



news notes: carolinas

compiled by Lainey Millen & Matt Comer

Paddlers come into own



One World Dragon Boat recently picked up their trailer from Central Piedmont Community College's welding class. Pictured are student

Brian Durrette, One World founder Denise Bauer, paddler Jennifer Stockwell and student Jonathan Skaggs. Inset: Fabrication of the trailer required all hands on deck.

of Welding Technology at the Charlotte campus. Jennifer Stockwell, a One World paddler, helped to make this possible by approaching the department head, Steve Gore, to secure the services. Instructor Johnny Johnson supervised student Jonathan Skaggs who has served as project coordinator with assistance by Brian Durrette. The Huntersville campus will do the automotive work and painting.

"We are thrilled and exhilarated by the entire process because it is words in action, it is 'building community through sport,' a win-win for the community, for Jonathan, the wonderful and magnetic young student, our team and the college," Bauer concluded.

The boat will be ready to use when the season opens.

info: oneworlddragonboat.org.

CHARLOTTE — One World Dragon Boat has reached an important milestone recently by purchasing their own boat.

With the assistance of a \$2,500 grant from the Charlotte Lesbian & Gay Fund, they were able to use it as a spring board to obtain a one-time used boat.

Over the last year, One World has netted Best Float in the 2014 Bank of America Charlotte Pride Parade, held a raffle at the celebration and enjoyed an after-party full of energy. By collecting \$8,500 through the fundraisers and contributions from friends and family, the dream of having their own boat came to fruition.

Denise Bauer, founder of One World, said that the boat "carried cancer survivors in a world competition that was held in Sarasota during October 2014." She shared that they were proud to have such a legacy as part of their team and named it Triumph.

In mid-February, the boat was paired with a newly-built trailer. It was fabricated by Central Piedmont Community College's welding class in the James Turner Institute

LGBTQ faith work, LGBTQ history and more.

The event's morning keynote speaker is University of North Carolina-Charlotte staffer and Charlotte LGBTQ Community Archive organizer Joshua Burford. The closing keynote speaker is this publication's editor, Matt Comer. Other speakers and workshop presenters include Robert Kellogg, Jim Long, Diana Fehr, Annie Earle, Dr. Amy Sifford and Ginger Feimster, among others.

Learn more about the event and see a schedule of workshops at gastonpride.com/event/sharing-our-stories/. Registration for the event is free and available at eventbrite.com/e/sharing-our-stories-an-lgbtq-awareness-and-education-event-tickets-15855686786.

— M.C.

Survey ponders state of community

GASTONIA — A short survey is collecting information in hopes of presenting results that help to define the current state of the LGBT community in Gaston County. The results, which are being collected anonymously, will be presented by community organizer Robert Kellogg in a workshop at the Gaston Has Heart March 28 conference, "Sharing Our Stories: An LGBTQ Awareness and Education Event." [Ed. Note — This publication's editor is a keynote speaker at the conference.]

Kellogg asks that only those people who identify as LGBTQ and reside in Gaston County complete the survey. The survey remains open through March 9. Kellogg hopes to do a future survey for straight allies.

The survey includes 16 questions, including on topics like family support, bullying, politics and other community concerns. The survey is available online at surveymonkey.com/s/C8MXP7P?fb_ref=Default

— M.C.

Charlotte

Parish to host conference

CHARLOTTE — The Parish Gay & Lesbian Ministry of St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, 507 S. Tryon St., and PFLAG Charlotte will hold a conference on May 16, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

The event, "Including LGBT People and Their Families in Faith Communities," is open to the community and is free of charge.

"Our hope is that the conference will help parents see their LGBT children as loved by God and created by God to be just as they are. We expect the conference to give inspiration and practical tools to help more congregations to become LGBT welcoming," PFLAG Vice President Jim Green said.

He added, "We at PFLAG frequently talk to parents whose high school or college-aged children come out as LGBT. The parents often are upset and worried. The parents who are most troubled about LGBT children are parents who have received strong anti-LGBT messages from their faith communities. Often they have never heard spiritual perspectives that affirm their LGBT children. So we work to help the parents have more information. And, we want to work toward more faith communities becoming LGBT affirming."

