

C. L. O. S. E. R. C O N N E C T I O N S

Newsletter of the Community Liaison Organization for Support, Education, and Reform

Asheville, North Carolina

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CLOSER is committed to improving the lives of gay men and lesbians in the Asheville area. Sometimes that translates into providing a loving environment in which each of us feels welcome and accepted. Our Tuesday night meetings, whether they be completely socially oriented or whether they also include an element of serious discussion, provide that. We are a caring bunch of people.

Sometimes the opportunity to improve our own lives as gay men and lesbians, as well as the lives of our brothers and sisters across the country, is less tangible than hugs and smiles. Sometimes it involves trying to change the world so that IT is more loving and accepting of us. As we all know, it's not easy to change it. But every election day we get a chance to elect those who can help us change the world. VOTING for people who can help us is one of the simplest and one of the most effective ways of beginning to improve our lives. Get them elected, and then, as gay Congressman Barney Frank told us last spring, we can work on them to work for us.

Which Presidential candidate will be most favorable to our needs? I refer you to the enclosed leaflet published by the Human Rights Campaign Fund.

Which Congressman? Members of CLOSER, SALGA and WNC AIDS Project people have met on a number of occasions with Congressman Clarke (D). He understands and is sympathetic with our needs. He voted FOR the Civil Rights Restoration Bill, even though his office was inundated with phone calls from constituents who urged him to vote for its defeat, and often used homophobic remarks in explaining their opposition.

Which gubernatorial candidate? NC Secretary of the Department of Human Resources Flaherty prevented distribution of \$170 million for AIDS education allocated to the State of North Carolina by the Centers for Disease Control. This man was appointed by Governor Martin (R), and would lose his job if Jordan (D) were elected.

Which State Senators and representatives? None of ours answered the questionnaire of the State Lesbian and Gay Coalition, in which gay issues were addressed. We know that representative Narvel (Jim) Crawford (D) has been supportive. Senator Robert Swain (D) was against the ERA and is against us too. What about the others?

If you want to send a message to the State of North Carolina that lets them know you are not pleased with the level of AIDS funding, you are urged to write in the name of Robert Sheets for North Carolina Secretary of State. This can be done easily; just ask the attendant at the voting booth for assistance.

Perhaps as important a consideration as any is to look up the road to the 1990 election: Who should we put in place now to help us defeat the #1 enemy of gays and lesbians in Congress, North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms, in 1990?

Don't be silent. VOTE! Because of silence is killing us.

C.L.O.S.E.R.