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Would you consider refusing to file your taxes in protest of the proposed same-sex marriage amendment?  
yes . no

Next Issue: Gardening

## Refusing to file: is a ban on same-sex marriage the same as taxation without representation?

*Hendersonville gay couple's refusal to pay taxes is sparking a nationwide movement*

by Donald Miller

HENDERSONVILLE, N.C. — Just outside the tiny town of Hendersonville, N.C. lives a 71-year-old artist who has sparked what may develop into a nationwide movement in protest of same-sex marriage bans.

Charles Merrill's name popped up in the media several weeks ago when he and his partner Kevin Boyle announced that they would not pay Federal or North Carolina Income Tax on over two million dollars worth of stock sales and income for 2004, because of unfair discrimination in the Federal and State Income Tax Codes.

"I have no intention of paying Federal and State Income taxes because my same-sex partner and I cannot be legally married and receive the same tax benefits as other mar-

ried couples," Merrill explained.

"By not paying taxes, this is a deliberate act of civil disobedience towards a president that wants to make an amendment to the Constitution to only allow marriage between a man and woman, rather than two people who love each other, and that discriminates against us as full citizens of the United States."

Merrill is back in the spotlight, as his initial movement seems to be picking up steam around the country as a way to protest anti-gay discrimination.

Merrill didn't pay for 2004 and won't for 2005, even if there are consequences. He says he'll fight in court even if it results in jail time.

"I'm not afraid of the consequences," says Merrill. "I'm 71 years old. I've had a great life. This is my opportunity to make a state-

see **GAY** on 5



Charles Merrill says President Bush's endorsement of a same-sex marriage ban is discrimination against American citizens.

## N.C. State Sen. Julia Boseman to speak at Charlotte Guild

*Boseman previously spent four years on the New Hanover County Board of Commissioners*

by Bert Woodard

State Senator Julia Boseman (D-Hanover), from Wilmington, will speak at the Charlotte Business Guild's (CBG) March 21 meeting. Boseman is the first and to date the only openly gay member of the North Carolina General Assembly.

Born and raised in New Hanover County, Boseman graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Finance from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington in 1989. She received her law degree from North Carolina Central University in 1992 and has been a practicing attorney in Wilmington for more than a decade.

She was elected to the New Hanover County Board of Commissioners in 2000 and served four years with distinction. Her civic boards and committees include UNCW Board of Visitors, Board of Trustees of New Hanover Regional Medical Center and the Legion Stadium Commission. She formerly served on the Transportation Advisory Committee, Girls, Inc. and the

UNCW Seahawk Club Board of Directors.

Boseman and her partner, who is the softball coach at UNCW, have one child.

see **GUILD** on 4



N.C. State Senator Julia Boseman is the first and only openly gay member of the North Carolina General Assembly.

## A soldier's story

### Joy and pain

**Editor's Note:** These are the thoughts of a gay soldier — a North Carolina native — who has been deployed to Iraq. Because of the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, he must remain anonymous.

In the shadow of the "Mohammed Cartoon-Gate" and the recent blowing up of the ancient Shia Mosque, things in Central Iraq have been really uneasy. My feelings of nervousness and apprehension change minute by minute as new reports come to us from the intelligence officer. My emotions and strength lately have been like the



tides, they go and come based on the events around the camp. You just never know what to expect, one minute you're laughing and enjoying a cup of coffee — the next you're diving into a bunker to avoid indirect fire, mortars or rockets coming into the base.

Sad occurrences are becoming a daily thing for me. Recently, one of my interpreters' lost his father. He was kidnapped and shot in the head — all in the name of religion. I find it confusing sometimes — Islam teaches peace and kindness. Not many people are following those teachings it seems.

I can tell you there isn't much peace here currently and we are in the midst of what I feel is civil war.

In another section where I work insurgents broke into one of our interpreters houses. The family was interrogated and threatened and told they should not be working with the Iraqi army and the coalition forces.

It is very dangerous for the interpreters and the soldiers to admit publicly they're working with the new government or with the coalition — it's a

see **SOLDIER'S** on 4