

MCSP Releases Report

Metrolina Community Services Project (MCSP) released a report summarizing its activities during the first six months of 1988.

The Gay and Lesbian Switchboard, which is open from 6:30 to 10:30 seven nights a week, reported that the number of calls continues to rise steadily. During the first six months of 1988, 1049 calls were received. This compares with 951 from January to June of 1987 and 552 for the same period in 1986. This translates to a 90% increase in just two years.

Queen City Friends (QCF), a social-educational group for professional gay women over 21, reported a significant increase in attendance. Its twice-monthly meetings regularly attracted an average of 40 to 60, and 100 to 200 women have attended its recreational events.

During the first half of 1988, the MCSP Speaker's Bureau provided qualified speakers to two counseling agencies: Reachline, Charlotte's suicide prevention telephone counseling service and Alternative Resources of the Triad (ART), a group which recently organized the Gay and Lesbian Hotline of the Triad in Greensboro.

Additional programming to address the problems of the lesbian and gay community is under consideration by the MCSP Board of Directors. Under investigation are such services as: Expanding the Gay and Lesbian Switchboard; Enhancing the Speaker's Bureau by offering formalized training and soliciting speaking engagements; Producing a "Guide to Professional Services" for businesses and professionals interested in working with gay and lesbian clients; offering a Welcome Wagon to new and relocating residents to the lesbian and gay community; publishing a consolidated newsletter; and starting a gay and lesbian community center.

The problems facing our community are great. MCSP, as the only community service organization for gay men and lesbians in Charlotte, is trying to address some of those problems. We aren't "The Gay and Lesbian Messianic Society," but we want to help where we can be most effective.

NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY

 TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP

HOTLANTA – The Weekend

By Robert E. Sheets
 Special to Q-Notes

Being from the Carolinas, we have all heard the saying "Hotlanta" and there are even a few who have been on the Hotlanta River Raft Race. The Hotlanta River Expo celebrated its 10th anniversary this year with close to 1,400 men from all over the country attending. To have been there was to be involved in a weekend that you would not easily forget.

The Hotlanta weekend got started on Thursday with the Miss Hotlanta Contest but Friday is the big kickoff with the official welcome party which was held at the historic Georgia Freight Depot and Garden.

What a party it was with over 2,500 men in attendance. It was a feast with carved roast beef, crabmeat dip and so many other good things to eat that it's hard to remember. The welcome party was also a costume ball and there were many hunks and semi-bare numbers (one rarely dances with 2,500 other men for long with their shirts on).

After the Ball ended at 1 am, there was free admission for all the Hotlanta participants at the bars in Atlanta and bar hopping went on until the wee hours of the morning along with private parties.

Saturday night was the Mr. Hotlanta contest where 11 of the hottest men in the country competed for the title of Mr. Hotlanta, but the show that goes with the contest is not to be missed.

The contestants were brought on stage in horse-drawn carriages, and later Charlie Brown did a number to the song Pink Cadillac, (with a pink cadillac) and the contestants in hot pink bikini trunks, Mr. Charlotte, Tufi Bader, came in forth place. Sam Baker (formerly of Charlotte) brought the audience to its feet with a patriotic number with strands of the American flag hanging from ceiling to floor in the background, later to be raised revealing a rainbow flag.

Again Saturday night, there were special bar parties with a number of people coming in just in time Sunday to catch the trip down the river.

The Event, rafting down the Chattahoochee River, takes place on Sunday. There was a group photo taken at the hotel and then everyone was bussed to the river to ride down in six-man rafts. Men for as far as the eye can see and... (was that a bathing suit) I thought string bikinis were bigger than that?

Going down the river is the part of the weekend that IS NOT TO BE MISSED, and if you survived it dry then you must have walked.

It is something else to be bumbed, bordered, wetted down by six hunks from all across the country, all the while doing your best to get them wet at the same time.

Men of all ages being young again, Miss Hotlanta was seen coming down the river dressed as Cleopatra with her Egyptian slaves (and yes she did get a bit wet). When we finished we were taken back to the hotel where there was another banquet happening with photos of past raft weekends and shots of the early events, and people partied into the wee hours of Sunday night.

For those who were there, it was a weekend that they will not easily forget and many are already making plans to attend next year. I know that I ain!

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