

# Q Notes

The Carolinas' Most Comprehensive Gay & Lesbian Newspaper

## The Latest Q-POLL Results

In this era of ongoing federal funding and immune-based therapies, has ACT-UP outlasted its usefulness?

Yes	No	Undecided
14%	13%	73%

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## Offensive words follow Panthers' new defensive specialist to town

by Brian M. Myer  
Q-Notes Staff

CHARLOTTE—In late July it was announced that the Carolina Panthers had signed formerly-retired Green Bay Packer's defensive star Reggie White.

While the imminent arrival of the "Minister of Defense" delighted some fans, it was troubling to many gay and lesbian Charlotteans given White's well-known penchant for anti-gay diatribes.

In a speech delivered March 25, 1998 to the Wisconsin Assembly, White, an ordained minister, called homosexuality "a sin," asserted that it was a choice, and equated gays to "liars, cheaters, [those who are] malicious and backstabbers."

Several weeks later he repeated those comments to ABC's *20/20*, and joined anti-gay activist Alveda Celeste King and singers Angie and Debbie Winans at a rally opposing a non-discrimination ordinance in Ypsilanti, Michigan.

Given White's history of opposing gains for gays and lesbians, *Q-Notes* wondered what impact White might have on this region's GLBT community. To see what others were thinking, we asked some locals to share their thoughts and feelings on the "Minister of Offense."

Rev. Mick Hinson, M.Div. — Pastor of Metropolitan Community Church of Charlotte:

"I want to welcome Reggie White to our community. I think his presence in the community will only serve to make us stronger as a GLBT community. I believe this because his presence, although a conservative one, will assist in the development and continuation of dialogue within the Christian and other reli-

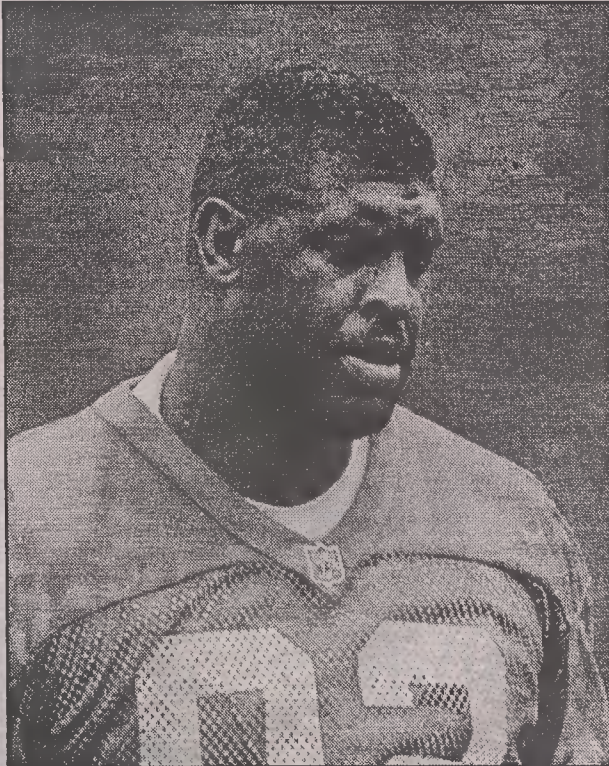
gious communities regarding homosexuality and God. I also believe it will serve as another calling card to the GLBT community not to rest in complacency. We still have a long way to go before total acceptance is achieved. I am not one to think tolerance is acceptable. It is the movement towards that which is our birthright as children of God."

Connie J. Vetter — Activist, attorney and founder of the Southern Center for Law and Justice:

"Mr. White has a right to believe whatever he wants, but I hope he is better informed about the real lives of gay men and lesbians than he once was. He will shame and embarrass himself and the Panthers if he chooses to spread lies and misinformation about gays and lesbians."

Leslie Johnson and Carole Lender — Co-founders of P-FLAG/Greenville (SC) chapter:

We co-founded Greenville, SC P-FLAG eight years ago in order to help prevent suicide in the gay community. Because of myths, misconceptions and unthinking hatred — shunned by church, family and society — many in the gay community had no place to turn. People have no idea the harmful affects of negative comments, even when coming from religious interpretation. Mr. White is coming out of retirement to a new team in a new city. Knowing he is a hero to many, we hope he will take this



Football star Reggie White

opportunity to no longer inflict wounds with his words. While we have no objections to Reggie White playing football, we do hope he will concentrate on playing, rather than bashing our gay kids. All people, regardless of who they are, deserve to be treated fairly and respected as fellow human beings.

Les Kooyman — Executive director, Metrolina AIDS Project, Charlotte:

Reggie White has made it abundantly clear from his repeated comments that he is unwilling to even consider any issue related to homosexuality with an open mind. As offensive as I find many of his comments, what disturbs me

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## NC Pride survey results released

by Wanda Pico  
Special to Q-Notes

DURHAM—According to survey results, "To show support for the LGBT community" edged out "to feel a sense of community" and "to have fun" as the primary reason people chose to attend NC Pride 2000, held June 10 on Duke University's East Campus.

Each of these reasons was cited by more than half of the 122 people who completed the informal survey, though they represent only a small portion of the estimated 3000 Pride attendees.

