

# 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

Gay and Lesbian Youth Hotline:

1-800-347-TEEN

Thurs.-Sun. 7 p.m.-12 a.m.

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

Asheville-Buncombe Community Relations Council:

253-1656 / 252-4713

U.S. Department of Justice toll-free:

1-800-347-HATE

Vol. IV, No. 11

December 1992

## Bigotry Loses Buncombe County Election An Interview with Buncombe County Commissioner-elect Patsy Keever

by Cynthia Janes

Patsy Keever was elected to the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners November 3, and was the third-highest vote-getter in the race, despite an eleventh-hour smear attempt against her by right-wing fundamentalists. The Asheville *Citizen-Times* carried in its Saturday and Monday editions a full-page insert accusing Keever of an extreme pro-gay stance. The ad was paid for by a group calling itself Citizens for Family Values and Justice.

Last spring candidates Keever and David Young had answered "yes" to the *Greenline* question "Would you support a non-discrimination ordinance which included sexual orientation?" But in September Young wrote in the *Indepen-*

*dent Torch* that he had changed his mind. Young said that at the time the question was asked he did not realize that the question about non-discrimination and sexual orientation was "a trick question." Young's change of mind apparently followed a meeting with fundamentalist evangelist Ralph Sexton, co-leader of the blatantly anti-gay "family values" march in June.

*Community Connections*: What do you feel was the net effect of the ad on the number of votes cast for you?

*Keever*: "I've been trying to figure that out. I'm sure that it did lose some votes, but from the feedback I've gotten from other people it probably gained some votes of people who didn't know me or who were not

planning to vote for me or were Republicans. A lot of people have told me or my husband that they didn't know me or hadn't planned to vote for me, but they were so outraged by what happened that they voted for me anyway. There has been really good, good feedback."

"My gut-level feeling is that it was more of a sexist attack than really an attack on the issue of homosexuality. I think that somebody is out there using a group of people, or giving a group of people money [because] they know that is a very emotional issue with that particular fundamentalist group. But I think there is some money being fed into that for other reasons." Keever said that her only printed comment on homosexuality

continued on page 6



## Meet Associate Editor Deb Self

Deb Self recently joined *Community Connections* as Associate Editor. *Community Connections* Editor, Cynthia Janes, said of Deb: "We are very excited about having Deb join us. We were very fortunate in having several well-qualified applicants for the position of Associate Editor. Besides her excellent writing and editing skills, Deb brings to *Community Connections* a background of working with grassroots community groups on environmental and social justice issues. She also has a great deal of experience in fundraising for social change organizations. We are confident that the paper will be stronger because of Deb."

Deb Self moved to Asheville a little over two years ago, after eight years of planning career moves to get here. She's glad she came. "I moved here for the mountains, for the opportunity to teach and—mostly—for the lesbian community I had always heard so much about." Before moving to Asheville, Deb lived in Tennessee for ten years where, most recently, she was a research associate in environmental policy at the University of Tennessee. Deb grew up in Northern Alabama, and feels strong ties to Appalachian land and culture. Her favorite hobbies are playing old-time music and hiking in the woods.

Deb is employed at Warren Wilson College, where she teaches environmental studies and supervises a group of students whose focus is community-based research. She also teaches courses in her home on ecofeminism (environmental studies and feminism, combined) and women's spirituality.

continued on page 3

## The "Vote of Our Lives" Brings Landmark Victories

Millions of gay and lesbian people cast their votes November 3 in the "vote of our lives," as *USA Today* termed it. The day brought landmark victories for the gay community at the national, state, and local levels. "This is a great day for lesbian and gay Americans, and a great victory for all Americans," said Tim McFeeley, Executive Director of the Human Rights Campaign Fund, the nation's largest gay and lesbian political action committee.

Nationwide, gay men and lesbians and supporters of their full human rights rejoiced at the victory of President-elect Bill Clinton. He is the first presidential candidate to receive the endorsement of the Human Rights Campaign Fund. "This is the first time that we gay and lesbian people are going to be part of the governing of this country," said Urvashi Vaid, NGLTF executive director. Clinton has indicated that he will honor a pre-election pledge to end anti-gay and lesbian discrimination in the military.

Speaking at the National Press Club on November 4, McFeeley called the election "an historic watershed" event in the history of the lesbian and gay rights movement. "Never before have our issues been at the top of the agenda, issues such as AIDS, discrimination and our right to live as equal Americans," he said. "The American public have rejected the calls of bigotry that were heard at the Republican Convention in Houston, and in overwhelming numbers they have given their support to candidates who will stand with us when the votes are taken in Congress."

### What Clinton Promised

- To sign an executive order barring discrimination in all federal agencies, including the military
- To support the federal bill to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation
- To appoint openly gay people throughout his administration
- To wage a real "war" on AIDS, including appointment of an AIDS czar, full funding of the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resource Emergency Act, and implementation of the recommendations of the National Commission on AIDS.

The Republican campaign began with unprecedented gay-bashing at their convention, and it appeared for a while that the intent was to make gays the "Willie Horton" of the '92 campaign. But the tactic backfired, as Republican moderates and the general public responded very poorly to that approach. The result was that at the national level there was little to no gay-bashing in the last 3/4 of the campaign. This was an early and highly significant victory for the gay community.

But the more tangible victories came with the counting of the ballots in November. In addition to Clinton's elec-

continued on page 7

## Community Center Opens in Asheville

by Ron Huskins

The Asheville Gay and Lesbian Community Council (AGLCC) has signed a one-year lease on a small building to be used as a gay and lesbian community services center. The center, unnamed as yet, is the result of almost three years work begun in January 1990. At that time a meeting was held with

continued on page 10