

Johanna Haynes new SCEC Chair

from page 1

to become actively involved with SCEC.

"I wasn't involved politically in Atlanta. I just never felt the need," she explains. "But here, I'm one of the lucky ones — I'm blessed. I've got a good job, I've got friends and family that support me and I can be out. So if I don't do it — there aren't a lot of people that can. I feel I need to do it."

Haynes' predecessor — Nekki Shutt — was based out of Columbia — giving her a bit more accessibility to statewide issues. Haynes doesn't think her Six Mile address will have any negative impact on her role as SCEC chair.

"It's one of the downfalls of having a statewide organization," she explains. "But I make it a point to try and attend as many things as I can."

She's worked directly with a number of South Carolina politicians over LGBT issues, including Republican Senator Mike Fair (an experience she describes as 'futile') and some of the state's good guys, like Democrat Senators Robert Ford, Maggie Glover and Gilda Cobb-Hunter.

"I'm very appreciative of those that are standing up for us," says Haynes. "There are a few and they're doing a great job at a high price for themselves, because it's so unpopular right now."

Despite the challenges LGBT folk in the state face, Haynes says she's ready to initiate change.

"SCEC's mission is to secure human

and civil rights for GLBT people of South Carolina," Haynes says matter-of-factly.

"Our focus was, and still is, on educating. Not just the people who don't know us, but our own people. There are plenty of people out there just like me who aren't involved, and feel just like I did"

We're also trying to help people understand the differences between marriage and civil union and why civil marriage is important."

In addition to Haynes' role as chair for SCEC, she is also director of case management for AIDS Upstate. Her partner, Cloy Wilson, works in cancer research for Cancer Centers of the Carolinas.

"We met through mutual friends," Haynes recalls. "And we're very happy here now. I've gotten real use to the quiet and I love the small town pace."

Like many LGBT individuals, Haynes has come to realize that you don't have to live in a city the size of New York, San Francisco or Atlanta to have an impact on the struggle for LGBT civil rights.

"Not everyone lives in Atlanta or San Francisco," says Haynes. "A lot of gay people live in smaller metropolitan and rural areas. People in Atlanta and San Francisco already have a lot of the rights that people in parts of South Carolina only dream of. They're able to be out, take their partners to office parties and put pictures of their family on their desk. You can make a big change in the world around

you by taking those beginning steps when you're comfortable.

"It's in places like these smaller towns where all the false beliefs and myths about the 'dangers' of gay people exist. They're here, they're not in the big city. I think it is important for us to stay here and make a difference here, especially if we love and appreciate the smaller town lifestyle. This is our home, too. We should be able to be free anywhere."

info:

www.scequality.org

Great Gay Adventures

ALYSON ADVENTURES INC.

▼HIKE
▼BIKE
▼DIVE
▼DREAM!

Choose your favorite activity, pick an exciting destination, and join us for a vacation you'll never forget.

1-800-825-9766

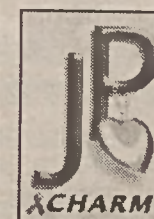
www.alysonadventures.com

HIV CASE MANAGEMENT IN IREDELL COUNTY

THE JEMSEK PROJECT announces HIV case management services in Iredell County.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call 704.929.0780.

www.Jemsek.org



The Jemsek Project

REGIONAL HIV AIDS CONSORTIUM

You have a friend in the car business ...

Need a New or Quality Pre-Owned Vehicle?

Get our lowest price and payment in 10 minutes or less, Guaranteed!

- Good Credit? • Not So Good Credit?
- Bad Credit?

We're here to help.

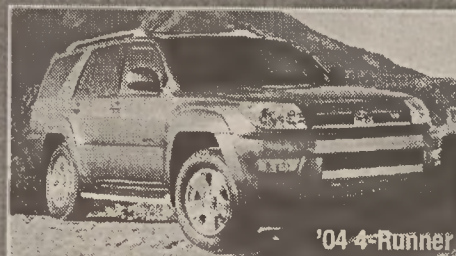
Call today and get the respect you deserve.

We're here to help.

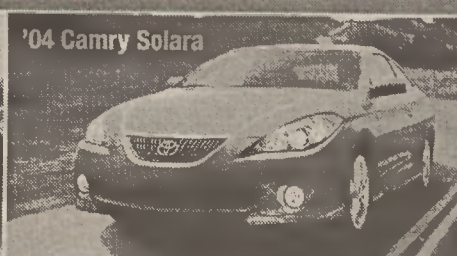
Please ask for:

- Peter Mereno • JaJa Mallory • Ryan Bartram
- Bernard Carter • Sam Gabbard

Mention this ad and Scott Clark's Toyota City will donate \$150 to the Human Rights Campaign in your name with every New/Pre-Owned purchase.



'04 4-Runner



'04 Camry Solara



'04 Tacoma



'04 Corolla



Scott Clark's Toyota City

6801 E. Independence Blvd. • Charlotte, NC 28227
704.535.1972 • www.scottclarkstoyota.com

