

S.C. legislators say they will fight in war on terrorism

BY JIM DAVENPORT
ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Several South Carolina legislators say they're ready to put on their military uniforms and do whatever is needed to fight the war on terrorism that President Bush has declared.

Eight House and Senate members could be called to active duty because they are in the National Guard or reserves, mostly as military lawyers who would handle wills and other papers for people who would go into battle.

The National Conference of State Legislatures in Denver and the National Guard do not keep statistics on state legislators serving in reserve or guard units around the nation.

But legislators aren't different from others who may be told to don the fatigues and leave, said Lt. Col. Pete Brooks, spokesman for South Carolina Adjutant General Stan Spears. "They have sworn the oath like all other soldiers and airmen."

"I am prepared to go," Sen. Joe Wilson, R-West Columbia, said. The South Carolina Army National Guard colonel is the state's staff judge advocate. He's also six weeks away from a primary bid for the 2nd District U.S. House seat left open by the death of Floyd Spence last month.

That campaign was on hold after last week's attacks in New York and Washington. "We are doing our best to get organized," Wilson said.

Two other state senators are guard members: Ethics Committee Chairman Wes Hayes, R-Rock Hill, and John Hawkins, R-Spartanburg, who is seeking the GOP nomination for attorney general.

Hawkins said he has written

U.S. Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., and asked to be assigned somewhere as soon as possible.

"If I can help in the upcoming war, I want to help," said Hawkins, a captain and Army Guard lawyer. "I don't feel like I could just sit here without at least trying to offer my service."

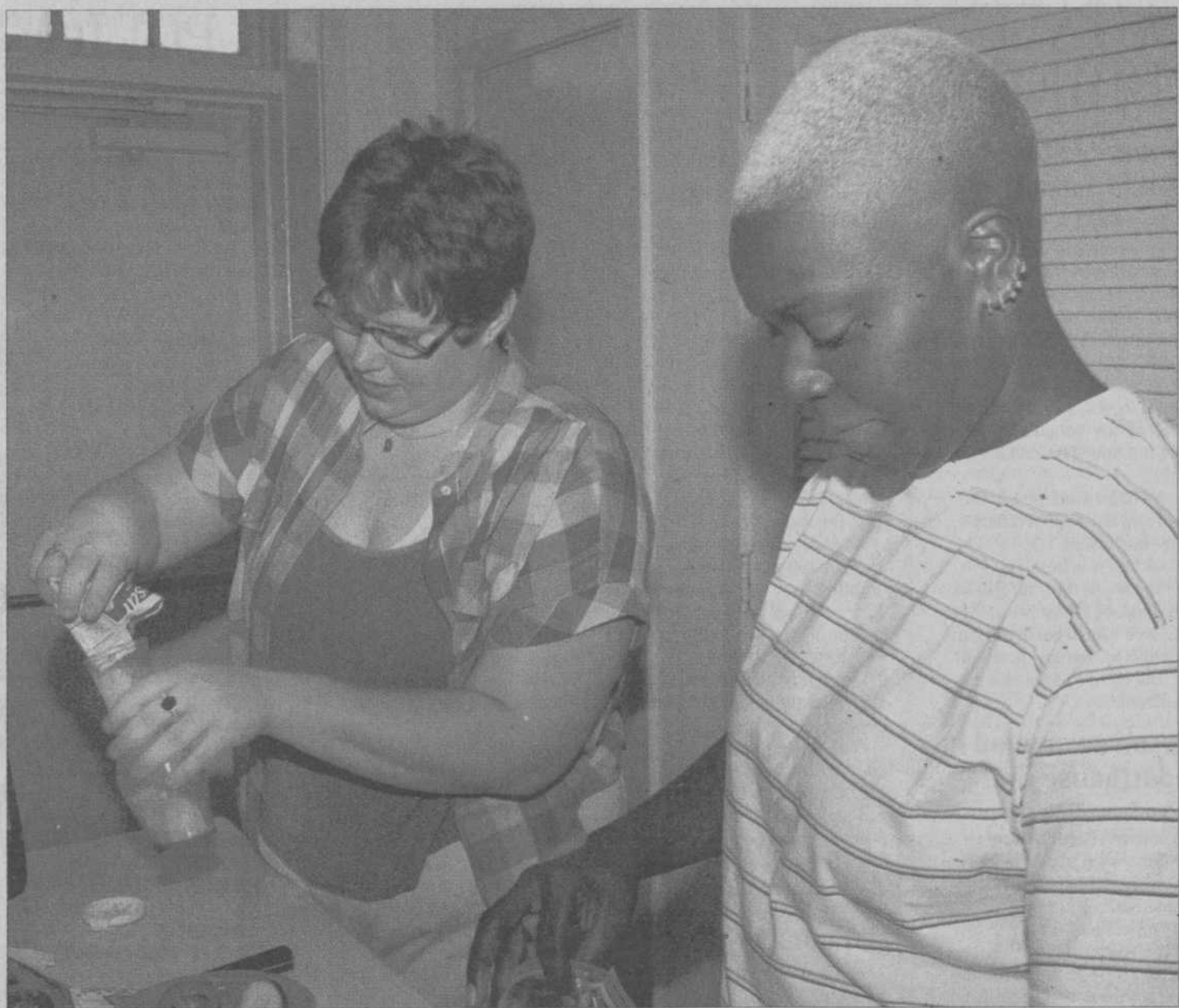
Hawkins' military boss is Rep. James Klauber, R-Greenwood, who is seeking the 3rd District seat that U.S. Rep. Lindsey Graham is giving up as he runs for Thurmond's seat.

