

# Q Notes

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## SC Pride '98 makes progress, Make a bid for Time Out Youth still faces some opposition

by Dan Van Mourik  
Q-Notes Staff

MYRTLE BEACH, SC—Plans for the 9th Annual South Carolina Gay and Lesbian Pride March and Festival, April 30-May 3, are nearing completion with most of the entertainment, speakers, vendors and other details set and announced to the public.

House of Blues in North Myrtle Beach will host many of the concerts and parties, kicking off the weekend festivities with a VIP Social from 6:00-8:00pm, featuring entertainment by Melissa Reaves and her band The Willys. Admittance is free and there will be a cash bar and appetizers available.

At 9:00pm, doors will open for the night's featured entertainment, dance and adult contemporary artist Taylor Dayne will be singing her hits. The concert will begin at 10:00pm. Tickets are \$15.

Following Dayne's concert, House of Blues will host a late night dance party with Mark McEwan, a DJ from Atlanta. The party will last until 5:00am. Admission is \$7 for people who do not attend the Dayne concert.

On May 1, '70s disco superstars KC and The Sunshine Band will perform at 11:15pm at the House of Blues. Tickets are \$25. Immediately following is another late night dance party featuring New Orleans' alternative DJ Lydia Prim. The party will last until 5:00am, and admission is \$7 for those attending only the dance party.

On May 2, the House of Blues will sponsor a dance party with RuPaul from 8:30pm until 2:00am. Tickets to that event are \$17.50.

Festival organizer Patrick Evans confirmed that registration and welcome activities will still be held at the Official All Star Cafe, another festival sponsor, on April 30 and May 1.

Candace Gingrich and Betty DeGeneres are scheduled to speak at the 10:00am rally on May 2, and festival organizers are waiting for confirmation of other speakers. The parade is expected to run from noon to 2:00pm with the balance of the rally activities finishing around 4:00pm. A concert at Doug Shaw Memorial Stadium is expected to follow at 5:00pm. The performer for the concert has not been announced yet.

The festival will end May 3 with an interdenominational morning prayer service on the beach. The service will be followed by a picnic at Myrtle Beach State Park.

For complete details on all the events, see the SC Pride ad on page 2 of this issue.

But all is not smooth sailing. On Tuesday, February 24, Myrtle Beach City Council denied part of the full request to close several downtown streets by SC Gay and Lesbian Pride Festival organizers. Council also restricted access by festival vendors, limiting them to a small parking lot. The Council was marked by strained remarks on both sides.

Organizers had asked the city to allow the closing of streets in the downtown superblock area from 10:00am to 4:00pm on May 2 for the rally and parade. Council, however, amended the request before approving it 6-1. Mayor Mark McBride said he could not support the use of city space by the Gay Pride group.

"For 60 years, this community has promoted

itself as a family beach with family values," McBride said. "I believe we're opening our door to all the other groups across the country, like the skinheads and all these Black Panthers if we allow this group. We'll become the soapbox for all these groups."

Festival co-chair Patrick Evans called the reasoning thinly veiled homophobia. His voice and body shook with anger as he tried to respond. "Tonight you have insulted my family,

Mayor McBride," Evans said during the meeting. "I have family values and

I question if you know what they are."

The council voted to close half of the portion of Ninth Avenue North that organizers had requested; added the use of George Cox Boulevard for the festival; and said the festival could not have vendors on the outer streets. The council also said vendors will only be allowed in the inner parking lot, which is enclosed by the superblock.

Council said it decided not to close part of Ninth Avenue North so traffic could get in and out of the First Methodist Church for a wedding. The church is located on the edge of the superblock and uses part of Ninth Avenue North for access.

Before considering the request to close streets for the festival, council had met in executive session for 55 minutes to discuss a legal question regarding two festival requests on the council's agenda. The requests were for Gay Pride and Myrtle Gras. The council approved the closing of superblock streets for the city-sponsored Myrtle Gras festival April 25. That festival requested the same streets the Gay Pride festival asked for.

Because of that and because the city has shut down roads for other private events, Councilman Wayne Gray said he would support the request by Pride organizers. "The fact is the precedent has been set," Gray said.

But McBride didn't agree. "When we closed 29th Avenue North it was for safety," McBride said.

Pride co-chair Linda Robertson said she was very angry and disappointed with council. She also said festival organizers would contact their attorney and the American Civil Liberties Union.

"We have met with City Manager Tom Leath," Robertson said. "We have met with local law enforcement and the fire department. We have met with city festival planners and downtown business owners. We have elected not to have food vendors so restaurants in the area can reap the benefits of serving this group. We have designated four charities to receive money from the event."

Downtown business owners and city residents also stated their disappointment and disgust that the council would approve Myrtle Gras and limit the same request minutes later for the Pride Festival.

"The precedent you may not understand you are setting is exclusion," said superblock business owner Heather Lee Johnson. "My perception is that it is just discriminatory. My opinion has changed tonight. I walked in here thinking this was a civil thing. I am so disappointed, Mayor McBride. I think you need to realize there are enough people in this community to keep three gay bars running in this city year-round." ▼

by David Stout  
Q-Notes Staff

CHARLOTTE—Everybody's trying to score a ticket to one of Garth Brooks' two sold-out concerts at the Charlotte Coliseum, right? Well, guess what? We know where you can get two of them. Yeah, you heard right...two! And that's not even the best part — the best thing is that the money is going to a great cause! So, where can you get them? At the 7th Annual Time Out Youth Auction — but you didn't hear it from us!

