

Q-NOTES

Switchboard, Charlotte 704/525-6128
 AIDS Hotline, Charlotte 704/333-AIDS
 PFLAG Hotline, Charlotte 704/364-1474
 AIDS Hotline, Columbia 803/779-PALS
 Call Line, Wilmington 919/675-9222

March 1989

PRIDE IN PRINT

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Living With AIDS Tom O'Connor To Speak In Charlotte

By David Prybylo
 Health Educator for
 Metrolina AIDS Project

Tom O'Connor, author of the book *Living with AIDS - Reaching Out*, will speak at Temple Beth El, 1727 Providence Road, on Sunday, March 5 at 7:30 pm. The topic of his discussion will be "Strategies for Healing AIDS: Making AIDS a Treatable and Manageable Disease." The presentation is sponsored by Metrolina AIDS Project and is free and open to the public.



Author, lecturer and AIDS authority, O'Connor has had ARC for over eight years. His experience in managing his own illness has provided him a wealth of knowledge which he shares freely with others. His message is one of hope and optimism, and he stresses that by actively participating in one's own healing process, a person can increase both the length and quality of life.

Tom has been an active participant in AIDS work for many years. He is co-founder of the AIDS Healing Alliance, which has recently begun the pilot stages of a national study on long-term survivors. He is co-founder of the Healing Alternative Foundation, a "buyers' club" which was instrumental

in getting the FDA to allow Dextran Sulfate into the country. He is currently helping to establish in San Francisco the Community Research Initiative, an organization that will help PWAs and physicians to control their own treatment protocols. Tom was a principal consultant for the founding of Project Survival, a national networking service for People Recovering From AIDS ("PRAs"). He also helped organize a group of patients at Kaiser Hospital in San Francisco.

Tom is a co-founder of the San Francisco Macro-biotic Network, which puts on a dinner every Friday night to introduce nutritional support to AIDS-affected persons. Tom practices his own unique nutritional program, which is the result of his research into macrobiotics and other nutritional regimens. He considers orthodox macrobiotics to have much good information but also to be a bit dogmatic.

See Tom O'Connor, page 4

MAP Begins Women and AIDS Group

By David Prybylo
 Health Educator for
 Metrolina AIDS Project

Metrolina AIDS Project, in response to a growing need in the Charlotte area, has begun a support group for women who are affected by AIDS. The Women And AIDS Support Group had its first meeting on Wednesday, February 1, and will meet every Wednesday at 4:00 p.m.

Lori Cardona, MAP's Coordinator of Client Services, says MAP established the group because they began to recognize that some women had specific and unique needs that were not necessarily being addressed by MAP's other support groups. "Our other groups deal with some topics that are not relevant to women," she explained. "For example, issues surrounding the gay male experience are not consistent with women's concerns."

"On the other hand, issues such as gynecological matters are not applicable to men. More and more I saw these women withdrawing from the support system, and I realized that some of their specific needs were not being met. It was clear that we needed to begin a group specifically for them."

The group is led by Betty Debrill, a trained counselor who is the clinical administrator at Randolph Clinic, an out-patient alcohol rehabilitation center. Joanne Stevenson, a trained counselor at Open House, a drug rehabilitation service, acts as co-facilitator. Both women have had extensive experience dealing with support groups, and both feel that the emotional issues which surround addiction are similar to those seen in HIV-infected people.

As with all other MAP services, the Women And AIDS group is confidential and free of charge. In addition, Metrolina AIDS Project offers on-premises child care during meeting times. If you are interested in joining the group, or if you would like more information, call MAP at 333-2437 any weekday between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm or 7:00 - 10:00 pm.

PFLAG Receives \$1500 Grant

by Rod Thornton
 Special to Q-Notes

A \$1500 grant has been awarded to the Charlotte chapter of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG). The grant was given by "Fund for Southern Communities," a non-profit organization based in Atlanta.

