GayCommunityNews

Thousands in N.Y. Protest Sodomy Decision

NEW YORK — Thousands of gay men and lesbians took to the streets here during the week of July 4 to protest the Supreme Court affirmation of the Georgia

"We could've done almost

anything."
The largely spontaneous protests are being called the most significant gay and lesbian action in New York since the Stonewall

Riots of 1969. "There was a genius about the community," said Darabout the community," said Dar-rell Yates-Rist of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), "People were peaceful, non-violent, yet angry...It was creative, wonderful, a proud moment for our community. And there has been nothing this angry around New York since Stonewall."

"The community took this up all by itself," Rist continued. "We

loosely shaped something that was already there." He added that many of the people who demonstrated were new to activism: "People who thought we [GLAAD and other New York gay and lesbian groups] were too abrasive have realized that being polite and apologetic isn't going to get you anywhere.

July 1: Why Don't We Do It in the Road? "It was as if we were demoted to

second-class citizenship after pass-ing the [New York City] gay rights law," Eleanor Cooper of the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights (CLGR)told GCN. Cooper's words echoed popular sentiments: the ruling was a slap in the face, and something must be done about it.

Protesters gathered in Green-wich Village's Sheridan Square the night of July 1. After a GLAAD-sponsored rally, the estimated 1,500-3,000 people sat in Seventh Avenue.

GLAAD had informed the

police of the anticipated civil dis-obedience. What neither the group



Police block doors of N.Y. federal courthouse chant, "Shame, shame, shame,"

nor the police had anticipated, however, was the will of the crowd. Protesters were not satisfied with sitting in the avenue. After an hour, the crowd decided to move over to the busier, and straighter Sixth Avenue.

At Sixth Avenue, the spontaneous sit-down turned into a speak-out with an open bull horn. During the speak-out, it was suggested that people should protest on the fourth of July, during the

Statue of Liberty celebration.

"People just wouldn't disperse," Cooper reported. The police did keep the cars away, and the protest continued without inci-GLAAD had negotiated with the police that the group leave at midnight. About one quarter of the protestors stayed until one.

July 4: "You Can't Control This Crowd"

People gathered at noon on July 4.

again in Sheridan Square, Crowd estimates hovered around 9,000, not estimates novered around stand, not including 200-300 police. The "March for Individual Liberties" was sponsored by CLGR and coorganized by Lambda Legal Defense and GLAAD. In addition to protesting sodomy laws, the march celebrated the July 3 announcement that New York Council member Noach Dear had failed to collect enough signatures to put the city's gay and lesbian rights bill up for referendum this fall.

Originally, plans were to march down to Federal Hall, where the federal courts are housed. The police expressed opposition to this dea, saying they had received threats that the Hall would be bombed on the fourth. After nego-tiations, the organizers decided to rally at Foley Square, across from Federal Hall.

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North Carolina Gay Pride **Pulls out Fundamentalists**

The sit-down on Sixth Ave., N.Y., July 2

By Barry Yeoman
DURHAM, NC — The Triangle
region of the state, which includes
this city, is one of the South's
centers for high technology,
radical politics and academia. It
gave us the South's first les-

News Commentary

bian/gay rights ordinance, in Chapel Hill, and provides the home base for many of the South's leading progressive organizations, such as the Institute for Southern

But it is also the home of Jesse Helms and non-union textile mills. It is an area where gay-baiting has replaced racism as the favorite technique of right-wing politi-cians. Most of the Triangle is represented by U.S. Rep. William Cobey, a New Right Republican who recently co-sponsored a bill barring the District of Columbia from passing anti-discrimination laws for people with AIDS.

So when organizing began for a

1986 Triangle pride march, lesbian and gay activists across the state hailed it as a triumph. Despite the renewed fervor of anti-gay politi-cians and fundamentalist Chriscans and fundamentalist Christians, almost 1,000 people — gay, lesbian and straight — marched and sang and chanted in the Triangle's first gay pride march in five years. The June 28 march was one of many Pride Week events across the state, ranging from a picnic in Raleigh to a celebration of the state's oldest gay bar in Charlotte, to a "gay jazz" radio show in Wilmington.