On Saturday, March 14, benefactors will convene at the First Union Atrium in uptown Charlotte to raise vital funds for Time Out Youth, the area's only non-profit organization dedicated solely to meeting the needs of GLBT and questioning youth ages 13-23. Silent and live auctions will run during the evening, dubbed "Show Your True Colors," offering a variety of unusual and coveted items — like those impossible-to-get Brooks tickets.

The silent auction will begin at 6:30pm and last until 9:00pm; live bidding will commence at 8:00pm with Master of Ceremonies Cullen

Ferguson (WSOC television news anchor and father of a gay man) leading the way.

Celebrity auctioneers scheduled to participate include County Commissioners Becky Carney, Lloyd Scher and Darrel Williams, openly gay commission candidate Andrew Reyes and local radio personality Jerry Klein.

Some of the items they will be pushing are an RCA satellite dish, an autographed pair of Speedos from Greg Louganis, a Maltese puppy with a free year of vet care, lunch with former Charlotte mayor and US Senate candidate Harvey Gantt, numerous vacation packages, Nascar goodies and backstage passes for Sarah McLachlan's Independence Arena show.

This event raises nearly one-third of Time Out's annual operating budget. Last year's auction brought in \$18,000; organizers are setting their sights much higher this time hoping to bring in \$50,000.

There will be a \$10 admission charge to cover the beer, wine, hors d'oeuvres and desserts provided throughout the evening. For more information, or to donate items, call Gigi Guyton at (704) 338-9528. ▼

## Games are on the gay agenda

by Juli Treadway  
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At last count, at least nine of the 12,500 athletes expected to compete in the upcoming Gay Games will be from the Charlotte area. Participants from five continents will compete in 30 events at Gay Games V, to be held August 1-8 in Amsterdam, Holland. The Charlotte athletes will be competing in figure skating, swimming, triathlon, marathon and tennis. Kyle McIntyre, who will be competing in solo figure skating, says, "I am looking forward to visiting this fantastic place and just being there amongst all of the other gays and lesbians. The camaraderie will be wonderful."

The Gay Games originated in San Francisco in 1982. Dr. Tom Waddell, a former Olympian in track and field, organized them as the "Gay Olympics" to demonstrate to the world the skills and competitive spirit of the gay community.

Despite their positive message, however, they were not without controversy. The United States Olympic Committee successfully filed for an injunction prohibiting organizers from using the word "Olympics" in their name. Despite the fact that numerous events used the word — even one called the "Rat Olympics" — only the Gay Olympics were forced to relinquish the name. (In 1994, when openly-gay, diving champion Greg Louganis received the highest honor bestowed by the International Olympic Committee, the US Committee recognized the Gay Games and included them in their annual handbook under noteworthy events.)

The first Gay Games attracted 1350 athletes, from 179 cities in 12 countries, who competed in 14 events. They boasted a budget of \$125,000 and a volunteer workforce of 600.

Gay Games II were again held in San Francisco in 1986. This time there were 3500 athletes, from 258 cities in 19 countries. There were 17 competitive events and the budget rose to \$350,000. Although the Games were a major success, tragedy struck the following year when Dr. Tom Waddell died of AIDS on July 11, 1987.

Gay Games III were held in Vancouver, BC,

Canada. These games were attended by 7500 athletes, from 39 countries, competing in 23 events and the budget had soared to \$2.1 million. Vancouver was a wonderful host to the Games, opening their city for everyone's use and providing free transportation for the athletes.

Gay Games IV, the largest sporting event ever, including the "real" Olympics, were held in New York City. A whopping 10,864 athletes from 40 countries competed in 31 events. The Games had 7000 volunteers and a budget of \$6.5 million. Gay Games IV also coincided

with the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots — which occurred in June of 1969. The three-day Stonewall riots are considered to be the starting point of the gay and lesbian rise to freedom. Two highlights of the 1994 Games were a one-mile-long rainbow flag that marchers carried during the Stonewall 25 parade and entertainment by Liza Minnelli. (Charlotteans had their own highlight to

boast about at the '94 Games: hometown power lifter Sandy Crenshaw captured the Gold in her weight division. Reportedly, she is planning to defend her title in Amsterdam.)

Like the Olympics, athletes to the Gay Games must pay their own expenses. Because of this, Charlotte's participants are coordinating several fundraisers — with the next one at Fat City restaurant, located in the North Davidson Arts District, on March 22 at 2pm. Local favorite Doubling Thomas is scheduled to perform and the cover charge will go to the athletes. The team is also selling T-shirts for \$15 featuring their original logo.

If you would like to sponsor an athlete, make a donation or purchase a shirt, contact Ann Hooper at (704) 377-1144. Additionally, Beverly McIntyre of Pink Fairy Travel is handling the travel packages for the Games and there is still room for folks to go — as spectators or competitors. Gay Games participants do not have to meet any minimum requirements nor are there tryouts. Athletes must simply possess a desire to compete with other gays and lesbians in an event whose motto is "Friendship Through Culture and Sports." ▼



RuPaul



Official team logo