The money will be used to print and mail a number of informative pamphlets about lesbians and gays. Much of this information will be directed to approximately 1000 clergy, psychologists, counselors, etc.

According to Jerry Cass of PFLAG, their stated purpose in applying for the grant was

LONG-TERM SURVIVORS

By Rev. Lynn Guerra
 Special to Q-Notes

Most of the time the media puts forth the word that diagnosis with HIV or ARC or AIDS is an automatic death sentence for the person. BUT the facts are different!

According to statistics put out by the CDC in Atlanta there are still approximately 10% of the persons diagnosed with AIDS in 1981 still alive today! Some of them have experienced what the medical community is calling "a complete remission" of the AIDS virus. What that means to us lay people is that the AIDS virus has disappeared from them.

One man, the Reverend Steve Pieters, has been on national television talking about his healing.

Because of these facts, it is very frustrating to me to see people lose all hope, and because of that frustration I decided to write this article and share some of the common factors that these long-term survivors have.

1. Long-term survivors understand and accept the reality of the AIDS diagnosis, but also refuse to believe that the syndrome is an automatic, imminent death sentence.

2. They believe that one can cope, actively with the disease, and refuse to succumb to a 'helpless-hopeless' state.

3. They make appropriate, individualized adjustments in personal habits and behaviors to accommodate living with the disease.

4. Long-term survivors find meaning and purpose in life.

5. A program of exercise and physical fitness is a common factor.

6. They report the importance of support and information from other people with AIDS, particularly shortly after diagnosis.

7. They give themselves permission to withdraw from involvements when they need to care for themselves.

8. Almost all of the survivors have found solace in religion or some sort of spiritual group.

9. They are fighters, often difficult patients, not passive. Most used a group of physicians to coordinate their care, not just one. A majority have fired a physician, or ordered one out of their hospital room.

10. There was no magic bullet, no single treatment used by all of the survivors.

11. All said they needed hope to survive. Each had to deal in some way with the media's repeated message that, once diagnosed, everyone dies.

(These factors have been paraphrased from articles written in ALERT, a monthly AIDS information newsletter from UFMCC, 5300 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 304, Los Angeles, CA 90029. Subscriptions are available.)

To all of you out there who are living with AIDS, continue to LIVE! Take care of yourselves. Don't lose hope! Don't give up! Rest! Eat right! Find a support group so that you can share your feelings. It is in keeping feelings in or denying that they exist that the problem arises. Most importantly, don't listen to anyone who tells you that EVERYONE dies from AIDS. LIVE WITH AIDS!!! A cure may be just around the corner.

First Tuesday Elects Board Members

On February 7th, during their monthly meeting, First Tuesday members elected new board members. Serving as Co-Chairs will be Sandra Bailey and Matt. I. Board members Pat W. and Rod Thornton were appointed respectively as Treasurer and Secretary. Don King was appointed as Media Representative, although he did not wish to serve as a Board Member.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with First Tuesday, the group organized last year to "...serve as an advocate for societal and political concerns for the gay and lesbian community." Also, "to interact with other organizations to further human rights...To provide politicians and the media with a perspective on gay/lesbian issues."

BEST BETS

- Mar. 3 *Closetbusters on Cable* ch. 33 at 10 pm
- Mar. 5 *Tom O'Connor to Speak at Temple Beth El* 7:30 pm
- Mar. 7 *First Tuesday, CCP House*, 8 pm
- Mar. 9 PFLAG
- Mar. 11 *Mature Gay Men, Call* 882-1747 7:30 pm
- Mar. 17 *St. Patrick's Day Parties and shows everywhere. See ads for details*
- Feb. 17 *Closet Busters 10:00 pm* Cable Channel 3
- Mar. 20 *Bowling - Coliseum Lanes* 9 pm
- Mar. 23 *Passover Seder Supper* MCC Charlotte 6:30 pm
- Mar. 24 *Good Friday*
- Mar. 26 *Easter*

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