

We're 8,000 strong...and proud

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are just generally pretty good people wherever you go. We've been made to feel extremely wel-

placards covered with anti-gay slogans.

Shortly after the parade, OSA, apparently discouraged by the response, left the festival.

"I think the impact they had was minimal," says Hayes. "They're not reflective of this city. Durham has always been very supportive. So have the University, the police and the business owners. They're so supportive they put gay stickers in windows and advertise in the Pride Guide."

According to Hayes plans for next year are already in the works.

"We're already talking about it," he says enthusiastically. "We'll have our first meeting in March and the real work begins around May. This is always very rewarding." ▀

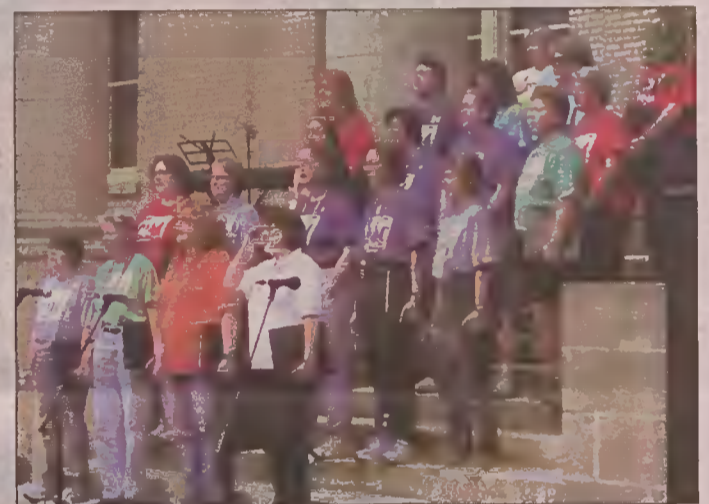


come and we definitely plan to be back next year."

News media throughout the state picked up on the successful event and some stations even began using Hayes' soundbite "feel-good event of the year" as a tagline when describing the fest.

Although a minor contingent of protestors from Concord's Operation Save America (OSA) showed up to protest, they were quickly removed from the college campus and had their loud speaker cut off when police determined that they did not have a permit.

At one point just prior to the parade, a group of young LGBT activists formed a wall in front of the protestors, blocking from view



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