

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

SERVING WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA'S LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDERED COMMUNITY

APA DOWNS REPARATIVE THERAPY

BY LISA MORPHEW

On December 11, the president of the Association of Gay and Lesbian Psychiatrists said that he expects a backlash to The American Psychiatric Association Board of Trustees' unanimous approval of guidelines that oppose the efforts to "change" a gay person's sexual orientation.

At the same time, Dr. Dan Hicks, who is also a member of the APA's committee on Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Issues, said the *Position statement on Psychiatric Treatment and Sexual Orientation* will probably generate the level of backlash another policy on homosexuality did in 1973. That year the APA's Board of Trustees voted to remove homosexuality from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM)* which classifies mental illnesses and is used by mental health professionals nationwide. The 1973 decision to de-stigmatize homosexuality forced a referendum by the full membership on the issue in 1974. Some 53 percent of the 10,091 psychiatrists who took part in the election voted to leave the Board's 1973 decision in tact.

"I would expect to see some opposi-



Preparing for the Open House of the new WNC Community Health Services Building. L to R-Polly Ross, MD, Sara McCracken, Grace Brazil, Stan Randolph, Chris Nidek, RN

tion," Hicks said about the decision, "but probably not at the level in 1973 because, in general, most psychiatrists are more aware and supportive of this issue then they were back then."

The 21 voting member's of the APA's Board of Trustees which formulates

and implements APA policy, unanimously approved a position statement that unequivocally opposes the use of "reparative or conversion therapy." The vote took place in Denver at the Board's quarterly meeting. The

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PSYCHIC FAIR TO SUPPORT PRIDE '98

BY MICHAEL BRAY

A psychic fair designed to bring clarity to even the most skeptical participants will be held Saturday, January the 16 th at CRYSTAL VISIONS, Meeting Hall, Naples NC. The meeting hall is located at 5920 Asheville Highway (Route 25) - on the left. Take exit 13 off route 26. Go south on route 25 for 1/2 mile.

Psychic readings and inner exploration

can be an enjoyable part of life. You are invited to come and enjoy your consciousness and spirit in all its wonder.

Among the various Psychics available for readings are * Michael Bray - Angel readings, life plans and Mayan calendar birthdate readings . (avatar@asheville.com) * Leslee - Source work hypnotherapist & third generation intuitive. * Lezlie - Intuitive reader. (hearttouch@hotmail.com)

When: Saturday January 16, 1999, 1.00pm to 5.00pm. Admission fee: \$15 includes 3 individual readings (5 minutes each). Additional readings are \$5. Light refreshments included.

The proceeds from this fair are being donated to off-set the debt incurred and still owed by the committee who brought us PRIDE '98. - Do come and enjoy your inner search and help NC PRIDE 98 -

HIV PREVENTION TAKES A HIT

BY ROSCO PARKER

Years of flat funding from the Centers for Disease Control has finally caught up with North Carolina. In December, the Aids Care Branch in Raleigh notified the 7 regional Community Planning Groups that at the end of 1998, no money would be made available to fund local HIV prevention and education efforts. Western North Carolina is part of a 19 county area known as Region 1.

At our meeting on December 10, Region 1 CPG was informed that we had no budget for the new year, so our regional Community Planning Group ceased to exist.

It is said that out of every crisis comes something good. The current region 1 CPG membership, (which included representatives from area Minority communities, Persons Living with Aids, the WNC Aids Consortium, Nantahala Aids Consortium, WNC Community Health Services, WNCAP, the Red Cross, Buncombe County Health Department and others) voted to form a new organization. This will be known as the Mountain Regional Aids Task Force.

However, by receiving no funding from Raleigh, this unties our hands and allows us to design programs that meet the unique needs of at-risk populations in our area. Local problems are best served by local solutions, and that is the approach we hope to take. The WNC HIV/Aids Consortium did a comprehensive needs assessment last year, and that highlighted many of the problems that we need to address.

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