

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Asheville, NC

Serving the Southern Appalachian Gay/Lesbian Community

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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

Ron Lambe Loses Primary

Ron Lambe, the first openly gay candidate to run for Asheville City Council, lost the Sept. 21 primary elections.

In order to be eligible to run in the general elections Nov. 2, the candidates must have first won the primaries. The winners are as follows: Chris Peterson, Barbara Field, Edward C. Hay, Leni Sitnick, Herb Watts, Charles "Chuck" Cloninger, and Charles Worley (mayor nominee). These Democratic nominees now must face their Republican counterparts.

Five of the six primary winners said they would support a city ordinance banning discrimination because of sexual orientation, which Lambe feels still leaves the community in good standings.

"Sexual orientation was never an issue in the campaign," according to



Ron Lambe. He feels he did not win because of "...West Asheville votes and general name recognition."

"I knew it was a long shot, but it was a respectable campaign," Lambe commented with regards to obstacles an openly gay candidate could face.

Lambe said "I was very pleased with the support I did get. The support was so broad-based, but just didn't materialize in the votes."

CLOSER Holds 15th Anniversary Dinner

Community Liaison Organization for Support, Education, and Reform (CLOSER) will hold its 15th anniversary dinner on Tuesday, October 26 at 7:30 p.m. at All Souls Episcopal Church. CLOSER's guest of honor for the evening will be Ms. Joan Gardner, the new executive director of the Fund for Southern Communities (FSC). FSC is a progressive community foundation that awards grants in the Southeast to grassroots organizing.

Among other topics, Ms. Gardner will speak about her experiences as an openly gay African-American woman. In addition to serving as an advisor to Atlanta's Mayor Maynard

Jackson on gay and lesbian issues, Ms. Gardner received the Human Rights Campaign Fund Community Leadership Award and was appointed to the Georgia Task Force on AIDS.

CLOSER is a gay support, educational, and social group which sponsors programs every Tuesday evening at All Souls Church. Facilities are wheel-chair accessible. The group is not affiliated with All Souls and is not a religious organization.

Please bring a dish of food if you are able. Drinks will be provided.

For more information about CLOSER or the anniversary dinner, call Dan or Joan at 704/277-7815.

National Coming Out Day Arrives Oct. 11

"Coming out", short for "coming out of the closet," is a term used for gays and lesbians who come to terms with their sexuality. A person can come out to a friend, parent, co-worker, or whomever, but, first and foremost, must come out to him or herself.

The National Coming Out Day Campaign states that, "There are over 30 million lesbians and gay men in America, yet most people think they don't know anyone gay or lesbian. It is no wonder people don't believe they can relate to us or our concerns. The price we pay for this invisibility is enormous. The poor government response to the AIDS epidemic, discrimination in employment and the military, and the perpetuation of anti-gay state ballot measures are but a few tragic examples of how costly our silence can be.

Equality will be there for us only when we come out and show our pride. Our open participation in society is critical to our empowerment, our safety, and our well-being. For gay men and lesbians to live in terror of being discovered is unacceptable. Future generations of gay and lesbian people count on our courage to come out now. If we don't commit to the process of coming out, anti-gay prejudice will continue. The future is up to us."

Outing Event Ideas

Be visible

Plan a "Queer Visibility Field Trip." Wear NCOD t-shirts, buttons, and caps and spend the day in a group at a shopping mall, amuse-

ment park, on a bike ride, etc...

Contact local radio stations about having representatives of gay, lesbian and bisexual groups on their programs.

Get Political

Host an evening of letter writing to local and national elected officials or newspapers on gay and lesbian issues. Your local political organization, or the Human Rights Campaign Fund (202/628-4160), can help you with ideas.

Educate Your Community

Host a film event featuring coming out themes or other gay/lesbian related educational subjects.

Produce a "Coming Out Workshop" with a local campus counselor or host an event where people come out publicly and/or tell their personal coming out stories.

Party

Arrange a gay/lesbian entertainment event: a band, stand up comedy, performance art, singing, variety show, etc.

Create a gay and lesbian "Come Out and Play" sports event. Plan a volleyball, softball, bowling or golf game for people in your community.



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