

Say it loud: pride over prejudice!

north & south CAROLINA



Notes

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VOLUME 20 . ISSUE 1

SINCE 1986

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MAY 21 . 2005

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Are you planning on attending Charlotte Black Gay Pride?

yes no

Next Issue: Queer Art • Father's Day

Are we in the middle of a Holy War?

The religious crusade against gays has been building for 30 years, now the movement is reaching truly biblical proportions

Part one of a two-part series
by Bob Moser

On June 26, 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the convictions of two Texas men arrested for having sex. Writing for the majority in *Lawrence v. Texas*, Justice Anthony Kennedy said that the two men were "entitled to respect for their private lives." The state, he declared, "cannot demean their existence or control their destiny by making their private sexual conduct a crime."

The decision was unusually popular. A national survey found that 75 percent of Republicans and 88 percent of Democrats wanted to see sodomy laws struck down. But not everyone cheered.

"Six lawyers robed in black have magically discovered a right of privacy that includes sexual perversion," said Jan LaRue, chief counsel for Concerned Women for America. "This opens the door to bigamy, adult incest, polygamy and prostitution," said Ken Connor,

president of the Family Research Council.

For anti-gay crusaders, who have been fighting gay rights for three decades, *Lawrence* was the most unsettling court decision since *Roe v. Wade*. Fundamentalist groups had filed 15 briefs supporting Texas' sodomy laws, only to see their arguments — that gay sex was a threat to public health and "traditional family values," and that gay people do not deserve equal rights — shot down. And with the Massachusetts Supreme Court widely expected to rule that fall (as it did) that gay citizens had a right to marry under that state's constitution, anti-gay leaders realized the time was ripe to ratchet up their call to arms.

"America stands at a defining moment," said Lou Sheldon, founder of

the Traditional Values Coalition. "The only comparison is our battle for independence."



Faces of hate: Power mongers behind the anti-gay movement — (clockwise, from left) Ken Connor, president of the Family Research Council, D. James Kennedy, president of Coral Ridge Ministries, Pat Robertson, founder and chairman of the Christian Broadcasting Network, Lou Sheldon, founder of the Traditional Values Coalition, and Jerry Falwell, founder of the Moral Majority.

the Traditional

see TACTICS on 14

SWOOP cleans up the Triangle area

Women's volunteer group open to all women
by Donald Miller

According to LeAnn Wallace, one of the founders of the organization known around the Triangle area as SWOOP (Strong Women Organizing Outrageous Projects), the group unofficially began in September 1996 in the aftermath of Hurricane Fran in Raleigh



LeAnn Wallace (left) and Sandy Fitzgerald (right) flank HRC Carolinas Dinner Co-Chair Joni Madison at the recent HRC banquet, where Wallace and Fitzgerald received the 2005 Community Service Award.

Fitzgerald had told her partner after a particularly challenging clean-up. "So we decided to choose that name," says Wallace.

"Over the years the group has grown from just 16 see SWOOP on 7

"Hurricane Fran made this all happen," says Wallace. "After the storm a bunch of friends got together to help each other out — working on friends' homes and eventually helping people out of town, as well. It was so empowering to see a place that was a disaster totally cleaned up by the time we left."

It was Wallace's partner and the other founder of SWOOP, Sandy Fitzgerald, who came up with the idea of giving this group of empowered women a name.

"It's like we swoop in and everything is done,"

see SWOOP on 7

Charlotte Pride draws 3,000

Low turnout, protestors don't deter organizers

by David Moore
Q-Notes staff

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — An estimated 3,000 individuals attended Charlotte's gay Pride celebration, held in the city's Marshall Park on Saturday, May 8. Figures for last year's event were reportedly higher, but organizers are enthusiastic about more nationally-



Crowds listen to performers and speakers at Charlotte Pride.

known acts this year's event attracted and the increase of participants in the vendor market.

Despite an estimated turnout of around 70 protestors from the Concord-based anti-gay organization Operation Save America (OSA), festival organizers were still pleased about Pride and promise to be back next year, regardless of continued efforts by OSA to shut down the event.

"I'm proud of the fact that the par- see CHARLOTTE on 4