

Working Out!

This feature of Community Connections highlights lesbians and gay men in the So. Appalachians who are open in the workplace about their sexual orientation. Being open at work about who you are breaks down barriers and provides an excellent role model. If you know someone who is gay and proud at work, whether an employee or a business owner, tell us about him/her!

Photo by Charlotte Goedsche

To John Rider, a speech pathologist at St. Joseph's Hospital in Asheville, working as an openly gay man is important for several reasons. "It gives me an opportunity to not have to hide anything, to not have to monitor everything I say and do, to not have to edit my thought processes. I can just be myself." Rider's being out



Speech pathologist John Rider in his hospital office

at work gives fellow workers an opportunity to knowingly interact with a gay person. Rider says that "people who know gay people feel so much differently about gay issues and gay rights. I have that constantly brought to my attention by people I work with." In addition, Rider believes that it's important for gay men and lesbians who are not out at work "to see that there might be an opportunity to feel more comfortable about who they are and the possibilities of their being out."

Rider told about a woman with whom he works having been so inspired by knowing him that she has talked extensively to both her parents about the need for acceptance of gay men and lesbians. Rider's friend believes she has made progress with both parents about gay issues.

Coincidentally, the friend found out when talking to her father, a contractor who had been very bigoted about gay people, that she was not the only member of the family whose attitudes towards gays had been changed by working with gay

people. Two of the father's subcontractors are a lesbians couple who are having a baby through artificial insemination. Working and talking with the women has led to the father's respect and acceptance of them, according to Rider.

Rider says that he made no single announcement at work about being gay. Rather, he is simply open and honest about his social life and participation in groups such as CLOSER, the Asheville-area gay and lesbian support group.

"Most of the people at work are very supportive," says Rider. One of Rider's biggest rewards for being openly gay at work came in February when 17 of his co-workers at St. Joseph's came to see him perform as a cowgirl, "Why Don't Ya Rider," in CLOSER's Camp Drag Variety Show at TRAX. Led by their enthusiastic cheers, the audience gave Rider several curtain calls and received an encore.

Most of Rider's co-workers who attended told him that it was the best \$5 they ever spent, and wanted to know when the next Camp Drag Variety show would be. Others who couldn't be there said they wanted to attend the next show, too. ▽

2nd Annual

A Cooperative of Workers Production Company Presentation



Come join us for a fun and exciting
Labor Day Weekend
Aug. 29 - Sept. 2 1991

Atop Lookout Mountain in Georgia overlooking Tennessee and Alabama

700 acres of beautiful private land with lakes, hiking trails, cabins, lots of flat land for camping, moonlit hayrides, canoeing, and much, much more!

Only: 3 hours from Nashville
2 hours from Atlanta
3 hours from Birmingham
2½ hours from Knoxville
4½ hours from Asheville

Festival Includes: music, comedy, theater, dance, crafts, sports, raffles, concessions, workshops, camping, food (vegetarian or meat), swimming, square dancing, films, videos, political tent, speakers. Women-only space, Women of Color tent, Environmental Awareness Tent, over 40's space, on-site General Store, Hipway Cafe, Disabled Resources. All concerts interpreted for the hearing impaired; showers and portable toilets provided. **IMPROVED SHOWER SYSTEM!** No dogs permitted, except seeing-eye or hearing-impaired (must be registered). Gates open 12 noon Thursday; festival ends Monday at 3 p.m.

TICKETS: 5-DAY: Thurs-Mon, 4-DAY: Fri-Mon; 3-DAY: Sat-Mon
CABIN: only 125 spaces available, so reserve early. Rooms 12-20 women with bunks.

RV's: Plenty of space but no hookups. RV ticket includes admission for one; others can purchase camping tickets.

CHILDREN: 3-8 yrs. old \$35; 9-16 yr. old women \$50. All children must be pre-registered for childcare by August 1st 1991. No overnight childcare; "potty-trained" only; boys 8 and under welcome.

