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ONLINE Q.POLL

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Even though it's only a symbolic gesture, do you think it's important for the Mecklenburg County Commission to repeal its endorsement of a state ban on gay marriage?

Yes . No

Next Issue:
Gays and the Holocaust

Philadelphia to host 40th anniversary of LGBT civil rights movement

National celebration '40 Years, 40 Heroes' expected to attract record attendance from across the country

by Dan Wagner

Twenty-eight national and international LGBT executive directors, 105 non-profit organizations and 30 statewide organizations are joining together in Philadelphia at Independence Hall on May 1 for "40 Years, 40 Heroes: The 40th Anniversary of the GLBT Civil Rights Movement."

"Our movement began when Frank Kameny, Barbara Gittings and 38 other gay pioneers were the first to openly demonstrate for equality at Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell on July 4, 1965," recalls Sally Susman, national co-chair of the 40th Anniversary Celebration. "They are our Rosa Parks. They refused the closet and demanded equal rights."

"We take no credit for having the 40th Anniversary Celebration at Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell," says Jonathan Capehart, also a co-chair for the event. "This was the iconic site chosen by gay pioneers. It is thrilling 40 years later so many will be part of the festivities."

"Equality Forum 2005 will be the largest gathering of national and international GLBT

executive directors," says Joe Farrell, Equality Forum's chairperson for their board of directors. "We are delighted that these leaders are playing an active role in this national celebration."

The national celebration on May 1 is on the concluding day of Equality Forum 2005, which kicks off April 25 and continues to May 1. The week-long forum has over 70 programs, parties and special events. There is no registration fee and all substantive programs, including the national celebration, are free.

"Never in the history of the movement have more national and international executive directors, non-profit organizations and statewide GLBT organizations joined together," says Malcolm Lazin, executive director of Equality Forum. "The national celebration will be a historic event and a statement of our solidarity."

The national celebration includes a salute of gay pioneers and heroes, as well as entertainers such as Kate Clinton and Cyndi Lauper.

"Cyndi Lauper's music and message



Protesters demonstrate for gay and lesbian rights in front of Independence Hall on July 4, 1965.

appeal to every generation of the GLBT community," says Lazin. "We love her music, from 'Girls Just Want To Have Fun' and 'True Colors' to her more recent hits. But Cyndi is more than a gay icon. She has been a major straight ally in the struggle for GLBT rights,

see **MOVEMENT** on 20

Chapel Hill opposes marriage amendment

Town council also looks to repeal DOMA and wants to include sexual orientation in hate crimes law

by David Moore
Q-Notes staff

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — The small North Carolina town of Chapel Hill has proven that metropolitan centers with high population figures or massive square miles are not limited to open minds and embracing hearts.

Support for an amendment to the state constitution banning same-sex marriages has come from Democratic Gov. Mike Easley and commissions in Mecklenburg, Gaston and Beaufort Counties. Chapel Hill's town council, however, unanimously voted against support for the amendment in a meeting held during the first week of March.

The eight-to-nothing vote also backed the repeal of North Carolina's *Defense of Marriage Act* (DOMA) and sought passage of a bill to make sexual orientation a protected cat-

see **CHAPEL** on 5



In contrast to the governor and several N.C. County Commissions, Chapel Hill voted unanimously to condemn the state's marriage amendment.

D.C. mayor's lesbian aide murdered

Wanda Alston failed to show up for work, neighbor charged with murder

by Donald Miller



LGBT activist Wanda Alston's work impacted gays and lesbians across the nation.

Longtime LGBT activist Wanda Alston, the liaison to the gay community for Washington, D.C., Mayor Anthony A. Williams and a prominent Democratic Party activist, was found murdered in her northeast D.C. home March 16.

Alston was found by her partner Stacey Long, who was called by city officials when they became concerned that Alston had not shown up for work or for an important meeting and had not called to explain her absence. Police said there was no sign of forced entry.

News reports indicate Alston was discovered still alive but unconscious in a large pool of blood. She was later pronounced dead at the scene by a member

see **ACTIVIST** on 20