



OPENING SOON

Check out this non-surgical face and body lift at www.kptv.com/news/14445915/detail.html. Then email us at JGM.Ltd@choiceonemail.com for further information and opening date.



828-322-8103

101 N. Center St.
Hickory, NC 28601

Open Thursday-Sunday
9:30 pm - until

www.clubcabaret.net



Add some
spice to your
New Year!

BLOWOUT SALE — up to 75% off

Many items to choose from to
heat up those cold, wintery nights.



5309-F E. Independence Blvd. • Charlotte, NC 28212
704.567.5515
www.adamevecharlotte.com

PROJECTIONS

A look ahead to 2008

from page 1

(ENDA) will continue to be a focal point for the LGBT community. Transgender protections are still excluded from the bill and more Capitol Hill wrangling over the legislation is likely to occur. Rumor has it that U.S. Rep. Barney Frank and other Democratic leaders will continue to push the trans-less version. ENDA must pass the Senate and be signed by the president to become law. Although the former may happen, don't bet too much on the latter happening until a Democrat takes office in 2009.

Hate Crimes

In 2007, both the House and the Senate passed hate crimes legislation. In late November, however, the Senate dropped its version from the defense reauthorization bill, effectively killing the issue for the year. The likelihood of Bush signing any form of hate crimes legislation is infinitesimal, but at least the LGBT community might finally see the bill through Congress and onto the president's desk.

Safe Schools

In May 2007, the N.C. House of Representatives passed the first LGBT-inclusive bill to ever make it through either chamber of the N.C. General Assembly. The bill, the School Violence Prevention Act, contained enumerated categories for protection, including specific safeguards on the basis of sexual orientation and gender-identity/expression. Once the measure was sent to the Senate, the categories were stripped out. House leaders have promised a conference report on the bill early this year. They say they'll do all they can to get the enumerated categories — including the LGBT protections — put back in the bill. The legislation's chief sponsor, Rep. Rick Glazier, said he'd never agree to a bill that didn't include the specific protections. By the end of 2008, North Carolina just might have statewide school safety, anti-bullying and non-discrimination regulations for our LGBT youth.

Religious Right

While the national wingnut groups will work to shroud their hate and bigotry in pseudo-political terms ("special rights," First Amendment protections, etc.), the anti-queer,

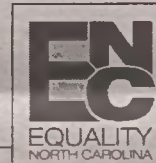
on-the-streets radicals of the Carolinas will give us more fire-and-brimstone preaching and protesting. Expect groups like Operation Save America (OSA) and Coalition of Conscience (CoC) to be evangelizing outside the Human Rights Campaign Carolinas Gala in February, organizing more "forums" for "dialogue" (read: bashing), protesting at Pride events around the Carolinas and anywhere else that we gather to be ourselves.

"Don't Ask, Don't Tell"

The military gay ban signed by President Clinton in 1993 faced more criticism in 2007 than it has received since its inception. Gay servicemembers outed themselves; others were outed, booted and then spoke out; former and retired generals and other military leaders stood up for DADT's repeal; and, all Democratic presidential candidates promised to scrap the policy. Expect 2008 to be no different. On the campaign trail, in the halls of Congress and in our neighborhood diners and hangout spots, DADT is going to be debated again and again. With each passing month and with each additional military leader who publicly denounces the policy, the result becomes more obvious. DADT will be repealed — if not in 2008, then sometime soon thereafter.

Community Organizing

Equality North Carolina and the South Carolina Equality Coalition have a lot of ground to cover in 2008. Equality NC is becoming a political powerhouse with their smart strategies and ability to forge alliances with legislative leaders in Raleigh. SCEC recently hired a new executive director, C. Ray Drew, with the national organizing experience to move South Carolina forward on issues like hate crimes legislation and non-discrimination. Utilizing Drew's extensive lobbying and leadership experience and taking cues from what has worked in places like North Carolina, SCEC is poised to make real gains in Columbia. The advocacy of Elke Kennedy and her Sean's Last Wish foundation should also prove to be significant. The Carolina's LGBT community is well-positioned for advancement (even if in small steps) throughout 2008 and in years to come. ▀





Connie J. Vetter
Attorney and Counsellor at Law

CJVLaw.com
704-567-5530

Varnadore Building
Charlotte