"What happened last week has changed our country forever," said Klauber, a major. Klauber asked to be put on active duty, despite his congressional campaign. "This is a time when your personal political and career ambitions have to be put on the sidelines to go and do what's right."

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Harrison, a Columbia Republican, is an Army Reserve colonel. He works in a civil affairs division that deals with humanitarian aid and helps displaced civilians.

Past military mobilizations kept him away from Columbia during campaigns. In 1996, he was in Bosnia, but defeated a primary opponent and won the November election. Campaigning from abroad is possible. "You rely on family and friends a lot more than they normally would be asked to do," he said.

Rep. Jeff Young, R-Sumter, is the only Air Force reservist in the Legislature. He's got 24 years of military service and could retire from his job of making deals for bed and food for military personnel. But, he said, "I could never look my children in the eyes and know that I didn't do the right thing and do what my country needed," he said.



Kathy LaLima makes salad dressing in her apartment while her girlfriend, Angie Wilson, chops lettuce. Kathy and Angie have been a couple since last year. PHOTO BY MICHELLE DOSSON

Gay at USC Gay students face scrutiny, pressure

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they have to walk.

"You just have to be smart about it," Glenn says. "You know there are places you should go and things you can do in those places, and if you choose to violate that ..."

"That's life," Alan says. "It's life," Glenn agrees. "And it was far worse 10 years ago. And far worse than that 20 years ago. That's a pretty quick change. And in 10 years, I expect it to be even better."

Alan and Glenn are open about their homosexuality. They laugh a lot, joke about it. Both have been out since high school and have supportive families.

Behaving 'dishonestly'

Students still feel pressure to behave dishonestly in public. Bryan talks about turned heads and stopped conversations as people turn to stare at him with his boyfriend. "Devil on your shoulder," he says. "If you do something that you feel should be normal, then you know you're going to be hit for it."

Sam empathizes. "If there's a group of girls and there's a lesbian

around, they just make fun of her and leave, but they're not gonna go beat her up or leave hate mail. Guys do. Gay guys have such a real hard time. Maybe they're sissies and everything, but they go through hell to be who they are. I guess we all do. But they get beat up a lot more than we do."

Kathy LaLima, a fourth-year art history major, describes walking across the street with her last girlfriend. "Some vagrant — it wasn't a student, he was really old and dirty — started yelling at us, 'Girls holding hands, that ain't natural.' And then he kept mumbling, but we were walking away, and I didn't feel like listening to his slurs. As long as I ignore the slurs, it's fine."

BGLA meetings

Wednesdays at 8 p.m. in Gambrell 201.

