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yes . no

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Get ready for S.C. Pride 2006

New location and exciting new line-up of entertainment includes Pepper Mashay and a Nickelodeon-sponsored gay film fest.

by Ed Madden and
Donald Miller

COLUMBIA — The South Carolina Gay and Lesbian Pride Movement (SCGLPM) will host the 15th Anniversary South Carolina Pride Parade and Festival in Columbia on May 20. The festival is part of a week of activities and events celebrating the theme, "We the people... includes everyone!"

"The message behind the theme is meant to drive home the message that the upcoming constitutional amendment really will be harmful to LGBT families," says Kate Goodrich, the newly elected president of SCGLPM. "With that theme in mind, we're also trying to make the center more inclusive of the entire LGBT community — lesbians, the community of color, the transgender community, everyone is welcome."

The central events of South Carolina Pride will be the parade and festival, which will be held in downtown Columbia. The festival has a new home this year, moving from Finlay Park to Martin Luther King Jr. Park in Five Points.

According to Goodrich, the move has

been fortuitous, although it was not intentional. "We didn't get the contract for Finlay Park," she explains. "Another group got the permit before we did."

Pride organizer Radar Williams confirms that the annual Columbia Women's Run did actually get the permit before SCGLPM in order to hold an awards ceremony.

Despite the change of venue, Goodrich sees it as a positive move.

"This is increasing our visibility," says Goodrich. "We'll also be marching down Devine St. during the parade. Past the business district on that street are residential neighborhoods — so we want to tie together the notion that we're all neighbors and families and friends. We're also hoping to draw a lot more spectators since we'll be so close to where a lot of people live."

Expected to be the largest in the organization's history, the parade will begin at noon, proceed down Devine St. and through Five Points into Martin Luther King Jr. Park. The festival and celebration, featuring vendors and live entertainment, will be held 1-6 p.m. in the park.

Both Williams and Goodrich confirm that last year's attendance for the festival and related events numbered somewhere around 2,000.

"This festival has been around for 15 years now, continuously growing and we're



Revelers in Pride March '05.

really hoping more people will come out this year, especially because of the amendment," says Goodrich.

The year's festival guests include lifelong women's rights and lesbian activist Mandy Carter and South Carolina progressive activist Brett Bursey.

Entertainment will include many local

see **SOUTH** on 10

PRIDE Charlotte announces
date and location

Changes include new leadership, new vision and new location

by Mark Smith

CHARLOTTE — At a press conference held May 5 at The Lesbian and Gay Community Center of Charlotte, organizers officially announced that the Center is now officially taking charge of the annual Pride celebration in the Queen City.

"With a new name, new location and a new vision, we're extremely excited to announce that this year's PRIDE Charlotte Festival will be held at Gateway Center," said Laura Witkowski, co-chair of the PRIDE Charlotte Task Force and executive director of the Center.

Witkowski and PRIDE Charlotte co-chair Jim Yarbrough went on to confirm that the event will take place on Saturday, Aug. 26.

"It's a date that works out well with what's going on in other communities around the Carolinas and in accordance to our planning," said Witkowski. "I know there will be people that will be bummed because it's not taking place in June, but at the same time to have a quality event, we have to have a feasible amount of planning time. We don't want to sell ourselves short."

Organizers say they're expecting crowds similar in size to last year and think they'll find the new digs an added incentive to want to attend.

"Gateway is a wonderful site," says Yarbrough. "It's in

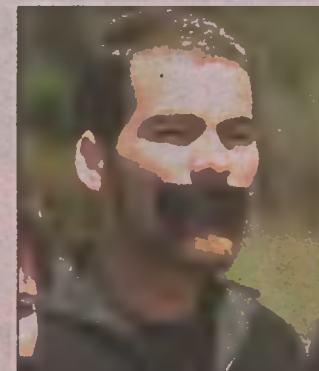
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Twenty-one
arrested at West
Point Equality Ride
action

Equality Ride comes to a close

by Richard Lindsay

HIGHLAND FALLS, N.Y. — Military police arrested 15 Soulforce Equality Riders and six community members as they attempted to step onto the United States Military Academy at West Point to speak as citizens and taxpayers opposed to the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. The policy prevents out LGBT people from serving in the military or attending West Point.

Silent protest by Soulforce
demonstrator.

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Don't miss the special 20th anniversary edition of Q-Notes May 20.