PAYMENT: Money Order, certified check or cash; personal checks accepted until July 30. For overnight express mail, use U.S. Postal Service. For tickets along with **brochure and map to festival**, send self addressed, legal size, stamped envelope to: RHYTHM FEST, P.O. BOX 807, DURHAM, NC 27702-0807.

INFO: (919) 683-1871; Fax (919) 682-5601
FOR CRAFTS INFO: (919) 687-4203

WORKSHOPS: Send description of workshop if you wish it listed.

OPEN MIC: Sign up at the Fest; some day stage slots available for theater and dance. Send tapes early.

MUSICAL PERFORMERS — COMICS DANCE BANDS — THEATRE

•Girls in the Nose•Faith Nolan•Monica Grant•June Millington•
Lea DeLaria•Sue Fink•Robin Flower and Libby McLaren•Joyce &
Jacque • 2 Nice Girls • Betty • Disappear Fear • Alix Dobkin • Mimi
Baczewska•Helen Hooke•Washington Sisters w/Melanie Monsur•
Marla BB • Debbie Fier Trio w/Nydia Mata & Laura Dreyer • Two
Spirited/Thunder People Native American Dance Troop • Boink
Dee Deek • Angela Motter • Georgia Raggsdale & Dancers •
Mary Gemini • plus **very exciting guest stars!**

SPEAKERS:

The Rhythm Fest Producers • Mel Bramyn • Nancy Buermeyer
• Deborah Klenk • Cathy Woolard • J.E.B. • Mab Segrest • Jona
Olsson • Mandy Carter • Kay Ostberg

PLUS: •A Special Ladyslipper 15th Anniversary Birthday party •
and on Monday for the first time a **Gypsy Carnival & Picnic**
featuring jam sessions•jugglers•mimes•games•clowns•flame eaters
• and more!

TICKET ORDER FORM

Purchase tickets early. Space limited to 1500. Tickets at gate \$10 above top sliding scale. Cash Only.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

RV: (includes 1 ticket) 5 days \$195 4 days \$190

CABIN: (limited spaces) 5 days \$185-190 _____ 4 days \$160-170 _____

CAMPING: 5 day (Thu-Mon) \$165-175 _____ 4 day (Fri-Mon) \$145-155 _____

3 day (Sat-Mon; limited passes) \$125-135 _____ 9-16 yr. old women \$50 _____

3-8 yr. old children \$35 _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED

I'd like info on: Disabled Resources Childcare Work Exchange

Cabin Selection: Smoking Non-Smoking Clean and Sober

I'd be willing to distribute Rhythm Fest flyers. # _____

SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS—Please enclose info

All festival participants will need to sign a liability release form. No Refunds.



SC Gay Computer Bulletin Board Announced

A new gay/lesbian computer bulletin board system (BBS) is online in South Carolina. The bulletin board, known as the Pink Camper, is the brainchild of Roger Bell. He set it up as a way for gay men and lesbians, and their friends and families, to communicate. Bell said that originally the BBS' name was The South Carolina Gay/Lesbian Network, but as many calls were coming in from out of state as from in-state, so the name was changed to serve the broader area.

The network features an extensive message area, a files area, and news on upcoming events. The message area can accommodate many different types of messages, according to Bell. For example, areas are set aside for specific organizations or groups, and some for people just to talk. There are areas just for men, some just for women, some just for bisexuals, etc. If s/he does not wish to, a bulletin board user does not need to get involved with messages at all. Bell reports that in the files area are standard utilities files and extensive text files (including news stories, information about various gay and lesbian bulletin boards around the country, joke files, erotic story files, etc).

The Pink Camper BBS operates from 11 PM to 6 AM, when long distance rates are lowest. It operates at 2400 bauds, and accepts callers at 300, 1200, and 2400 bauds. Settings are N, 8, 1, F. Users' initial security ratings will be low, but a caller's rating will be raised after s/he has been verified, Bell said. For more information, call 803-843-1070. ▽