

QNotes

The Carolinas' Most Comprehensive Gay & Lesbian Newspaper

The Latest Q-POLL Results

The Human Rights Campaign has come under fire from gender activists for refusing to add "transgender" as a protected class to the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). Who do you think should be included?

Gay/ Lesbian	Gay/Lesbian/ Bisexual	Gay/Lesbian/ Bisexual/Transgender
30%	18%	51%

Vote at www.q-notes.com

Published Every Two Weeks On Recycled Paper • Volume 13, Number 7 • August 22, 1998 • FREE

Carolinas youths attend leadership conference

by Tracey Conaty
Special to Q-Notes

WASHINGTON, DC—The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) brought some of the nation's most outstanding gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) youth leaders together for its annual Youth Leadership Training Institute. Twenty-five young people gathered August 5 for five days of intensive grassroots organizing training along with concrete skills-building workshops. The youth were selected after an extensive screening process. Four of them came from the Carolinas.

The annual Institute is the longest-running GLBT youth training program in the country. NGLTF provides need-based scholarships to ensure that all participants can attend.

"The Youth Leadership Institute is one of NGLTF's most exciting programs," said Kerry Lobel, NGLTF executive director. "The young people...embody the diversity and talent in our community. They are not only our movement of tomorrow, they are our movement today."

The Institute included skills training in areas such as media, meeting facilitation, leader-

ship styles and fundraising. In addition, the youth were instructed in various types of organizing, including grassroots and campus organizing. Also, there were facilitated discussions on diversity, coalition building and what it means to be a youth activist in the age of AIDS.

A major focus of the Institute was Equality Begins at Home (EBAH), a series of actions to be held in state capitols across the country next March. The Task Force is the national coordinator of EBAH. Institute graduates are being paired with the EBAH group in their home states to work on youth activities.

The home team

The Carolinas youths who attended the Leadership Training Intensive are:

- John Harrison, Durham, NC
John is a 20-year-old, African-American, gay man. He is a Duke University student and initiated a campaign to allow same-sex marriages in the Duke Chapel. He helped implement the first mentoring program for GLBT youth in NC. John is on the board of the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum.
- Holly (Tyler) Pullis, Durham, NC
Tyler is a 22-year-old, gender-questioning, white dyke. She was a member of North Carolina Lambda Youth Network's (NCLYN) first summer leadership institute and is now on its board of directors. She is currently in charge of organizing NCLYN's next institute.
- Aubry D. Threlkeld, N. Charleston, SC
Aubry is an 18-year-old, white, gay man. He helped organize a petition to the US Senate to oppose HR9, a resolution regarding environmental justice law, on the basis that it discriminated against the poor. He also helped organize a group of fellow students at his high school to talk about sexual orientation issues, informally called "Queer Lunch."
- Darnell C. Williams, Durham, NC
Darnell is a 17-year-old, black, gay man. He worked to bring together 25 young people from his local surrounding counties to create a coalition of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning high school-aged young people. He is involved in Youth Voice Radio, a non-profit, youth-run organization dedicated to education and getting youths' voices heard. ▼

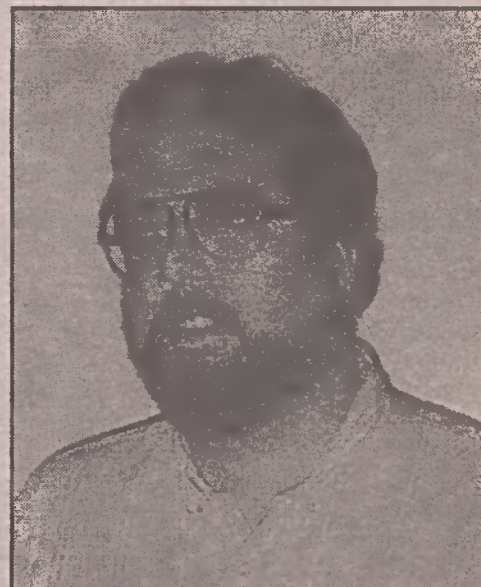


Photo by Jim Yarbrough

Commission hopeful Chris Cole

Candidate Cole ready to rumble

by David Stout
Q-Notes Staff

Chris Cole wants to be a Mecklenburg County Commissioner. He believes his status as an openly gay Libertarian offers him a unique perspective on local politics which no other candidate can match. He says the Commission needs a strong voice to challenge the bigotry that has infected it over the last year and believes he can best provide it.

Cole knows that some of his views, and his party affiliation, are likely to raise eyebrows among a segment of GLBT voters, but he unapologetically presents his positions and is willing to trust people to make up their own minds.

In today's era of "promise 'em anything until you win" style of politics, his forthrightness deserves respect — regardless of whether anyone thinks it deserves a vote.

Q-Notes interviewed Cole recently and asked him to speak about the race thus far.

Q-Notes: This is your second campaign for public office [Cole unsuccessfully ran for a seat in the NC House in 1996]. How has that helped you with this race?

Chris Cole: I was much better prepared to deal with the media. I knew how to do it and I already knew some of the people. Also, I started much earlier. Two years ago I started in May; this year I started in December.

QN: Why are you running for County Commission?

CC: I had originally planned to run again for the state legislature because the issues that were most important to me were primarily state issues. But last year, when the county commission decided, "Hey, here's a part of our community that is helpless; we can grind them up and it will make us look good to our constituency," I chose to run in the county commission race. I'm very proud to be a part of this community...the gay community...I'm proud to be a Charlottean too. It tortured me to see that going on.

