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Welcome to N.C. Pride!

This year's parade theme:
'Equal Rights: No More, No Less'

DURHAM, N.C. — The 21st annual North Carolina Pride Parade will take place at 1 p.m. on Sept. 24 launching from Duke University East Campus.

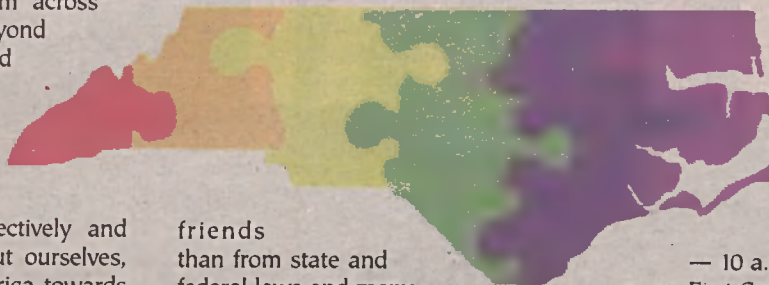
Pointing to years of increasing success and popularity, organizers expect thousands of participants and attendees from across North Carolina and from well beyond state borders, including large and growing numbers of non-gay participants and spectators.

"This parade is about celebrating how far the LGBT community has come and showing that, collectively and individually, we feel good about ourselves, that we continue to push America towards 'freedom and justice for all' and that we have many allies and supporters on our side," says Keith Hayes, spokesperson for the Pride Committee of North Carolina.

"Any fair-minded person who spends 30 minutes at our PrideFest will never question the joy and excitement that come from being inclusive, building bridges and being open,

honest, self-affirming and diverse."

"Equal Rights: No More, No Less" is the international theme of LGBT Pride organizations and events for 2005. It highlights the fact that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people still face significant discrimination — although today that discrimination comes less from individuals, employers, family or



friends than from state and federal laws and many religious organizations.

The theme also underscores the LGBT community's insistence on securing the basic rights and protections that virtually all other minority groups in America enjoy — the right to non-discrimination in the workplace, the right to protection under law against violence and the right to marriage or

civil unions that confer all the benefits and responsibilities of marriage.

In 2004, an estimated 5,000 people from across North Carolina, across the Southeast and as far away as Ohio, New York and California attended the Pride Parade in Durham. This is the sixth consecutive year that the parade has taken place in Durham — largely a reflection of the welcoming attitude of Duke University, the City of Durham and the dozens of merchants and business owners along the Ninth, Broad and Markham Sts. parade route.

Signature Pride Parade activities include:

- Pride Parade Rally and Vendor Fair — 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sept. 24, Duke University East Campus

- Pride Parade — 1 p.m.-2:15 p.m., Main St. and Campus Dr. through Ninth, Markham and Broad Sts., Durham.

See the Pride events calendar on page 38 for the full list of activities.

info:
www.ncpride.org

Gay and HIV-positive; Katrina victim resettles in Charlotte

Chris Odeven excited about calling North Carolina home

by David Moore
Q-Notes staff

Odeven "Chris" Christopher has been through a lot in his lifetime. A New Orleans native resident, Christopher has battled multiple hurricanes and waged an ongoing fight for his health since he was diagnosed as HIV-positive a few years back.



Odeven "Chris" Christopher and Buddy outside their new Charlotte home.

There's no question Christopher's got a strong will, but even he was eventually overwhelmed by Hurricane Katrina and the resulting aftermath that would leave him cut off from the rest of the world.

In the early morning hours of Aug. 29, Christopher and his tiny little teacup chihuahua Buddy weathered the onslaught of Katrina from the Mid Cities neighborhood as it roared into the city.

"It started around 4 a.m.,"

see **KATRINA** on 7

One Voice Chorus announces new artistic director

Rehearsals currently underway

by Pam Young

After a nationwide search process, One Voice Chorus, the gay, lesbian and gay-affirmative chorus of Charlotte, announced the appointment of its new artistic director, Steav W. Bates-Congdon, to lead the award-winning group into their 2005/2006 season.

Bates-Congdon brings his extensive musical background and training to One Voice as it begins a transformational 16th year.

"Choral music is the highest achievement of all musical sound," Bates-Congdon says. "Everyone has a voice, and to take that phenomenal, natural, exquisite sound and combine it in a controlled form, synchronized with others, is absolutely awesome."

He ought to know. After receiving his B.P.S. in conducting and voice from Crane School of Music and his M. Div. from the alma mater of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Bates-Congdon became the youngest Master of the Choristers in the 130-plus year history of the Pingry School.



One Voice's new Artistic Director Steav Bates-Congdon led the Syracuse Gay & Lesbian Chorus for eight seasons.

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