Other reasons for attendance that were repeatedly given included "to be visible," "to make a political statement," and "to make friends/meet new people."

The Pride March and the opportunity to be among friends tied as the best-liked things about NC Pride 2000. Despite compliments about the shady location, the heat was mentioned most often as the least favorite thing about the event. Also mentioned multiple times were the distance from the stage to the vendors, parking difficulties and concerns about the number of attendees.

The survey also asked people to identify the foremost issue facing gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender North Carolinians. Hate crimes was the only category from the list of 11 that received votes from more than half of those who returned the survey. "Creating a strong sense of community among LGBT people" and "visibility of LGBT people in North Carolina" each received support from more than 40 percent of the responses. Rounding out the top five issues, "creating a supportive environment for LGBT youth" and "family issues" (adoption, domestic partnership, etc.) each received a significant number of votes.

The survey also showed overwhelming support for a Pride event in 2001. Everyone who answered the question checked "yes."

Suggestions for improving Pride varied, and included multiple calls for more participation and more publicity. Raleigh and more rural ar-

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## Report reveals psychological dangers of "ex-gay" programs

by Wayne Besen  
Special to Q-Notes

SAN DIEGO, CA—On July 24, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) released a new report that reveals the grave psychological damage done to many people who participate in "ex-gay" ministries and "reparative" therapies designed to change a person's sexual orientation.

*Finally Free* — *Personal Stories: How Love and Self-Acceptance Saved Us From Ex-gay Ministries*, is a landmark publication that features the personal stories of people who have survived the "ex-gay" ministries and have come forward to expose the harm done by these groups. The publication is dedicated to Stuart Mathis, a gay Mormon from San Francisco who committed suicide because he was unable to change his

sexual orientation. In his suicide note, he expressed anguish over his church and society not accepting him for who he was.

"The extreme right wing pumps resources into deceptive ads that claim gays can change their sexual orientation, but they unconsciously conceal the damage done to many people who enter these failed programs," said HRC Associate Director of Communications and *Finally Free* editor Wayne Besen. "*Finally Free* exposes the 'ex-gay' myth and highlights how false and misleading information put out by these groups can place vulnerable people at risk."

*Finally Free* was released at a press conference in San Diego, the city where Exodus International — the largest "ex-gay" organization — is hosting their annual conference. The pub-

lication is intended for use as an educational tool, and to share the truth about the "ex-gay" ministries and "reparative" therapy that the political right does not want the public to hear.

"After five wasted years of lies and deceit, I found the empty promises of 'ex-gay' ministries shallow and without foundation," said *Finally Free* contributing writer Clint Trout at the press conference. "My mental health was clearly compromised by my attempts to resist my true nature as a gay man. I urge anyone to research the facts before they enter these ministries that lure people with false promises that lead to broken hearts and shattered lives."

Unlike the political right who pay "ex-gays" — as much \$65,000 per year — for their testimony, no one was paid for their story in *Fi-*

See *EX-GAY* on page 18

## Bush taps ultra-conservative Cheney for running mate

by Veronica Schwartz  
Q-Notes Staff

AUSTIN, TX—Republican Presidential Candidate George W. Bush announced July 25 that he had chosen Richard (Dick) Cheney as his running mate. Cheney, a former US Representative from Wyoming, also served in various posts in the Nixon administration, was chief of staff in the Ford White House and was Secretary of Defense under Gov. Bush's father.

Cheney has a lengthy conservative record that includes opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment, opposition to hate-crimes legislation, opposition to abortion, opposition to funding for HIV/AIDS research and services, opposition to lifting the ban on gays in the military and support for prayer in public schools.

Winnie Stachelberg, political director for the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), said, "The choice of Secretary Cheney is in keeping with Governor Bush's strategy of staking out conservative positions and wrapping them in a moderate package."

According to separate research released by both HRC and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF), Cheney opposed President Clinton's effort to lift the ban on gay servicemembers, warning the debate over the ban and cuts in military funding had led to "a decline in the quality of military recruits," and "an unwillingness to serve and low morale."

Though he did support Pete Williams, a defense department spokesperson whose homosexuality was revealed by *The Advocate* in 1991, he told Larry King on CNN in 1993, "I basi-

cally don't believe in discrimination, but I did conclude, as Secretary of Defense, that the ban on gays in uniform was appropriate."

Cheney repeatedly opposed funding for AIDS research, testing, and counseling. In July 1986, Cheney supported an amendment to prohibit the District of Columbia from enforcing its recently enacted HIV/AIDS insurance bill. In June 1988 he voted to cut \$100,000 in funding for HIV/AIDS research. In September of that year, Cheney voted against the AIDS Federal Policy Act of 1988, the first major federal bill to provide funding for HIV/AIDS counseling and testing. Even ultra-conservative Republicans Tom DeLay and Dick Armey supported this bill, but Cheney joined Newt Gingrich and Bob Dornan in opposing it.

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Jo Wyrick of Durham was named Executive Director of Equality NC (formerly NC Pride PAC), effective July 12. Wyrick has been active in political campaigns for President Clinton and US Rep. Eva Clayton (D-NC), as has worked with NC Lambda Youth Network. Search Committee chair Jeff Prince said Wyrick has "the skills we think are necessary to take the organization to the next level."