

north & south CAROLINA



# Notes

noted . notable . noteworthy GLBT issues

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Justice for Brandon Teena

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stay safe. stay alive.

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Log Cabin Republicans' happy days are here

¡Para Todos! "Visitas de Hospital"

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Great heart, great help Charlie says thanks



Wells & Wells first couple to have their announcement printed in The Charlotte Observer

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Do you count your blessings?

. YES! . NO

. NO ...

but I'll start today

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happy chanukah november 29, 1st light

## World AIDS Day: December 1



a dying mother holds her children in both photos

WORLD AIDS DAY 2001

Photo credits: AVERT website. An international organization based in the UK, dedicated to AVERTing HIV/AIDS throughout the world

Individual photo credits:

South African mother & children: Ketan Joshi  
United Nations Building 2001: UN/DPI  
AIDS Memorial QUILT: Phil/CDC  
Woman with AIDS in China: UNAIDS/Noorami

Hear these photographs. Speak to their message. And act.

## South rising again: 40% of all new US HIV cases

16 southern states underfunded, NC ranks 50th in help for HIV/AIDS patients; 800 on list waiting for medication money

CHARLOTTE — On November 14, officials in the area of health from a 16-state region of the South urged both state and federal legislators to consider a more proactive stance in their approach to dealing with the AIDS crisis.

Officials from Delaware to Texas attended the three-day conference at the Sheraton Charlotte Airport Hotel. Among the officials was former US Surgeon General, Dr. David Satcher.

Racial and economic demographics as well as cultural conservatism were two of the reasons cited for the disproportionate number of both existing and new HIV infections across the region.

"It's not popular to talk about our differences and single out Southerners as not being able to talk about problems well or not being as accepting of different lifestyles and different sexual orientations," the chief of the NC Department of Health and Human Services' communicable disease programs,

Steven Cline, told the *Charlotte Observer*. "But we think that might be part of the puzzle in the South."

At the conference, officials released the *Southern States Manifesto*, a plan that suggests a more assertive approach in convincing legislators to increase funding against HIV and AIDS as well as creating new ways of providing outreach and treatment for people within high-risk groups.

"We need a lot more changes," former US Surgeon General Satcher said in his keynote address. "That's what this *Southern States Manifesto* is all about."

The manifesto calls for increased federal HIV/AIDS funding, enforcement of laws that require doctors to report HIV/AIDS cases and more work with community groups.

Problematic areas that need to be addressed, according to the group, include the fact that more people have AIDS in the South than any other single region in the country — in fact, the South accounts for as much as 40 percent of total cases; the fact that higher rates of new HIV and AIDS cases are seen in the South than any other single region; and the fact that the South also has higher incidence of other sexually transmitted

diseases. Statistics were provided by a report by national health care philanthropy, the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.

The rate of other sexually transmitted disease bears special significance because people with sexually transmitted diseases are more susceptible to HIV infection, and vice versa, noted Dr. Peter Leone, medical director for the NC Health Department's HIV/STD prevention and care programs.

The disease is striking most maliciously in minority communities. More than half the people with AIDS in the South are African American even though only 20 percent of the South's population is made up of that racial group. Among the hardest hit are minority females in rural areas.

The fear of many people in small towns and rural areas is that being identified as HIV/AIDS patients will result in stigmatization so they often avoid screening and treatment, health officials said.

And their fears are not unwarranted, said Kathryn Whetten, a Duke University researcher. She co-authored a recent book that tells the stories of 25 people living with the disease in rural Eastern North Carolina.

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