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BRIEFS

**news notes:
from the carolinas, nation and world**

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Parents start PFLAG chapter

HICKORY — A small group of people got together on Jan. 18 to begin the process of creating a Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays chapter. Each of them simply wanted to help create a safe place for those who have gay and lesbian children or friends. They wanted to provide a confidential environment for conversations and discussions to ease the pain and/or confusion of the coming out process.

Kathy and Richard Greathouse, together with Debbie Cox and Ed Farthing, spearheaded this effort. They wanted to revive a chapter in the Catawba area that had laid dormant since 2005 when it disbanded.

Greathouse remembered when in the 1990s, her son came out and found PFLAG helpful. She saw parents at every stage of the journey and felt comforted by their stories. She stayed with it until the early 2000s.

With the recent suicide deaths of youth across the nation, they all felt that it was time to get together to discuss bullying. None of them felt that they could simply stand by without doing something.

"Fear is big enough. The group is essential for parents who are trying to figure things out," Greathouse said.

Currently, the chapter is in the formative stage. It will be meeting on the fourth Monday of every month at the Women's Resource Center, 125 3rd St. N.E. At the next meeting, regional and state PFLAG officials will be joining them to get information and organizational tips. They will also share how a chapter works and it can benefit from established resources.

Greathouse added that PFLAG was about wanting love, not hate, thus becoming a bit of a moniker of the organization.

For more information, call the Greenhouses at 828-994-2131; Cox at 828-466-2284; or Farthing at 828-322-2805.

— L.M.

Charlotte

TOY welcomes new board members

CHARLOTTE — Ivey Graham, Michael Holmes, Steve Wilson and Jeremy Carter have taken positions on the Time Out Youth board. Leaving are John Johnson and Brandon G. Major.

— L.M.

Triad

Parade slated

WINSTON-SALEM — Equality Winston-Salem (EWS) has announced its plans for a Pride parade on Oct. 15, the first one in well over a decade.

Steve McGinnis, one of the co-founders of the community rights organization, told *The Winston-Salem Journal* that the city was not visible enough. The retired school system principal wants people to recognize the presence of the LGBT community and the differences that it makes to the Triad.

The leaders of EWS felt that the climate

was just right to be holding a celebration. On the coat tails of the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," recent statements by Rep. Larry Brown, as well as other issues, there could not be a better time to champion LGBT equality.

The parade will be coordinated with other local groups in order to represent all factions.

— L.M.

Triangle

March hits streets

RALEIGH — On Feb 12, Equality North Carolina (ENC) and the NC Aids Action Network (NCAAN) participated in the fifth annual "Historic Thousands on Jones Street" (HKonJ) march in downtown Raleigh.

The rally was organized by 107 civil rights, religious and other non-profit groups, lead by the North Carolina NAACP, to bring attention to a progressive 14-point agenda that included equal rights, education, jobs, criminal justice, and voting rights. Almost 1,000 participants (according to WRAL.com; News Channel 14 says "hundreds;" NBC 17 says "thousands") marched from Shaw University to rally outside the state Legislative Building on Jones St.

During the event, ENC worked to raise awareness of LGBT issues and gathered signatures to oppose a proposed marriage discrimination amendment to the North Carolina Constitution. NCAAN focused on educating participants on HIV/AIDS related issues and getting people to sign up to protect the Aids Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) which provides essential medication to low-income citizens in the state. North Carolina officials say ADAP will run out of funds for new enrollments in late March. Over 330 signatures were collected.

North Carolina NAACP President Rev. William Barber noted that it was the 102nd anniversary of the NAACP's founding. "We stand in that tradition that still refuses to believe that inequality and injustice has the last word," he said. "We want economic justice, good jobs and labor rights for all our people, and we want to see equal protection under the law for everyone."

Though LGBT equality is not currently part of the HKonJ agenda, one of the speakers did allude to LGBT civil rights, referencing the need to end discrimination against people based on whom they love.

— L.M. (Shawn Long, ENC, contributed to this report.)

Asexuals to hold meeting

RALEIGH — The first meeting of Aces United, a group for asexuals, will be held on March 5 at 7 p.m. at the Cheesecake Factory, 4325 Glenwood Ave.

The focus of the get-together is to allow members the opportunity to talk about their experiences and share what they hope to get out of participating in the group.

Asexuality is the states in which a person does not experience sexual attraction.

Stephanie Silberstein, the organizer, said she felt out of place in LGBT social events and wanted to create a space where she and others could find common ground.

Attendance is free and is open to anyone who identifies as asexual.

For more information, visit meetup.com/Aces-United.

— L.M.

Getting better at NCSU

RALEIGH — North Carolina State University's (NCSU) GLBT Center has hit the small screen, so to say, with the release of a video for the "It Gets Better" project which was launched by syndicated columnist and author Dan Savage last fall.

It was produced by Center director for GLBT Programs and Services Justine Hollingshead.

The *Technician* reported that Hollingshead "selected the three main people so that there would be differing perspectives. She said she wanted to select a transgender student, a gay student and a lesbian student."

Maddy Goss, a part-time computer science major represented the transgender portion of the campus. Justin Kadel, who left the campus in 1995 due to harassment, is the voice of the gay population. Communications Senior Stephanie Raney rounds out the trio as the lesbian representative.

Will Lamb recorded and edited the piece. He is a senior in communications. Hollingshead was pleased with his treatment and said that the two wanted to be sure to have the filming be "Wolfpack warm." They included the Belltower, the Free Expression Tunnel and classroom settings as a backdrop to the storyline.

To view the video, visit youtube.com/watch?v=xuSNuPM5Bsl.

For more information, visit news.collegemedianetwork.com/news/glbtc-center-creates-own-it-gets-better-video.

— L.M.

Western

WNCAP's leader retires

ASHEVILLE — Ron Curran, Western North Carolina AIDS Project (WNCAP) executive director, has announced that he will retire from the board effective June 30.

The board has initiated a formal search committee and is accepting applications and hopes to fill Curran's shoes prior to his departure.

According to the *Citizen-Times*, "Curran's legacy includes a stable financial future thanks to a diverse source of funding, which includes a mixture of state and local money and foundation grants." The newspaper also reported that Curran was someone who did not leave his work at the office. "I know Ron, and I know him personally, and I know that he is always thinking about WNCAP. And I think that's unique. I think his leadership style is very unique in that it was not just in his mind, but in his heart," Pam Siekman, friend and board member said.

WNCAP's successful signature fundraisers, Dining Out for Life and Raise Your Hand, have been part of his leadership legacy. This, peppered with unwavering passion and fiscal responsibility, helped to solidify the future of the organization through capturing both state and local money along with foundation grants.

With offices in Asheville and Hendersonville, it also operates two satel-