

## Bank

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lending officer and ask for a mortgage incorporating both partners' contributions. If a person is transgendered — say male by birth but living as a woman — G&L Bank will print that person's checks to show both male and female names. In another scenario, "a pre-op transexual may need to borrow money to cover medical expenses; while that may be a difficult loan to ask for at many banks," Taylor said, "it is easy at G&L Bank. We are inclusive in the broadest sense and welcome all facets of the community."

Sounds great. But some of us are shy about Internet banking (not to mention those among us without a computer or Internet access). That is why Kevin Washburn, Charlotte Pride board member and Corporate Sponsor Coordinator for this year's festival asked G&L Bank to sponsor the May 5th weekend of events. "I was a founding member of the bank when G&L opened last year, and I've been extremely happy with them. They are simply wonderful to work with." G&L Bank is FDIC insured and its capital assets far exceed the national average for a young bank.

Impressed not only with G&L Bank's customer service, but with the ease of his financial transactions, Washburn can't recommend the bank highly enough. "They use 128-bit encryption technology, which is the most stringent methodology available for providing locked, secure websites. I have never had any problems." He said that ATM usage is reimbursed according to the type of account a customer opens: "The ATM fees I incur are automatically credited back to me at the end of the month, and I never have to even think about it."

G&L Bank's commitment to supporting the gay and lesbian community is chief among Washburn's praise; he personally approached the bank to sponsor Charlotte Pride. They responded by giving the highest level of support. "Along with Coors and US Airways, G&L Internet Bank is offering platinum-level support, and they are our official banking sponsor," he said.

Jeff Schmehl, Director of Charlotte Pride, confirmed G&L Bank's support, "They are very interested in what we're doing here not only in terms of Charlotte Pride but in terms of the LGBT community at-large."

G&L Bank has created a national, non-profit partnership program and the pilot is being launched during Charlotte Pride, through Charlotte Pride, has created a pilot partnership program specifically with the city of Charlotte. "This is our bank's first city-wide effort to initiate a program open to all non-profit LGBT organizations in the area," explained Taylor.

The program is two-fold: First, a Charlotte non-profit GLBT group opens an account with G&L Internet Bank, include G&L Bank's logo on all printed materials, and provide a link from the organization's web site to G&L Bank's web site; then, that organization receives a \$25 contribution from G&L Bank whenever a new member opens an account and designates the non-profit group to receive the donation. Schmehl explains, "Charlotte Pride, Inc. opened an account with G&L Bank a couple of weeks ago. Now, every time someone decides to open an account with G&L and designates us as a recipient, G&L gives us \$25."

"It's an out-of-pocket donation for us," said Taylor. "We strongly believe in helping Charlotte express its strength and pride, and it's our way of supporting a variety of organizations as opposed to just a few. We gain some exposure along the way, but it's more that that." She suggested that the non-profit partnership program is a new twist on an old theme. "Remember when banks used to give out toasters to new customers?" she asks. "This is a way to recognize those who open new accounts and to benefit many more through funding a community group." The G&L Bank non-profit partnership program, according to Washburn and Schmehl, has sparked the interest of many GLBT organizations in Charlotte such as Regional AIDS Interfaith Network (RAIN), Unity Fellowship Church, Time Out Youth (TOY), and the Gay and Lesbian Switchboard of Charlotte.

Tonda Taylor, Executive Director of Time Out Youth, a program that provides support services to GLBT youth ages 13 to 23, attended a meeting on April 4 where she met Dixon Taylor and Kay Griffith, President/CEO of G&L Bank, and ex-Bank of America executive. "There were representatives from many organizations at that meeting and a couple of Time Out  
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