The state's new AIDS Advisory Council recommended recently that a comprehensive program of education and support services be implemented to reduce barriers to HIV testing. The council called for the state to keep anonymous testing for at least two more years while the program was put into effect. The commission agreed to consider the council's recommendation at its August 3 meeting. (See August 1994 Q-Notes.)

Several days before the meeting, ACT UP/Triangle member Steve Harris reported that he was told the state had decided to support the advisory council's recommendation, in-

cluding the extension of anonymous testing. He stated the decision was relayed to him by John Humphrey, an assistant to Secretary of Environment, Health and Natural Resources Jonathan Howes. The decision reportedly came after two meetings in late July between Howes and state health director, Ron Levine. Harris reported that Evelyln Blankenship, the newly appointed interim head of the health department's HIV/STD Section, would express the state's support for the council's proposal in view of Levine's strong opposition to anonymous testing.

There were early signs that the under-

standing had either been violated or not communicated fully, however. When asked by Q-Notes (just before the commission meeting) whether the state would support the advisory council's recommendation, Blankenship said yes. But when asked if that included the extension of anonymous testing, she replied that she did not intend to speak to the date specifically, but she "hoped that everyone would be able to continue to work together regardless of what happens."

At the commission meeting, Blankenship did endorse the council's proposal. Commis-

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## Radecic resigns as Task Force executive director

by Susan Tedder  
Q-Notes Staff

WASHINGTON, DC—Peri Jude Radecic will step down as executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) at the end of her one-year contract in November. Radecic will resume the position of NGLTF Director of Public Policy following the naming of her successor.

The NGLTF Board of Directors will immediately begin a nationwide search for a new executive director. To ensure a smooth transition during the search, Chris Collins, NGLTF board co-chair, will move to the office and assist with fundraising and other organizational duties. In addition, the board will hire an interim Chief Operating Officer this month to oversee day-to-day management of the organization.

Radecic's term as executive director was successful and influential. During her tenure, NGLTF established and built the highly recognized Fight the Right Project, which has organized and trained scores of activists in more than 25 cities and 20 states. The project has assisted activists and campaigns around the country battle proposed anti-gay initiatives and has seen the number of threatened ballot measures drop from 10 to 2. Radecic also coordinated NGLTF's involvement in helping Georgia activists get the Olympic Volleyball competition pulled from Cobb County. She personally advocated the US Department of Justice on behalf of Brenda and Wanda Henson of Camp Sister Spirit in Ovett, Mississippi, and directed NGLTF's efforts to assure Apple Computer stayed in Williamson County, Texas, after that community's anti-gay attack on Apple's support of gay rights.

During Radecic's previous tenure as NGLTF Director of Public Policy, a position she held for six years, she was instrumental in getting the federal Hate Crime Statistics Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act passed through Congress. As she resumes this position, her responsibilities will include coordinating the Task Force's advocacy programs,

including lobbying, Fight the Right, Anti-Violence, Lesbian Health, and Workplace and Campus projects.

"Peri is an accomplished strategist," said NGLTF Board co-chairs Chris Collins and Deborah Johnson-Rolon. "Her skills are best used in bringing various program issues together, developing and harnessing the power of the grassroots and translating that power into action on Capitol Hill." Radecic seems to agree, "I relish the opportunity to deal with overall program coordination that is needed to make NGLTF work for our colleagues at the grassroots. We need information and energy to flow from activists to Capitol Hill, and we also need to inform our constituents of policy issues in Washington. That's what I do best."

Radecic's position change is not the only NGLTF staff adjustment ushering in the fall season. During September, Deborah Cox, Director of Finance and Administration, Ivy Young, Director of Creating Change, and Robin Kane, Acting Director of Public Information, will all be leaving NGLTF. Both Young

and Kane are long-time staff members, while Cox has been with NGLTF a little over a year. Stacey Sobel, an attorney and legislative specialist, has been hired as a consultant to focus on lesbian health advocacy within federal agencies. NGLTF board member Gregory Fisher, a public relations specialist, will serve as interim Communications Director and Beth Barrett, NGLTF part-time legislative assistant, has also taken on duties as public information assistant.

What these dramatic changes mean to the Task Force is unclear. The climate in Washington is critical—Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) is attaching anti-gay riders to every piece of legislation that passes through his hands, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act is in discussion, and several health care reform bills are almost ready for committee.

