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& south  
CAROLINA



It's election season. Register to vote!

# Notes

noted . notable . noteworthy GLBT issues

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disaster was adequate?

. yes . no

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## New Orleans gays weather hurricane disaster

Despite storm and subsequent  
flooding, two gay business owners  
remain hopeful

by Ed Walsh

A desperate dispatch from New Orleans late Wednesday, Aug. 31, captured the chaos created by Hurricane Katrina. C.W. Stambaugh, owner of the gay Starlight by the Park bar in the French Quarter, emailed a final message from his laptop, which was running on battery power. Stambaugh typed hastily, as the typos show: "this will be my last message out. marshall law has been declared. they fixed the major levee we heard but the waters are still rising. we shall see. the gas is being cujt off at any moment. we cooked as much food as we cood but there saying now 30 days before electricy will be restored. the bar is closed. we brought people to our home and were making the best here. waterr was shut off last night. the gas to's tonight. we still have a phone but i cannot get local service. . . . there's a strong community still here but were trying to get people out. they announced that boats are are coming.v they will not say what time there loading. were staying to make suer thar ouhers get out. i hope4 this geetis to you.b keep the family!!!

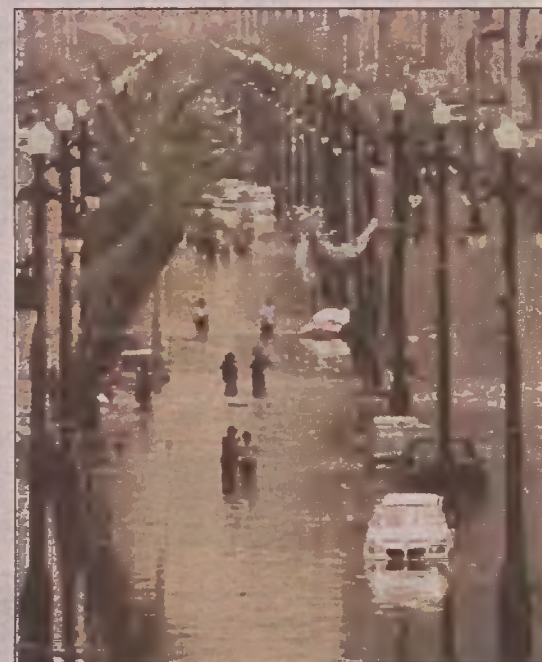
our love to all. this will be my last message. the battery in ther laptop is going out and the room is dark. forgive the mis-spelling. WE ARE FINE HERE!!! so far. take care and wish us the best!!!

Just a few days earlier, Stambaugh thought he had dodged a bullet.

He decided that he and any patrons who wanted to join him were going to defy Hurricane Katrina when it blasted through town on Sunday, August 28, with an impromptu "hurricane party." Stambaugh kept the club open all night throughout the storm. The nightspot quickly became a makeshift shelter for tourists and locals alike who had nowhere else to go.

"We used the bar as a shelter and the quality of the gay population, local and tourist, was fantastic. We all pulled together and fed and took care of each other," said Stambaugh.

According to Stambaugh, his bar sits on a slight hill away from the more flood-prone areas of the French Quarter. By default, it became a gay-friendly shelter of last resort. The Starlight and the Moulin



Floodwaters rising on Canal Street.

see GAYS on 4

## MeckPAC's fundraiser raises record amount

by Bert Woodard

CHARLOTTE — The Mecklenburg Gay & Lesbian Political Action Committee (MeckPAC) raised a record \$18,955 at its annual fundraiser, held this year at the Morehead Inn on August 25.

Several local candidates joined over 150 MeckPAC supporters at the August 25 fundraiser. Mayoral candidate Craig Madans, City Council candidates Darrell Bonapart, Susan Burgess, Nancy Carter, Nicholas Heath, Patsy Kinsey and Hardin Minor attended, as well as, school board candidates Mukul Datta, Donna Jenkins Dawson and Peter Sidebottom.



Left to right: City Council candidate Darrell Bonapart; fundraiser co-chairs Brooks Shelley, Cindy Hostetler, Elizabeth Pruet; City Councilmember Nancy Carter; fundraiser co-chair Phil Hargett and School Board candidate Donna Jenkins Dawson at the Morehead Inn.

Connie Vetter, who co-chairs with Wells, added, "This annual event has proven to be a great way for candidates to connect with LGBT and fair-minded voters who want Charlotte to be a city where people are treated fairly and equally."

Info: www.meckpac.org

## N.C. Legislature adjourns; passes on marriage bill

Equality NC at the forefront of stopping anti-LGBT amendment  
by John Palmer

RALEIGH — The North Carolina General Assembly adjourned its 2005 session Sept. 2 without voting on a proposed anti-LGBT state constitutional amendment. For the second year in a row, North Carolina is the only state in the Southeast that faced an anti-gay amendment and stopped it in the legislature.

Equality NC (ENC) and their allies worked together to stop the attack on LGBT families that would not only have denied equal marriage rights to same-sex couples, but would have prohibited any form of recognition for same-sex couples. The language of the amendment was so broad it could even have prevented private employers from offering partner health benefits.

"This remarkable victory is made possible because of lots of hard work by Equality North Carolina, our allies, and our members across the state," said ENC Executive Director of Programs Ian Palmquist, "Without the financial support of our members, and the willingness of our supporters to take action, this wouldn't have been possible."

"This is a huge victory for LGBT North Carolinians, but our work is far from over."

"We know that this amendment will be back again in the spring when the General Assembly returns to Raleigh on May 9. Equality NC will be there, ready to fight for equal rights and justice."

Info: www.equalitync.org

