

The FRONT PAGE

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Serving the Carolinas' Gay & Lesbian Communities Since 1979

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Team Alliance prior to Gay pride Parade in Durham, October 2002.

Tour de Friends Seeks Riders For 4-Day Raleigh to Washington, DC Ride

"Tour de Friends" created by three regional AIDS service agencies to raise much needed funds to serve people living with HIV and AIDS.

RALEIGH — Team Alliance will host a Tour de Friends information and registration session on Saturday, February 22nd from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at Club Oasis in Raleigh. Team Alliance is made up of 70 riders and Corps members representing The Alliance of AIDS Services-Carolina (AAS-C). Riders of all skill levels and interested volunteers are invited to learn more about Tour de Friends and meet other people in the Triangle already registered to participate in the largest bike ride of its kind on the East Coast. Interested participants will learn about free upcoming training events' logistics of the ride, the people benefiting from the money raised and more.

Tour de Friends is a new fully-supported, non-profit bike ride designed to raise money for three AIDS service agencies including the Alliance of AIDS Services-Carolina, Washington-based Food & Friends and Richmond-based Fan Free Clinic. The 330-mile route will take riders and volunteers through the very communities where the money

raised will help people in need. The ride leaves Raleigh, NC on June 19, 2003, travels through Richmond, VA and ends in a celebration on the Mall in Washington, D.C. On June 22, 2003.

Each rider is asked to raise \$2,500 and Tour de Friends is expected to register more than 1,500 riders from across North Carolina, Virginia and the Washington metro area making it the largest bike ride outside of California to raise money for HIV/AIDS prevention and care programs.

Substantially more information on the ride as well as information on those riders and teams that have already signed up can be found at the Tour de Friends website: www.tourdefriends.com. Registration for riders and corps (volunteers) can also be done on-line at the Tour de Friends website.

Tour de Friends Raleigh Registration will be held on February 22, 2 to 4 pm at Club Oasis (3201 New Bern Avenue) in Raleigh.

AAS-C provides food, emergency financial assistance and referrals for more than 1,000 Triangle residents living with HIV/AIDS. AAS-C also conducts HIV prevention and education programs reaching over 25,000 people annually, provides spiritual support and operates a third of all family care home beds available to those living with AIDS in the Triangle. To learn more about AAS-C, visit their website at www.aes-c.org.

MCC Founder to Visit Wilmington

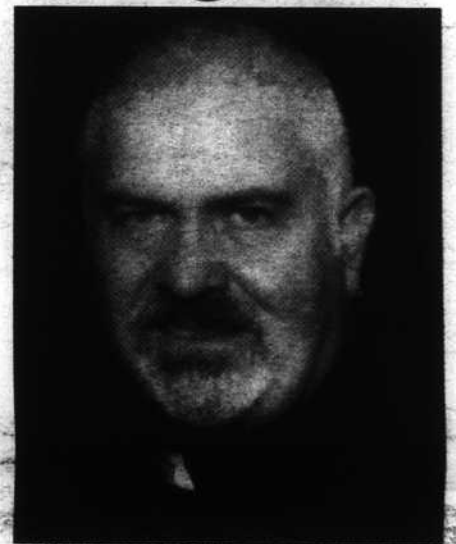
The founder and moderator of the Metropolitan Community Church, Rev. Elder Troy D. Perry, will visit Wilmington Feb. 21 through 23. Rev. Perry, who established MCC with twelve other people in Los Angeles in 1968, will speak about the worldwide MCC organization in the 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. worship services, Sun., Feb. 23, at St. Jude's MCC.

Rev. Perry will also be the featured speaker at events for church members and guests on Friday and Saturday. Rev. Perry has visited Wilmington on one previous occasion, but this trip will likely be his last to the area before his announced retirement as moderator of the denomination in 2005.

Since Rev. Perry formed MCC more than 30 years ago as a Christian denomination with a primary, affirming ministry to gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered persons and their friends and families, UFMCC has grown to a fellowship of more than 44,000 members in 300 congregations in 17 countries around the world.

Rev. Perry has become an internationally recognized spiritual leader and one of the world's leading activists for the civil rights of gay/lesbian/bisexual and transgendered people. He has been honored by the American Civil Liberties Union Lesbian and Gay Rights Chapter with its Humanitarian Award and has been invited to the White House on four occasions.

His publications include an autobiography, *The Lord Is My Shepherd and Knows I'm Gay*, a sequel, *Don't Be Afraid Anymore*, and a video about the founding of MCC Los Angeles and early



Troy Perry

years of Metropolitan Community Churches titled *God, Gays and the Gospel: This Is Our Story*.

In addition to the three church services on Sunday, two other events are open to the public: a reception from 6 to 9 p.m. Fri., Feb. 21, at the St. Thomas Preservation Hall (free but by reservation only; for a reservation call (910) 762-5833; and "A Dialogue with the Founder," 5 to 7 p.m. Sat., Feb. 22, at St. Jude's MCC, 511 Castle St., Wilmington; no reservations needed.

St. Jude's MCC was founded in Wilmington in September 1992 and ministers to a diverse community of members and visitors. Rev. Amanda J. McCullough has served as the congregation's pastor since 1998. For more about St. Jude's, visit stjudesmcc.org.

Wake Removes Homosexual References from Sex Ed Plan

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Wake County school administrators have removed most references to homosexuals that were added in a sex education update, but say they are not backing down from promoting tolerance.

Parents of students in grades seven through nine soon will get letters inviting them to review the curriculum before deciding whether to let their

children attend classes that begin in mid-April.

The Wake school board in November voted 5-4 to add more instruction about contraceptives, sexually transmitted diseases, the effects of teen pregnancy and tolerance for gays and lesbians to the curriculum. The course emphasizes sexual abstinence

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