Keynote speaker will be Sister Jeannine Gramick, Ph.D., a Roman Catholic nun. She helped to co-found News Ways Ministry, an organization advocating for justice and inclusion for LGBT individuals and their families and has been an activist in the movement for decades.

info: Diane Troy, 704-578-5065. pflagcharlotte@yahoo.com. Jim Green, 704-375-2822. jimgreenmdiv@gmail.com.

— L.M.

Group gets 'Kinky' for party

CHARLOTTE — The Out on the Town affinity group from Blumenthal Performing Arts Center will host a post-show party after seeing the award-winning musical production of "Kinky Boots" on March 19, 9:45 p.m., at Blue Restaurant and Bar, 206 N. College St.

"Kinky Boots" was scored by Cyndi Lauper. It is based upon Tony Award winner Harvey Fierstein's book.

An RSVP is required by email to bcarter@ncbpac.org.

For those who are not members, simply send an email to outonthetown@ncbpac.org with name, email address and address.

Tickets are available for the performance at 7:30 p.m. in the Belk Theatre, and are available online.

And, due to the popularity of the production, it has been booked for a return performance from Dec. 29-Jan. 3.

info: blumenthalarts.org. 704-372-1000.

— L.M.

Guild celebrates with gala, awards

CHARLOTTE — The Charlotte Business Guild will host its A Giving Gala & Award Ceremony on March 21 at Label, 900 N.C. Music Factory Blvd.

Cocktail hour begins at 6 p.m., with dinner following at 7:30 p.m. Attendees can enjoy hors d'oeuvres, dinner and cash bar.

TV personality Jessica Milicevic will serve as emcee and The Tenya Coleman Quartet will provide entertainment, along with a house DJ.

Sen. Jeff Jackson (D-37), Charlotte City Councilwoman LaWana Mayfield and Rocio Gonzales, executive director of the Latin-American Chamber of Commerce are the slated speakers for the evening.

Tickets for members, non-members, VIP, couples, seniors, veterans, military and student options are available online. Tables of eight can be secured as well.

info: charlottebusinessguild.org.

— L.M.

Gaston to hold LGBT conference

GASTONIA — Gaston Has Heart will host a free, one-day LGBT awareness and education conference, "Sharing Our Stories: An LGBTQ Awareness and Education Event," on March 28, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., at All Saints' Episcopal church, 1201 S. New Hope Rd.

Gaston Has Heart is a new LGBT community group, and the conference is a way to introduce the new group and educate the community, organizers say.

"A few months ago, a group gathered to discuss ways for supporting our brothers and sisters," the group says. "Out of that meeting, came the idea for several opportunities — including [the March 28] Awareness Event. We also gather the first Wednesday of each month for our Wednesday Walks for Awareness. Each walk has a different theme related to the LGBTQ Community."

Several community leaders will present workshops, including on topics like LGBTQ youth,

Triad

Foundation all set for fundraisers

GREENSBORO — The Guilford Green Foundation is all set for fun during the Feb. 27th weekend.

On Feb. 27, 6:30 p.m., at The Elm Street Center, 203 S. Elm St., join host Shirli Stevenz for "Bingo's a Drag."

Tickets are \$15/advance, \$20/at the door, student and military/\$15 at the door and are available online.

The foundation has team up with The Poetry Collective so that attendees can enjoy the spoken word artist Buddy Wakefield. The "Riled Up and Wasted on Light" tour will be held on Feb. 28, 6:30 p.m., at the Community Theatre Greensboro Studio, 520 S. Elm St.

Guilford Green shared that Wakefield is a three-time world champion spoken word artist featured on the BBC, ABC Radio National, HBO's "Def Poetry Jam," NPR and most recently signed to Ani DiFranco's Righteous Babe Records. In 2004 he won the Individual World Poetry Slam Finals thanks to the support of anthropologist and producer Norman Lear then successfully defended that title at the International Poetry Festival in Rotterdam, Netherlands, against the national champions of seven European countries with works translated into Dutch.

Tickets are \$13 and are available online. Ticket holders can attend a poetry writing workshop with Wakefield on March 1 free of charge. Expedient purchase of tickets is encouraged due to limited seating.

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