Although the reasons for the changes are unknown, and may be beneficial to the individuals involved, much continuity is being lost, and the community will ultimately feel the repercussions.



Peri Jude Radecic

## Pride pumps \$500k into economy

CHARLOTTE—The North Carolina Lesbian & Gay Pride Weekend in June pumped more than a half million dollars into Charlotte's economy, according to event organizers.

"Our survey at the Pride Rally on June 5 showed that weekend attendees spent \$433,073 on lodging, food, entertainment and shopping," said Dan Kirsch, co-chair of the event's organizing committee.

In addition, Kirsch said, the committee spent \$72,272, almost all locally, for printing, stage and tents, advertising, off-duty police, soft drinks, sound system, catering, insurance, postage, office supplies, Marshall Park's rental fee, and other expenses.

Wrist bands showed that 3,841 people attended the June 5 rally; 2,158 completed a survey questionnaire.

Based on the results, which were factored for 3,841, attendees spent \$103,163 for lodging at hotels and motels; \$101,376 for meals; \$28,217 for movies, museums, concerts, theater productions and nightclub entertainment; and \$200,317 for shopping.

Southpark drew 616; Eastland, 445; Carolina Place, 295; and other retailers, 600.

At restaurants, attendees averaged \$6.91 for breakfast, \$12.71 for lunch, and \$18.52

for dinner. The average hotel bill was \$67.96 for 1,518 room-nights.

Besides North and South Carolina, people attended from 13 other states and Washington, DC. 52% of the total of 3,841 live in places other than Charlotte.

In a related announcement, the NC Pride 1994 Committee says it is planning a community dinner in recognition of National Coming Out Day. The dinner will be held on Tuesday, October 11, beginning at 7:00 pm at the Unitarian Church, 234 N. Sharon Amity Rd. The Pride committee will be actively soliciting other groups to become involved with this dinner, with the hope to make it an annual event in Charlotte.

Everyone is asked to bring a dish to pass. The LOC will provide beverages and utensils.

At the dinner, the NC Pride 1994 Committee will officially disband, but hopes to announce the formation of a new group that will organize an annual gay and lesbian cultural event in Charlotte.

For more information about the community dinner, to contribute door prizes, or to be placed on the mailing list, please call Sue Henry at (704) 332-7473 (days) or Dan Kirsch at (704) 536-1372 (evenings).

## AIDS caregiver receives national award

by John Scruggs  
Special to Q-Notes

Dr. Diane Rose Carr of Lexington, South Carolina, has been selected as a recipient of the inaugural National Outstanding Caregiver Award of Merit. The award, presented by Mary Fisher's Family AIDS Network, Inc., is designed to offer gratitude and recognition to the recipients and to heighten awareness of the critical and often heroic role played by caregivers in the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Carr was nominated for the honor by Palmetto AIDS Life Support Services of SC (PALSS).

Carr, who received her doctorate in composition from the University of South Carolina, was first introduced to the field of AIDS while working as an editorial assistant for a professor writing a book about the medical and social aspects of AIDS. Carr became acquainted with PALSS and their work and realized that people battling AIDS are battling more than just a disease. "Here are people who have a chronic illness, faced not only with losing their lives, but their jobs, their families, their churches and the things that make life worth living," says Carr. This awareness led her to volunteer for PALSS. Carr says, "It felt wrong to know so much about a problem and not do anything about it."

With PALSS, Carr not only acted as a

"buddy," but also as a senior team leader. PALSS matches trained volunteers ("buddies") with persons living with AIDS. These buddies provide emotional support for their friends, listening to them, helping them solve problems and spending time with them while they just live their lives. Five to seven buddies make up a team, and as a senior team leader, Carr helped coordinate the leaders of the individual teams.

Working as a volunteer, Carr says she has learned "a great deal, not just about AIDS, but also about life." For Carr, one of the most important things a volunteer can provide to someone living with AIDS is their presence. Volunteers cannot stop the disease or relieve physical pain, but they can "be there for people who live in the face of losing so many things," relates Carr.

She says, "It feels strange to be getting this [award] because so many people do what I do," but at the same time, she feels fortunate because she can come forward and tell about her volunteer activities. For many people, the same ignorance that leads to the societal stigma of AIDS, also spills over into caregivers.

In receiving the National Outstanding Caregiver Award, Carr was selected from over 100 nominees. The Family AIDS Network, which administers the award,

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