

CAROLINA CLIPS

Questionnaire Provokes Protests

CHAPEL HILL — Some parents expressed concerns when a UNC-Chapel Hill student teacher distributed a "Heterosexual Questionnaire" to Chapel Hill High School students during a class presentation. The student teacher, Travis Laughlin, had intended provoke discussion about the role of homosexuality in ancient Greece and Rome.

John Felton, a high school parent and member of Putting Children First, denounced the questionnaire during a recent Chapel Hill-Carrboro School Board meeting, claiming it as an attack on values. The Board took no formal action.

The questionnaire, which has been widely distributed among the UNC lesbian and gay community for years, is intended to be both humorous and thought provoking. It reverses typical questions asked of gay men and lesbians, including "What do think caused your heterosexuality?" and "Isn't it possible that all you need is a good gay lover?"

AIDS Ministry Acquires Site

CHARLOTTE — The Cathedral at Charlotte, a non-profit organization for people with HIV/AIDS has announced the purchase of property in uptown Charlotte to serve as a resource center. Plans call for the former Consort Inn to become "The Refuge," a complex including meal services, a full medical clinic, meeting rooms, a counseling center, a retail store, and offices for local AIDS service agencies.

Attorney Jerry Alan Reese, who founded the project, said that the 75,000 square foot hotel was purchased for \$500,000. The group has leased the property since November 1992.

Second Challenge to AIDS Home Rejected

GREENVILLE, SC — A second challenge to a group home for people with AIDS has been rejected by a judge.

Circuit Court Judge Ellis B. Drew Jr. dismissed the complaint, filed by the Colonel Elias Earle Street Historic Association Inc., to block establishment of Stephen's House.

Residents complained their neighborhood was becoming too concentrated with such homes and they sought an order forcing city officials to enforce zoning restrictions against Stephen's House.

However Circuit Judge Ellis B. Drew Jr. ruled Tuesday that none of the association's arguments had merit. The city zoning administrator's ruling that Stephen's House was permitted as a multifamily residence was correct, the judge said.

A federal court lawsuit by the neighborhood association was dismissed earlier.

Duke Plans Free HIV Legal Clinic

DURHAM — Duke University plans the Fall 1995 opening of a free legal clinic to serve people with HIV. The AIDS Legal Assistance Project will offer the services of Duke Law School students for indigent HIV-positive persons, and will cover the areas of will preparation, living wills, powers of

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The Front Page



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Serving gay men and lesbians in the Carolinas since 1979

AIDS Leading Killer in Five Cities

The migration of people from large cities to North Carolina might have a down side: more deaths in this state from AIDS.

In 1993, AIDS was the No. 1 cause of death among people aged 25 to 44 in Charlotte, Durham, Winston-Salem, Raleigh and Greensboro, according to figures released January 30 by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

Nationwide in 1993, about 35 of every 100,000 young adults died from AIDS, according to the CDC. The same year, about 32 per 100,000 died from accidents, followed by cancer, heart disease, suicide and murder.

Overall, new AIDS cases being reported to the CDC have leveled off at about 20,000 every three months.

In addition to AIDS deaths, North Carolina reports the number of people who test positive for HIV.

"The problem may be even bigger in North Carolina than the statistics show," said Dr. John Ward of the CDC.

With the great migration of people to the state, Ward said, the death rate may increase even more.

In some cases, people become infected in other parts of the country and return to North Carolina to be with family, or to seek treatment, Ward said.

In estimates for 1993, AIDS became the leading cause of death for young people between the ages of 20-39 in six North Carolina counties, said Bill Furney, a spokesman for the state Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources.

"It isn't surprising at all. It is a disease that is

affecting all social strata," Furney said.

The counties were Durham, Guilford, Mecklenburg, New Hanover, Wake and Buncombe.

While the rate of new HIV cases leveled in metropolitan counties in 1993, the rate in rural counties continued to increase, said Delbert Williams, head of surveillance for the state's HIV-STD Control Section.

