

# 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

## SC To Hold 5th Annual Gay/ Lesbian Pride March

South Carolina's 5th Annual Gay and Lesbian Pride March will be held on Saturday, April 16 at 1:00 p.m. in Columbia, SC. The march is sponsored by the South Carolina Gay and Lesbian Pride Movement (GLPM). Marchers are asked to assemble on the corner of Main and Calhoun Streets for the march, which kicks off promptly at 1:00 p.m.

"South Carolina's Gay and Lesbian Pride March is a chance for gays, lesbians, bisexuals, their friends and supporters to come together as a show of solidarity," says Matt Tischler, executive co-chair of GLPM. "Each of us marches for more than a hundred other gays and lesbians who because of economic and social pressures have not yet 'come out.'" The marchers also lay the groundwork for future generations who through our efforts will be able to participate freely in American society.

Gays, lesbians, bisexuals and their friends and supporters will march down Columbia's Main Street to the steps of South Carolina's State House. The march to the State House will be led by North Carolina's Pride Marching Band. Immediately following the march, these steps will become the stage for the Gay and Lesbian Pride Rally and will echo the marchers' commitment to fight homophobia and bigotry.

This year's them, "Proud to Say", symbolizes the growing recognition among SC gays and lesbians of the importance of being out and open. This theme is echoed not only by gays and lesbians, but also their friends and supporters whose importance in our struggle for equality grows daily.

Speakers at this year's rally, both gay and straight, symbolize this commitment. Mandy Carter of the Human Rights Campaign Fund, will emcee this year's rally. The featured speaker will be Mel White. White worked for years as a ghostwriter for

Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson, and was a close colleague of Billy Graham. This all changed when White came out as a gay man. White, who is now an MCC pastor in Dallas, Texas, speaks of the war now being waged by the religious right for the control of the minds and actions of millions of Americans.

A special program at this year's Rally will commemorate Bill Dalton, GLPM's treasurer, and Bill Edens, executive director of Palmetto AIDS Life Support Services (PALSS), both of whom died recently of complications of AIDS. Recognition will also be given to those individuals with HIV/AIDS who continue to fight, not only for their own equality, but those of the entire lesbian and gay community. Also speaking at the Rally will be Dan Kirsch and Sue Henry of North Carolina's Pride 94, who will announce plans for NC's upcoming pride celebration in June. Other speakers will update the crowd on SC's growing gay and lesbian rights movement.

Following the Pride Rally, a Celebration will be held at The Edge at 1801 Main St. Local and regional performers will entertain the crowd who gather to celebrate the days events as well as our present and future victories. Vendors from the tri-state area will be present offering a wide range of pride merchandise.

The South Carolina Gay and Lesbian Pride Movement is committed to fighting for equal rights for all gays, lesbians and bisexuals. GLPM's demands address this struggle at a policy and legal level. At the personal level, GLPM devotes itself to helping gays, lesbians and bisexuals "come out" and live happy and productive lives in an environment riddled with prejudice and hatred from churches, professionals, employers and, in many cases, families. GLPM seeks to become a vital part of the every growing gay



(The Sharpless sisters as the Everly Brothers at CLOSER's Camp Drag Show held on February 15, 1994)

## CLOSER Variety Show Produces Great Turnout

by Jeff Minnick

CLOSER (Community Liaison Organization for Support, Education and Reform) held its annual Camp Drag Variety Show on February 15 at Resurrections (formerly Trax II). The show raised about \$900.00, with the proceeds benefiting CLOSER, **Community Connections** and Loving Food Resources.

Among the acts for Camp Drag

were the Everly Brothers, Tina Turner, Elvis, and many others. The Crowd was brought to its knees by a medley of Janet Jackson hits performed by David Wingate.

CLOSER would like to thank everyone who attended and remind everyone to be thinking about their act for next year.

## Randy Shilts Dies

Randy Shilts, a journalist covering AIDS for the **San Francisco Chronicle** and author of a best-selling book on the disease, died of AIDS on February 17 at the age of 42.

Shilts was one of the first openly gay reporters to work for a mainstream newspaper. At **The Chronicle**, he became a liaison be-

and lesbian rights movement. For more information, contact Matt Tischler at 803/7771-7713.

tween the homosexual community and the general public for news and opinions about AIDS. He is probably best known for his book **And The Band Played On: People, Politics, and the AIDS Epidemic**.

Appearing in 1987, the book was a detailed, well documented history of America's failure to deal with AIDS. In 1993, it was made into an HBO movie starring Richard Gere and Alan Alda. Shilts also announced last year that he had been infected with HIV in 1987.

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