"We've done stuff quietly a lot, but the march indicates that maybe we're going to become much more visible in North Carolina," said Charlotte gay activist Don King. "It seems that our organiza-tions are coming out of the closet just like our people are. And for a Southern place other than Atlanta, I think that's quite a step for-

It was not an easy step. This se-cond gay pride celebration (the first was held in 1981, after the murder of a gay man named Ron Antonevitch) came in the middle of a spate of publicity brought on by several hundred fundamentalist Christians, who loudly objected to a display of gay and lesbian books at the Durham Public Library and a pair of anti-discrimination proclamations signed by local of-

The controversy began when the library agreed to give gay and les-bian organizers the use of the library's display areas for an exhibit of gay books, including Out of the Closets and Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosex-

Dale Gadis, director of the county library system, said the display was made available to the group because gay/lesbian issues were of "community concern. We do not proscribe based on the beliefs of people who are putting the displays in. It's a freedom of speech issue."

But local right-wing Christians But local right-wing Christians were quick to voice their abhorrence. "The library presents us with perversion in repectable dress," wrote Durham resident Bruce Newman in the Durham Morning Herald. "A group of people claiming minority status based on lust...and demanding their 'rights.' But shades of amnesia, what about the duties and responsibilities that attend and responsibilities that attend rights? What about AIDS?"

But the library brouhaha paled next to the backlash against two officials — Durham Mayor Wib Gulley and Orange County Commission Chair Don Willhoit who signed proclamations declar-

ing June 22-29 "Anti-Discrimination Week." The pro-clamations recognized the achievements of lesbians and gay men and condemned anti-gay

churches organized their members to attend local government meetings, where pastors called for the resignations of Gulley and Willhoit. At an Orange County Commission meeting, one man demanded that Willhoit get down on his knees, kiss the Bible and plead for forgiveness. Willhoit declined, and the commission backed his proclamation by a 3-2

At the Durham meeting, 100 anti-gay church members and an equal number of supporters of gay rights listened as one pastor shouted that AIDS was the manifestation of the anti-Christ. Another pastor told a Jewish gay rights supporter to return to Israel where, he claimed, gay people were "stoned" in punishment.

were "stoned" in punishment.
Still another pastor roared, "They call themselves gay. But God calls them sodomites. The dictionary calls them homosexthem queers.

Steve Schewel, a staff writer for the liberal North Carolina In-dependent, observed, "Over and over, the pastors declaimed against 'queers," and the word rang loud in that chamber, where many gay people sat, as if someone had yelled 'nigger,' again and again, at Durham's five Black city council members. As if somene had yelled 'kike' over and over in sanctuary at Beth El

local Republican legislative candidate, Dick Smith, called for Mayor Gulley's resignation and

Sodomites Versus the Supremes

D.C. Rally

By Denise Sudell
WASHINGTON, DC — Over

200 people marched in front of the Supreme Court here on July 2 to case of Bowers issued two days before. The decision held that the constitutional right of privacy did not extend to lesbian and gay sexual activity, and upheld a Georgia law making such behavior a felony punishable by up to 20 years in prison.

The rally took place despite a tor-rential rain storm which hit the D.C. area a half hour before the D.C. area a half hour before the demonstration was scheduled to begin. Only a few people were standing at the foot of the Court's marble steps at the scheduled starting time, but the downpour slowed to a drizzle, and honking cars. ed to a drizzle, and honking cars and taxis pulled up to discharge late-arriving participants throughout the march and rally.

"Neo-fascism is on the march in this country," Eleanor Smeal, president of the National Organization for Women (NOW), Organization for Women (NOW), told participants. "We must sound the clarion call to progressives that the fundamentalist right wing is trying to push us back into the dark ages. We've got to say, 'we won't go back!" "She reminded the marchers that the Continued on nowal."

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Boston 'Kiss-in'

By Stephanie Poggi and Kim Westheimer

BOSTON — Sporting Sodomize Democracy" stickers, 200 angry lesbians and gay men gathered on the steps of the State House to protest the Supreme



Kissing for the Court.

Court's decision to uphold state sodomy laws. The July 7 evening demonstration featured a "kissing action" where lovers, ex-lovers and future lovers were encouraged

Speakers addressing the crowd included gay Boston City Coun-Continued on page 12



One of many anti-LaRouche contingents.

S.F. Political Carnival

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riers, not citizens. He wants to call all gay people carriers, not citizens. Lyndon LaRouche wants to give credibility to the absurd.'

to give credibility to the absurd."

