

Encounter International Visits Charlotte

By Gene Skidmore
Special to Q-Notes

When Jesus sent His disciples into the world to do His work, He told them to take only what they had on their backs, and to rely solely on the people they served for their needs.

So it is with four young women from Long Beach, California, who were called by God to minister to gay and lesbian people in cities all over the United States.

What began as a worship band for the Metropolitan Community Church of Long Beach has become a full time ministry called Encounter International.

The group is made up of Sandy, singing lead vocals, Janet on guitars, Veronica playing bass guitar, and Terri on Keyboards.

Their name, Sandy says, came from their feeling that worship should be a total encounter with God, not just a religious game of going through the motions.

On Sunday, November 27, Encounter International performed at MCC Charlotte, playing two songs for the morning service and giving their full ministry to the evening service.

They began with Sandi Patti's "How Majestic Is Your Name," and played some of their own compositions as well.

The women have been playing together for almost two years, and are in the midst of a 12-month tour, aimed primarily at larger cities where they say the subculture they want most to reach is the gay and lesbian community. This community has been misinformed for so

long by society and organized religion about the gospel. Who better to reach the gay community than other gay people that the gospel does indeed apply to them, they say.

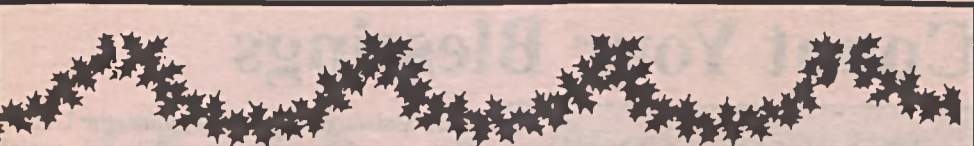
Encounter International challenged us to be gay ministers. There are so many thousands of people who are lost and searching for answers, that there is room and need for all of us to minister to someone.

Ronnie (Veronica) gave us a moving testimony about her life. She had been a cocaine addict and eventually hit bottom. "I wish someone had reached out and told me before then," she said, "that God loved me just the way I am." Ronnie overcame her drug habit and quit cold turkey with a lot of willpower and prayer.

Encounter International has high hopes for the future. By mid-1989, when they finish their tour, they plan to start a training school for workers in their ministry. Interested people would then spend one to two months on the road serving people where the needs are present.

The key areas the ministry will be aiming at are: getting MCC's started in cities where none exist, and, of course, assisting churches in their outreach to the gay and lesbian community.

Right now Encounter International is four months into their tour. Following their visit to MCC Charlotte, they plan to minister in Nashville, Dallas, Houston and New York. Our thoughts and prayers are with these young women who so courageously "fight the good fight."

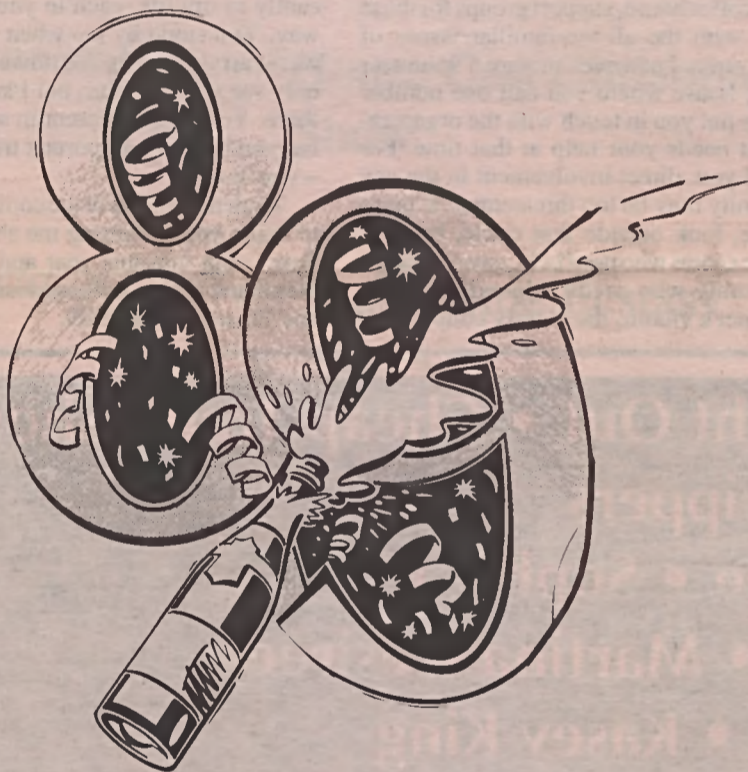


STEVENS

◆ Cafe and Bar ◆

Stevens Open 7 Nites a Week No Membership Required
316 Rensselaer Charlotte 377-1221

Open Christmas Day



Make New Year's
Dinner Reservations Early

PMS Party
Friday 12-23-88

Drink Specials

Monday - Draft Beer
Tuesday - Well Drinks
Wednesday - Domestic Beer
Thursday - Import Beer

GET IT FREE

See the Classifieds, page 7

X-MAS SHOPPING SHOULDN'T BE A DRAG!!

- UNIQUE
- CLOTHING
- SHOES
- JEWELRY
- ACCESSORIES



THE SEVENTH STREET
EMPORIUM
1824 E. 7TH ST.
377-9717