

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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

## NATIVE SON NO LONGER TO APPEAR IN ASHEVILLE CITIZEN TIMES

by Will Jones

Community Connections was notified just prior to press time that Gay Asheville native and noted author Perry Deane Young will no longer have his weekly column published by the Asheville Citizen Times newspaper. Young's column has been a weekly feature of the Citizen Times' editorial page every Friday since June of 1997. He is the first and only openly gay columnist to ever have been printed by the Asheville newspaper on a regular basis.

Citizen Times Editorial page editor Joy Franklin cites "wanting to expand our editorial page" as the main reason Mr. Young's column will no longer be run weekly. Franklin states that Mr. Young

was offered the opportunity to continue having his column published on a semi weekly basis, but that he declined. When asked if any of the columnists being considered to replace Young were self-identified Gay or Lesbian individuals, Franklin replies, "We are more concerned with what they have to say than with their sexual preference."

When reached for comment at his Chapel Hill home, Mr. Young, whose same column has been regularly carried by the Chapel Hill Herald since 1994, states, "I grieve that we no longer have an openly gay voice on the paper now, and Lord knows I will miss the wonderful dialogue I had with readers there. The demotion offered to me by Joy Franklin was a crushing blow. While I think it is very important for us

to be represented in the mainstream media, I don't think we want to be there as second class citizens. Some people are saying that I should have bitten the bullet and accepted the bi monthly half-pay offer, but I found it insulting. I must believe that my work isn't second rate by anybody's measure."

Interested individuals wanting to express opinions to the Asheville Citizen Times on this matter are encouraged to contact Joy Franklin at 232-5895, Citizen Times publisher Virgil Smith at 252-5611. or you may write to either of these individuals c/o Asheville Citizen Times, pob 2090, Asheville, NC, 28802. Those wishing to offer your support to Mr. Young personally may reach him via e-mail PYoung3@bellsouth.net.

## POSITIVELY ALIVE-A DAY OF EMPOWERMENT FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS

Staff

On Saturday, April 24, 1999, WNC Community Health Services will sponsor the first workshop of it's kind in the Asheville area. The purpose is to bring together both those infected with as well as those affected by HIV/AIDS for a day of empowerment, education and support. The workshop will take place at All Souls Cathedral in Biltmore Village at 9 Swan Street (there is no religious affiliation to this workshop), from 10:00 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. Breakfast snacks and lunch will be provided. There is no cost for the workshop, but you must register by calling WNC Community Health Services at 285-0622 by April 20, 1999. Space is limited to 80

people. Parents, family, significant others and caregivers are welcome. Everyone's confidentiality MUST be respected. If you cannot, do not attend.

This program has been developed by Greg Haller, who moved to this area from Charleston, SC with his partner in October, 1998. Greg is a member of the National Association of People With AIDS Speakers' Bureau and has done speaking and training on a national level. He is a long-term survivor whose goal in developing this workshop is to create a safe and open forum that is coordinated by and for PLWA's, and to conduct these workshops quarterly.

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## GREENSBORO WILL HOST PRIDE '99

NC Pride '99 will be in Greensboro, NC on Sunday, June 13, 1999. The theme this year is "Celebrating North Carolina's End of the Century". In the past, a local organizing committee in the city in which Pride was held, sponsored all events. This year will be different, NC Pride, Inc. will sponsor the March and Rally.

The march and rally will take place on Sunday with the remainder of the weekend for organizations to participate and show support for Pride. Currently, Friday evening, June 11th and Saturday afternoon, June 12th are open for groups to do just that. If your organization would like to sponsor an event, please contact us. We will work with you to advertise your event, find space and make suggestions, if needed.

If your organization would like to participate for name recognition, let us know. We have opportunities for those groups to participate. For example, if your group would like to co-sponsor beverage sales, we would cover the expense and your organization would provide volunteers to set up and sell drinks during the festivities. Your group would get a portion of the profits. This is just one example.

You can also show your support by sponsoring a fund-raising event for Pride '99. Let us know if your organization wants to sponsor a fundraiser.

Don't forget to contact us if your group will be participating in the Pride '99 march. We want as many organizations as possible to join us in celebrating Pride '99.