"That's one more bigot's barricade," announced Parade grand marshall and former National Gay Task Force director Virginia Appuzzo, "that we're going to storm."

Appuzzo was one of only 14 scheduled speakers and enter-tainers in this year's rally program, down from thirty last year. There were fewer live acts, more recorded music, less dancing, and the net result of a rally that ended at five p.m. instead of at 6:30 as the previous year.

But the celebration did not stop

for everyone. As crews began dismantling the stage, a spontaneous circle of nearly a hundred men, chanting and holding hands, began drawing people like a magnet from throughout the magnet from throughout the plaza. Augmented by a group of Native American women — part of a contingent from Arizona's Big Mountain — and by the merely curious, the circle's single powerful chord echoed off of surroun-ding buildings, then escalated to an ecstatic cheering. Nearby, a man produced his video camera and filmed the scene, one final spectacle in an institution where spectacle is the rule of the day.

North Carolina

Continued from page 1

vowed to start a recall petition. "This town has become a hotbed for homosexuals," Smith said. "They're all over the place." While Smith has since backed off from the petition, a group of fundamentalist churches is pursuing

damentalist churches is pursuing the recall campaign.

Despite the pressure, Gulley, who was elected with strong support from the gay and progressive communities, stood firm on his proclamation. "I think he [Smith] is going to find out that the majority of citizens of Duchan do not be ty of citizens of Durham do not be-lieve that we should be a community that is marked by intolerance, prejudice or fear," he said. "It looks like this guy is trying to give some life to his campaign, and that's unfortunate."

Mab Segrest, one of the march's organizers, said the anti-lesbian/gay backlash was "one reason for the march. The bigots are just coming out of the closet There's a need to be visible and not to let this kind of ignorance and fear that's coming out shape our

Despite fears that the backlash Despite fears that the backlash would carry over to the march (the Durham Police Department reportedly readied a SWAT team for the occasion), the march pro-ceeded without incident. Hundreds of lesbians and gay men were joined by scores of straight sup-porters, who had formed a separate organization to help raise money and consciousness for the march and celebration. "The controversy definitely motivated progressive non-gays to come out and support us," said Jim Baxter, who served on the march's steering

The march wound its way through much of West Durham, finishing at at park where mar-chers listened to a series of chers listened to a series of testimonials, including a tearful recollection by North Carolina Lesbian and Gay Health Project co-founder David Jolly of the men he has watched die of AIDS. Music was provided by the Common Woman Chorus and several

other groups.

In his keynote speech, gay
Democratic Party activist Joe
Herzenberg of Chapel Hill said, Herzenberg of Chapel Hill said, "We are nearing the end of a great week in the history of this city, in the history of the Triangle. Never before has the issue of gay and les-bian rights been on the agendas of the Durham City Council, the Orange County Board of Commissioners and the Carrboro Board of

Organizer Baxter, who moved Organizer Baxter, who moved to North Carolina 14 years ago, said, "As I unwound at the rally, I realized that I have really been waiting for this march since the day I moved to North Carolina. The day's turnout, and the support we received from the non-gay companity to the property of munity, show the gay and lesbian rights movement in North Carolina

rights movement in North Carolina is coming of age."

"We called it the Triangle Gay & Lesbian Pride March," he said, "partly because that was all we could conceive of pulling off. But

people came from all over the state:

people came from all over the state: from Greensboro, Charlotte, all over. I think we can say it was a North Carolina Gay Pride March." Added Leo Teachout, president of the North Carolina Human Rights Fund: "I think it's going to have tremendous impact. It sets a standard for other compunities; in have tremendous impact. It sets a standard for other communities in the state: They can do the same thing; they can focus the same is-sues. And when that is done in Durham, and Raleigh, and Wilm-ington, and Asheville, then we'll start achieving something.

Corrections

An uncredited photo of Merle Miller appeared in Vol. 13, No. 49. The photo was taken by Richard J. Brilliante of Providence, R.I.. Our apologies for the oversight and thanks to Richard for bringing it to our at-

An article in Vol. 13, No. 50 on a national anti-viral drug study in-correctly described the treatment program in which Alan Kuconis is involved. Kuconis is participating in a study of the drug alpha interferon. Again, our apologies.

THE BUSINESS GUIDE

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