

SPEAKING OUT!

Send us a copy when you send letters or telegrams about gay/lesbian issues to elected officials, other press, etc.

February 6, 1991

Dr. Rebecca Meriwether
Chief of the State Health Department's
Communicable Disease Control Section
North Carolina Department of Environment
Health and Natural Resources
P.O. Box 27687
Raleigh, N.C. 27611-7687

The Associated Press on February 4, 1991 published the article with this quote by Dr. Rebecca Meriwether, Chief of the State Health Department's Communicable Disease Control Section. "Statistics show more people are willing to be tested confidentially, instead of anonymously." I ask this question: "At what target group or focus were these statistics directed and in what region of the State of North Carolina were the statistics taken?"

Dr. Meriwether also states, "medication has become available to battle the virus, laws have been passed to protect the infected against discrimination." At the present time, the only known and approved drug "AZT" is not affordable to most HIV infected people without private insurance unless the HIV Person is indigent. State medical services are not administered properly by knowledgeable Infectious Disease Doctors.

Insurance companies have access to medical records and have been known to cut off coverage to persons with HIV infection through higher premiums, or under clauses concerning pre-existing disease.

Confidential testing provides the state health department with the person's name, address and social security number.

Anonymous testing provides the time for adjustment and decision making before he or she seeks private treatment for the HIV positive test results.

Doing away with anonymous testing instills fear, intimidation and discrimination through reporting of names.

High risk groups will not seek testing with reporting their names to the State Health Department. The HIV virus will continue to spread through fear created by the reporting of names.

Before you take away a system that is working, give us a system that works against discrimination.

Thank you,

William H. Bednarek

Your Ad Could Be Seen Here By
Many Wonderful Customers

Call Ron at 258-3318



Carpentry by Lucy

- certified master residential carpenter
- licensed journeyman carpenter
- home improvements
- wall covering and painting

over 11 years experience

LUCY NEHLS • 658-2228

Feedback...

Letters to the Editor

Dear *Community Connections*:

Just a quick note to thank you for publishing a great paper. Not only is it a pleasure to read for the variety of articles that are included, but particularly for the things that you don't include. Like the sleazy phone sex ads. Some other papers are an embarrassment to read in public, but I can carry my *Community Connections* with pride and read it anywhere!

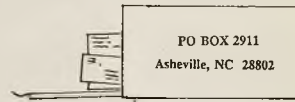
Not having these advertisements probably costs you in lost revenue, but you should be proud of a quality paper that tries to elevate the human spirit and does not get dragged into gutter level mentality of trashy ads.

Betsy Mayers

Dear *Community Connections*:

Love *Community Connections*! The best & healthiest as well as most upbeat, optimistic gay & lesbian paper I know of. Better than *Outweek*, *Gay Community News*, etc. Keep things up!

Jeff



Dear *Community Connections*:

We here at SAGA (the Sexual Awareness Group at Appalachian) want to write and thank you for carrying the listing of our group in *Community Connections*. We do sincerely appreciate this listing as well as the copies of your publication sent to our group. We eagerly read and wait for each month's issue.... We all find *Community Connections* upbeat and positive here at ASU....

We will try to keep *Community Connections* abreast of our affairs and mail you our newsletter when it comes out. Again, we thank you for your support. It is appreciated by us here at SAGA.

The folks here at SAGA

PLEASE NOTE

The Documentation Project needs your help! We would like to extend this service beyond Buncombe County, but need more help to do so. If you would like to help record incidents of discrimination, harassment, or violence against lesbians and gay men, please contact Martha Copeland at 254-2485.

The Memorial Mission Hospital "HealthBreak" program will air a three-part series on HIV Disease: Risks and Treatments" (March 17 and 18); "The Work of the Western North Carolina AIDS Project" (March 24 and 25); and "Living with HIV Disease" (March 31 and April 1).

"HealthBreak" is a medical news and information program from Memorial Mission Hospital which airs each Sunday evening between the local and national news at 6:28 PM and repeats each Monday morning during "Good Morning America" at 7:23 AM. The program focuses on local people and local issues and is carried on WLOS-TV.

The SALGA Speakers' Bureau will hold a training workshop Sunday, March 3, from 3:00-4:30 PM at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Asheville. Anyone interested in speaking at area colleges in affirmation of gay men and lesbians, please contact Charlotte Goedsche at 252-4037. You do not have to be a SALGA member to speak.

WNC Recovery Center, located at 25 Orange Street, is offering an intensive outpatient day program for women IV drug users. Federal funding permits us to offer full scholarships for this program in a safe, caring, and confidential setting. Contact Andrea Amburgey at 251-9400. Call now as there are immediate openings and group size is limited. We can't help you if you don't call.

The Human Rights Campaign Fund, a national lesbian/gay political organization, is looking for volunteer organizers in targeted Congressional districts in the Southeast and Southwest. Our Field Associate program offers great opportunity to learn field organizing skills. Affect the national political process for lesbians and gay civil rights and work with top professionals in Washington, D.C. For more information, contact Cathy Woolard, HRCF Southeast Regional Office, call collect at (404)373-6330 or write to PO Box 375, Decatur, GA 30031-0375.

The National Lesbian Conference is coming up April 24-28, and women need to register now. Please see application form on page 11.

Information and application forms for the 1991 Southern Women's Music Festival are available at CLOSER and SALGA meetings, or see Nancy Curry. ▽