

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Asheville, NC

Serving the Southern Appalachian Gay/Lesbian Community

Asheville Gay and Lesbian  
Information Line:  
253-2971

A project of the Asheville Gay and Lesbian  
Community Council

To report anti-gay/HIV +  
discrimination/violence:  
253-1656

U.S. Department of Justice toll-free:  
1-800-347-HATE

Vol. IV, No. 5 May 1992

## Bill Bednarek Succumbs to AIDS



William (Bill) Bednarek

The gay/lesbian and HIV communities suffered a tremendous loss when William (Bill) Bednarek passed away March 31, 1992.

Bill served untiringly as AIDS educator for the Western North Carolina AIDS Project, a position he held until his illness prevented him from continuing. In that capacity, Bill did all he could to ensure that others did not get the disease. He was co-founder and an active member of the Mountain AIDS Coalition. He was also an active member of CLOSER. He was instrumental in helping lay the groundwork for the WNC HIV/AIDS Consortium. Bill was a member of the Episcopal AIDS Task Force,

as well as a member of RAIN, a support system for people with terminal illness.

The following was written by Bill's life partner, Tim Edwards.

I won't try to put into words the devastation Bill and I felt when he was diagnosed with AIDS, but Bill refused to fall prey to the devastation. Instead, he channeled his energy toward making Asheville a better place for gays and PWA's. Many good things came as a result of his work and devotion, but I don't have to tell the gay and HIV communities how wonderful he was; he showed it in his works.

Bill's suffering was a very private thing to him; therefore, I won't write of his last days. I love all of you who

shared in his and my pain. Like Bill, those days were filled with caring and compassion. Thank you all!

I can't express how much I appreciate the support the gay and HIV communities showed me by attending Bill's memorial service. It was wonderful of each of you to come and pay respect to Bill. I know we all loved him and miss him so much.

I only want to say one personal thing. Every night that goes between his death and the present I feel the loss a little more.

Contributions can be made in Bill's name to Mountain Area Hospice, P.O. Box 16, Asheville, NC 28802.

## NC D.A. Drops CAN Charges

by Clint Werner

North Carolina gays and lesbians were surprised and encouraged by the decision of Carl Fox, district attorney for Orange and Chatham counties, not to prosecute two gay men on charges of committing a crime against nature. The men were arrested for allegedly engaging in oral sex in an automobile that was parked at an abandoned Western Sizzler restaurant.

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## An Open Letter from the Board of Community Connections

*Community Connections* needs your help. NOW. If we don't raise \$5,000 by the end of May, this may be the last issue that you read. Are we prepared to let that happen?

Every month *Community Connections* brings us local, regional and national news. Every month *Community Connections* keeps us informed of events going on in the area. Every month *Community Connections* gives expression to our varied voices. In short, every issue of *Community Connections* weaves separate gay and lesbian organizations and individuals into a wonderfully diverse and cohesive regional community. And every month, it does it reliably and timely, without fail.

To produce a paper of *Community Connections*' quality takes money. For every issue that we bring to you, we record expenses of approximately \$2500. Over the last two years, *Community Connections* has met its expenses through advertising revenues and CLOSER and SALGA contributions, supplemented by small fundraisers organized by the Board and staff. But the single greatest financial support for the paper came in the form of a \$10,000 contribution in the Spring of 1991, made by an anonymous donor who is not a

member of the gay and lesbian community. That grant was meant to last only through last Fall, but thanks to good management and much volunteering, it has lasted twice as long. It is now, though, almost gone!

The Board and staff are hard at work on a fundraising strategy that includes increased advertising revenues, fundraising events, organizational and private foundation support, and an individual donor plan. But make no mistake, no matter what approach we take--advertisers, foundations, etc.--it all comes back to us: the readers! Advertisers will pay more for their space if readership increases. The very few private foundations that support lesbian and gay projects will expect subscribers to make up their start-up contributions on an ongoing basis.

So, the ball is in our court! If each *Community Connections* subscriber (including CLOSER/SALGA members) contributes at least \$15, we can meet our goal of \$5,000 to keep the paper going. Because the situation is so urgent, the Board has decided to follow up this public appeal with phone calls. In early May, a *Community Connections* volunteer will be calling each subscriber (and even non-subscribers) that we haven't heard from as of that

time. In return for your support at this crucial time, we promise to work even harder not to have this campaign again for at least six months.

*Community Connections* is a unique paper. For example, it publishes a monthly calendar and a list of local, regional and national resources. It accepts no "900" or sex ads. But most unique of all, *Community Connections* is owned by all of us--the lesbian and gay community of these mountains! We don't have owners or publishers who benefit from the paper's profit (or who absorb its losses). We are here only to serve our community--nothing else! We need to think of *Community Connections* like we think of public radio or public television, but unlike public radio and television, which have government and corporate support, *Community Connections* has only us to count on!

So, it really is up to each of us. A contribution of \$15 will keep the paper going. Of course, we will be grateful for more if you can, or less if you can't. Whether or not you read us again depends on you. Please ACT NOW!

Sincerely,

The Board: Carlos Gomez, Michelle Greenspan, Ron Lambe, Karen Lockee, Amy Springer, Barry Ward V

REMEMBER: IN THE  
PRIMARIES, EVERY  
VOTE COUNTS 4 OR 5  
TIMES (BECAUSE ONLY  
20-25% OF PEOPLE  
VOTE)  
**VOTE MAY 5**

See story on page 3.