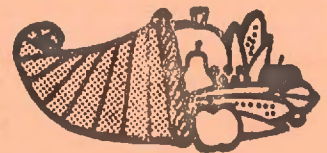
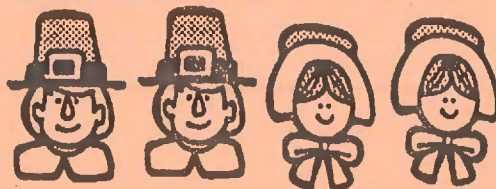
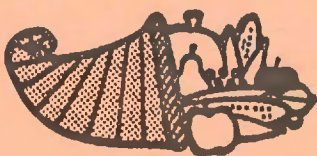


# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Asheville, NC

November, 1989



## CLOSER ENTERS SECOND DECADE WITH GALA CELEBRATION

An elegantly decorated Parish Hall, bouquets of beautiful pink and purple flowers and balloons, heaps of wonderful home-cooked food, and a crowd that nearly burst the Hall at the seams (143!), all came together Tuesday night, October 17th, to celebrate CLOSER's tenth anniversary, and to send CLOSER into its second decade in royal fashion. Theo captured much of the proceedings on videotape, but the full flavor of the evening should linger in the hearts and minds of CLOSER members and their guests for a long time to come.

We felt that Sue Hyde's speech was so excellent that those of you who were there might want to have a copy, even though you heard it, and those of you who could not make it would want to see what she said. With the exception of her explanation of the NGLTF materials she brought with her, what follows is the full transcript of Hyde's speech, as taken from the videotape.



### *CLOSER to Home*

by Sue Hyde

My talk tonight is entitled "CLOSER to Home," and I cannot help but note with some irony that as human beings sometimes we see ourselves and our homes in closer focus through the eyes of someone who actually doesn't live here. So I hope that my perspective as a friend from outside your community helps you see better CLOSER's very important role in the evolution of Asheville's gay and lesbian community, and in the broader gay and lesbian revolution in the United States. I hope also you won't mind if my speech is just a little bit political. I promise you that the politics won't be too heavyweight.

...(I refer) to both an evolution and an revolution, an evolution within our community and within ourselves, and a revolution in the larger political system and culture here in the United States. Our evolution and evolutionary processes are represented by organizations like CLOSER, groups that gay and lesbian people create so that we can get closer to a home, closer to each other, closer to a chosen family in which we feel accepted...CLOSER was, and remains, the product of the work and the sweat of the men and women who make it happen. And these men and women make it happen because there is a great need for an organization which offers a safe harbor from the sometimes very rough seas of straight culture. CLOSER was founded because coming out of the closet, our self-realization of homosexuality, is really only the very first, and the most individual kind of step, in our personal evolution.