"This trend in North Carolina has officials worried," Williams said. "Many people in rural areas see this as a big-city problem, but it's everywhere and it's growing."

People who work with AIDS patients in North Carolina say the increase in cases makes a difficult job even harder.

"We struggle to find the money to help AIDS

victims. It doesn't leave much for educating people about the disease. And without education, there will be more and more people with the disease," said Ron Huffman, a spokesperson for the AIDS Service Agency for Wake County.

In the Charlotte area, 25 percent of the state's AIDS cases are diagnosed, but Mecklenburg AIDS agencies say the problem has pushed out of the city.

"Those in small towns think they are isolated from AIDS and many of the dangers of the outside world," said Adam Robinson, director of education for the Metrolina Aids Project in Charlotte. "But if these recent statistics are good for one thing they will make people think. It may just scare them into thinking about what can happen to them."

South Carolina Nearing 10,000 AIDS Deaths

Close to 10,000 South Carolinians have had the virus that causes AIDS, with most of the cases affecting African Americans, males, and people in their 20s and 30s, the state health department says.

Since 1981, 9,959 cases of HIV have been confirmed in the state, the Department of Health and Environmental Control said in a statement received February 6.

Nearly half of those people, 4,835, have been diagnosed with AIDS, the agency said. Richland County has had the most AIDS cases, with 734, and Charleston County is second at 673. Only

Abbeville and McCormick counties have had fewer than 10 AIDS cases.

Two-thirds of those with HIV are African Americans, three-fourths are men and three-fourths are between 20 and 39 years old.

The state averages more than one hundred new cases of HIV each month, said Lynda Kettinger, director of the health department's HIV-AIDS division.

One-sixth of the new AIDS cases reported last year were the result of heterosexual contact, Ms. Kettinger said.

New Co-Chair Chosen for Pride '95

North Carolina Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride 1995 has selected Mark Benton to serve as one of the co-chairs of the Local Organizing Committee. Benton will be replacing Ron Huffman, who resigned, stating that time considerations and personal issues would interfere with further plans.

Benton, a policy consultant with the NC Division of Social Services, is originally from Havelock, NC, in Craven County. Benton has lived almost his entire life in North Carolina. He attributes his history of involvement to growing up in a large family who taught him, "you've got to give something back to your community."

Benton sees NC Pride '95 as serving a large community. The weekend's events include a march and rally, a day of educational seminars, a dance, and many other events. The theme for NC Pride '95 is "To be rather than to seem," the English translation of the state motto, *Esse Quam Videri*.

Benton explained, "North Carolina Pride enlarged it's name [to include bisexuals and transgender persons]. It's imperative that we try to include everyone. That's why the state motto fits in nicely. We all walk under different flags: the United States flag, the Rainbow Flag...and even the North Carolina one. We can educate everyone and let them know who we are."

Benton, who has never been involved in organizing an NC Pride event said he felt challenged to help "pull together communities for the common good." He said NC Pride '95 would be a series of events to help educate the general community about discrimination. Benton also said that "We have the responsibility to educate ourselves." He mentioned NC Pride '95's plans to help the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities learn about and discuss issues like legal and civil rights, finances, health, family planning, and spirituality.

On the political aspects of NC Pride '95,

Benton said, "We've been here. We've always been here." He added that in today's political climate, that the weekend's events could provide a strong message to state leaders.

Benton said he was sorry to see Huffman go. He felt comfortable stepping in because of the work Huffman and co-chair Julia Gozstyla had done. He felt Huffman and Gozstyla had put together a strong Local Organizing Committee. Gozstyla said she appreciated all of Huffman's help.

"Ultimately," Benton said, "It's not the co-chairs or the [Local Organizing Committee] that make NC Pride a success. It's the people who come and say 'I had a great time. I learned this, I talked to people from all over the state, or made a political statement.' We can celebrate our culture and have a good time. Fun is the underlying theme."

For more information on how to get involved with NC Pride '95, call the Pride Line, 685-1880.