A relationship

Kathy is dating Angie Wilson, who was president of BGLA for two years. With six earrings in her left ear, three in her right, tattoos on her shoulder and close-cropped, bleached hair, Angie describes herself as a "big tough woman."

Angie makes a salad while Kathy doctors a jar of spaghetti

♦ GAY AT USC, SEE PAGE 5

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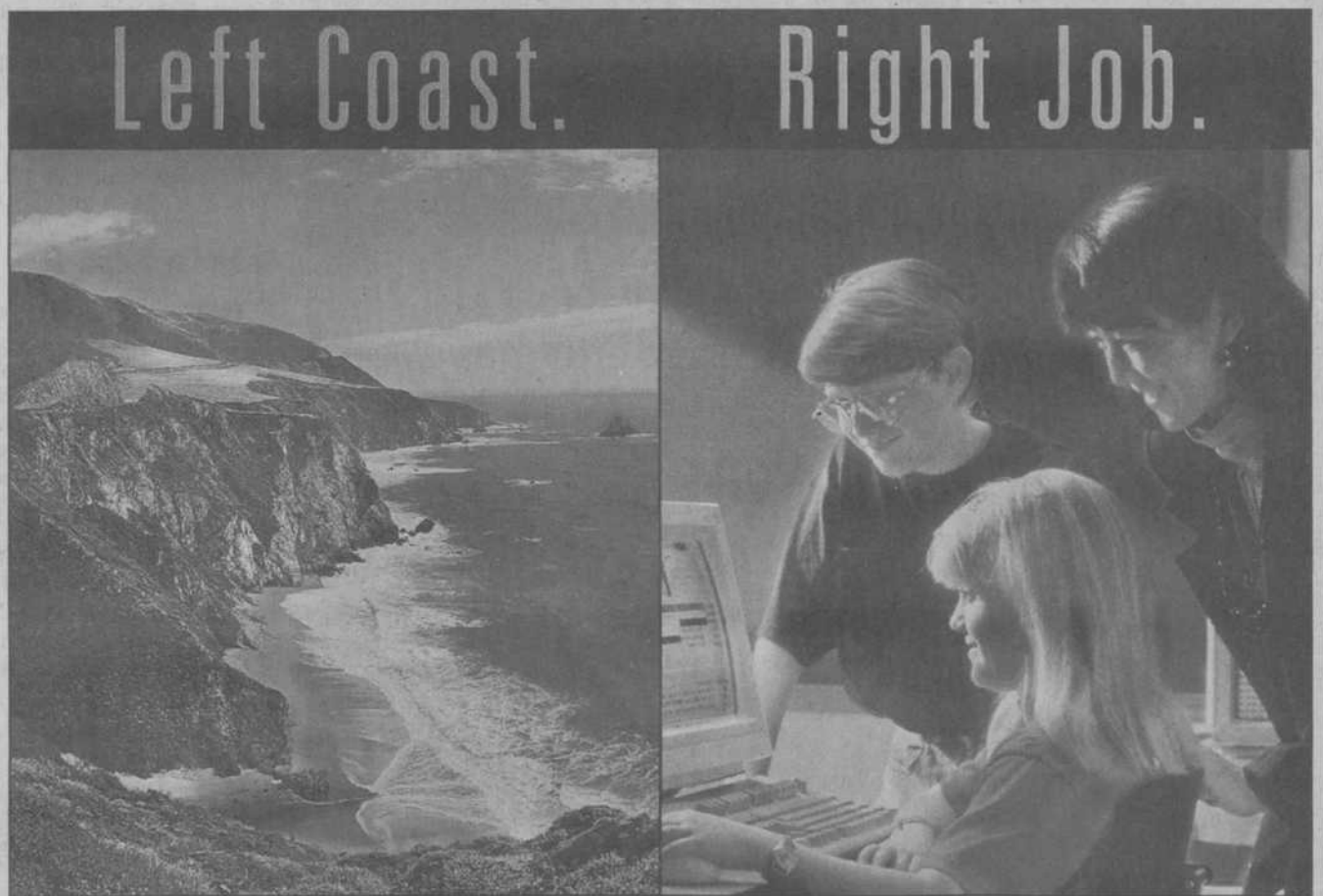
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