



## OFFICIAL CMF PRESS RELEASE

June 30, 2010

### **2010 Crape Myrtle Festival Still Blooming After 30 Years**

Chris Smith, CMF Board Member and Communication Chair

On Saturday evening, July 31 over 500 people will converge for the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Crape Myrtle Festival (CMF) at the Raleigh Convention Center. This year's theme is "Forever Blooming" and celebrates the past 30 years of fundraising for local nonprofits in the LGBT community.

Over \$1 million dollars has been collected by CMF to support HIV/AIDS related services and the LGBT community over the past 30 years. The festival is one of the oldest HIV fundraisers in the Southeast. The gala this year will be emceed by WRAL news anchor, Pam Saulsby and feature a variety of local entertainers, a silent auction and a display of The Names Project Foundation AIDS Memorial Quilt.

The festival originated in the summer of 1981 as a small backyard gathering in Wilmington, N.C. The party quickly grew in size and moved to Chapel Hill, focusing on the needs of the local gay and lesbian community. In response to the emerging AIDS health crisis, CMF soon began concentrating on raising funds for the HIV/AIDS service agencies located in the Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill area.

By the early 1990s, special events such as educational seminars, sports tournaments, and musical concerts joined the gala, resulting in a multiple CMF activities throughout the year. In 1992 a group of dedicated individuals initiated the process of incorporating CMF as a recognized North Carolina non-profit organization. CMF received state recognition as an official 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in May 1993.

CMF grant recipients for the 2010 year include the Alliance of AIDS Services, AIDS Community Residence Association (ACRA), Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of NC, Chatham Social Health Council, Common Woman Chorus, Duke AIDS Legal Project, El Centro Hispano, Equality NC Foundation, LGBT Center of Raleigh and the Triangle Gay Men's Chorus.

For more information about the Crape Myrtle Festival or to order tickets on-line, visit [www.crapemyrtlefest.org](http://www.crapemyrtlefest.org).