

# Q-NOTES

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PRIDE IN PRINT

(704) 338-1138

## Gays March into Raleigh's Heart

by: Joel N. Smith  
 Q-Notes Staff

The North Carolina Lesbian and Gay Pride March was Saturday, June 24 in Raleigh. The theme for this year was Stonewall to Raleigh—twenty years of pride, struggle and liberation. A group of Charlotteans traveled together on a bus sponsored by First Tuesday and Q-Notes. Others drove their personal vehicles.

Gays and lesbians from all over North Carolina gathered outside the arts center of Pullen Park, near the North Carolina State University several hours before the march began. Mandy Carter manned the mike, giving information for the arrivals. There were free balloons of all colors. Vendors sold tee shirts and buttons. Several panels from The Quilt along with banners from nearly every Carolina gay or lesbian group were spread on the lawn.

The march began at noon and covered about two miles thru the city of Raleigh. There was a drum corp a.k.a., the Pride Marching Band which boasted morale along the way with chants such as "Hey-Ho Jesse Helms has got to go!" and "2-4-6-8 How do you know your kids are straight?". The day was overcast with one short, light rain.



Theme Banner for North Carolina's Gay Pride March

The march culminated with a rally. The emcee was Danny Leonard (Brandy Alexander) from Jacksonville, NC. The program was opened by Mary Nooe of the Raleigh City Council. Also on the program were Jim Duly, March co-coordinator; Willie Pilkington;

storyteller Louise Kessel; Julie Johnston, Leo Teachout; Joyce Nacca-Rankin; Eleaor Holland; Martha Wilson; Kim Saffran and Joe Herzenburg.

An After Pride Party was held at the Raleigh Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

### Best Bets

July 8 Mature Gay Men

July 10 First Tuesday

July 13 PFLAG

Gay Parents  
 Coalition  
 The Burkhardt Boys  
 Club Caberet

July 21 PFLAG Benefit  
 Scorpio

July 27 Tribute to  
 Broadway  
 Charades

July 29 Wizard of Oz  
 Oleens

July Mr. N.C. U.S.A.  
 Scorpio

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## Compound Q Testing Underway

by: Nancy McVicar  
 Fort Lauderdale News &  
 Sun Sentinel

FORTLAUDERDALE, Fla.—On March 31, John Fisher a 43-year-old Fort Lauderdale man became the first American to receive a highly touted experimental AIDS drug, Compound Q, thus beginning an underground study at getting the drug quickly approved.

Results of the trial, which is continuing in South Florida - and in New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco - so far have been mixed, with some patients claiming to be free of the HIV virus and some experiencing severe side effects requiring hospitalization, those involved say.

One participant in San Francisco died several weeks after being treated, but it is not known if the drug contributed to his death, said Dr. Larry Waites, a San Francisco doctor who set up the procedures used in the trial.

He said results, which are too preliminary to release, will be presented to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration within six weeks.

Dr. Robert Mayer, a North Miami doctor conducting the study in South Florida, said the early results show that the drug, "is not the magic bullet, but it has had a remarkable effect on some people. It's probably better than anything we've had so far, but we can't call it a milestone yet."

He said four of the first eight people to receive the drug, including Fisher, appear to be free of the virus, but it is too early to draw conclusions. "We need more time. Will the drug's effects remain? We don't know yet."

Dr. James Kahn, who is coordinating the FDA-sanctioned study of Compound Q along with Dr. Paul Volberding at San Francisco General Hospital, said he is concerned the underground trial could adversely affect the official trial.

"I'm afraid the FDA might want to slow down our trial or even stop it until they can fully evaluate the underground responses," said Kahn, referring to the one patient who died.

Kahn said he also fears his patients may become alarmed and withdraw from the offi-

cial study because of the reports about side effects and death. "I have no idea what their drug is," he said. The Compound Q in the FDA-sanctioned study is made in the U.S. and has met FDA purity standards, he said.

The FDA said that is investigating the underground study, but Waites said the FDA has known about it for some time.

"The FDA has been completely aware of everything that has gone on throughout the entire program," he said. "There has been no secrecy...Of course, they're in a difficult position."

Waites said he and his partner, immunologist Alan Levin, became involved in the underground study after they were approached by Project Inform, an AIDS information network, which pointed out that people could import the drug for their own use under the FDA rules established late last year.

"We were faced with the dilemma of thousands of people taking this drug in an unmonitored, uncontrolled way, in danger of killing themselves, and the bureaucracy was moving along very slowly," he said.

"We needed to find answers very quickly. We consulted the best lawyers here and in Washington, D.C., and best experts in medical field, Genelabs (which helped to develop Compound Q in this country), and experts on ribosomal inhibitory proteins, which this drug is," Waites said.

"Even people in the federal government, who I can't name, helped us. They advised us on how to set up a treatment program that would meet even the strictest criteria for an FDA protocol," he said.

Waites said after being reassured by lawyers that the trial would be "perfectly legal," three San Francisco patients received the drug on May 24.

By that time, four South Florida men already had received their initial doses, said Paul Ellis, an assistant to Mayer, whose clinic has been offering alternative treatments to HIV patients for three years.

Compound Q, which has been shown to kill the HIV virus in the test tube without harming healthy cells, went into FDA-sanctioned human safety trials last month at San

Francisco General, "but so far they've given infinitesimal amounts of the drug to one person, then next month a second person will get it and so on," Ellis said. "That's absurd. The drug has been in use in China for years."

Kahn said, however, that his safety trials of the drug "are progressing very well. The trial has our highest priority and will be done very quickly, with accurate data entry and excellent clinical management that will give us good data that we can build on." He declined to give more details.

Ellis, who is infected with the HIV virus, is Mayer's vice president for research and development and claims responsibility for finding the source in China for the drug and making that information available to Project Inform.

After unsuccessfully trying over four months to get the drug's ingredients from researchers, he learned that the patent application became public record on January 1. For \$1.50, he was able to get a copy and found the active ingredient was trichosanthin, a protein derived from a Chinese cucumber plant and in widespread use in China for centuries, most recently to treat certain cancers and to induce abortions.

He made many calls to China before finding Dr. Jing Yu Chi, chief of gynecology at a Shanghai hospital, who agreed to make some of the drug available in its purest form for \$5 an ampul, he said. The drug was analyzed for purity after it reached this country, Ellis said.

Each of the patients in the study has signed a release saying he learned of the drug through his own research, is importing it for his own use, agrees to blood chemistry tests and physical exams monitored by the doctors involved in each city, and agrees not to hold the doctors responsible for any ill effects.

He said the man who died and the other early participants in the San Francisco study were "very sick when they got the drug. This was their last hope."

Mayer said public criticism will not halt the study.

"We're going to go on with it, that's all." Mayer said, "They can't put us in jail like they do in China, you know."