When I was at that [April 1] meeting last year, none of the Democrats really had any meaningful response to what was being said. And whether or not [Commissioner] Parks Helms truly cares about us, I don't know. But he was an ineffective response to the Gang of Five, because he doesn't know our lives. When Bill James and Joel Carter, especially, start spouting the stupidest trash about us, I think we need someone on that committee to just say, "No, that's not the way it is."

QN: What kind of response have you gotten from the gay community?

See COLE on page 14

House GOP breaks ranks with the Right — for a day

by David Stout
Q-Notes Staff

WASHINGTON, DC—A flurry of legislative activity created and then divided a coalition of Democratic and Republican leaders when three anti-gay bills came up for debate in the US House over two successive days. The outcomes of the anti-gay measures elicited praise and condemnation from gay leaders.

In the first battle, on August 5, 63 House Republicans voted along with an overwhelming majority of Democrats to easily defeat an amendment by Rep. Joel Hefley (R-CO) to repeal President Clinton's recent executive order banning workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation. The 252-176 defeat of the Hefley Amendment was seen as a crushing defeat for House Majority Whip Tom DeLay (R-TX), who supported the measure.

The response to the vote was swift and unusually upbeat. Richard Tafel, executive director of Log Cabin Republicans, a national organization of gay Republicans, called the decision a turning point in the history of the GOP.

"The real story in this vote is that a growing segment of the Republican Party is emerging. While so many have reported on the anti-gay segment of the GOP, this vote shows there is a growing segment of the party that is inclusive and opposes anti-gay discrimination."

The 63 Republicans voting against the bill set a record for House Republicans acting favorably on a gay rights issue. The last such gay-supportive vote was in the 104th Congress where 29 Republicans voted against an amendment to repeal Washington, DC's domestic partnership law.

Ironically, the celebration ended unceremoniously the very next day with the passage of two amendments attached to the District of Columbia's Appropriations bill.

Rep. Steve Largent (R-OK) offered an amendment to prohibit joint adoptions in the District by people not related by marriage or blood. Rep. Todd Tiahrt (R-KS) pushed a measure to prohibit federal and local money from being used to fund local needle exchange programs. The anti-gay adoption measure passed

the House 227-192 and the anti-needle exchange provision passed 250-169.

Democrats again voted sizably against both measures. Put this time, a wide majority of Republicans voted in favor of the amendments. Clearly, the bipartisanship that thwarted the anti-gay Hefley measure was gone.

Daniel McGlinchey, interim executive director of the newly-formed Stonewall Democratic Federation, was especially disappointed to have these setbacks come so quickly on the heels of success. He bluntly observed, "This is the wrong Congress for those seeking full fairness for gay and lesbian Americans."

Roger Lee, the group's vice-chair, said, "Every anti-gay amendment that came before Congress over recent weeks was sponsored by a Republican — and many were actively supported by the Republican leadership — and in each case, a rock solid majority of Democrats opposed the attacks. The answer is simple: if we're going to fully vindicate our rights, we need more Democrats, and specifically a Democratic leadership, in Congress." ▼

Gay Games drama didn't just come from sports

by Dan Van Mourik
Q-Notes Staff

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS—The fifth quadrennial International Gay Games were held in Amsterdam, considered by many to be the gay capital of Europe, August 1-8. Anyone, straight or gay, may compete in any of 29 events and this year's games drew 15,000 competitors, from near world class athletes to ordinary men and women who were more interested in personal bests, friendship and a good time.

The week-long games kicked off with parades and "drag races" in which the tough and the fit found themselves right beside the tacky and the outrageous.

"No, I'm not competing," said a burly New Yorker, groaning at the aches and pains he suffered from strutting in the opening parade. "Five hours in high heels is enough participation for me."

In addition to competition, the Gay Games is a cultural event with art exhibits, poetry readings, musical performances, panel discussions, nightly parties and nearly constant entertain-

ment of one variety or another. Subculture favorite Diva International appeared and the Weather Girls belted out "It's Raining Men" before crowds that were significantly more male than female. Harvey Fierstein and the Rocky Horror Show performed, as did Mina Hartong, a Dutch-American comedian, who riffed on sports not yet on the official Gay Games program —



"lesbian sports like rebounding, breaking up and group dating, and gay sports like traveling and eating out."

More than 230 teams competed in, or just played, volleyball, the Gay Games' most popular sport. The other big draws were soccer, track and field, figure skating and bodybuilding. But these games are not the Olympics. Included in the events were billiards, sport climbing, table tennis, karate, bridge, and such demonstration sports as aerobics and fencing. And competitors with an aversion to traditional training tried their luck in the 100 meters high-

heels sprint or the handbag-throwing contest.

But as an estimated quarter of a million participants and spectators enjoyed the festivities, not all was well with the games.

Financial woes

On Monday, August 3, the Amsterdam City Council guaranteed an emergency five million guilder (\$2.5 million) loan to the financially troubled Gay Games after it became clear that the event's former director had spent beyond his budget. Organizers said the full sports program would go ahead as a result of the additional cash. The Games' original budget was 14 million guilders. Some companies had considered pulling out of the event for fear they would not be paid.

Managing Director Marc Janssens, earlier hailed by Dutch media as a financial wizard, was relieved of his duties on Sunday, August 2 after organizers discovered he had committed the games to an estimated two million guilders extra spending. The overspending came as a surprise to sponsors and organizers. When the accounts were last checked in July, the Games

See DRAMA on page 22