

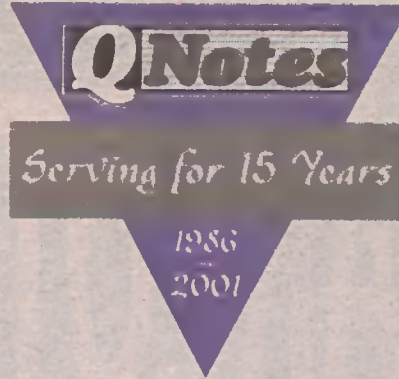
QNotes

The Carolina's Most Comprehensive Gay & Lesbian Newspaper

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Political organization pickets banquet!

See page 3 for more Out of the Past coverage.



Near "Ground Zero" the day of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centers 9-11-01

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Take the latest Q-Poll:

Would you accept contributions from Coors? ... Coors' advertising dollars?

- YES to both
- YES, contribution/ NO, advertising
- YES, advertising/ NO, contributions
- NO to both

The Q-Poll is online at: www.q-notes.com

10-27 Q-Poll results: pg 30

Q-Poll sponsored by:

Williamsburg on Commonwealth

Townhome Style Condominiums

What gives at the Adolph Coors and the (quite conservative) Castlerock foundations?

by Jen Christensen
Exclusive to Q-Notes

The success of last year's Charlotte Pride Festival rested in part, on what twenty years ago would have been an untouchable funding source.

Charlotte Pride, like many other regional and national gay and lesbian groups, got financial help from the Denver-based Coors Brewing Company. But it was only until recently that some community activist edged off their fierce boycott of Coors products, started over alleged discriminatory company practices. As the company now tries to win back LGBT support, some activists wonder if it's good politics to take Coors money.

"We at the Gill Foundation believe gay and lesbian groups should establish policies around accepting gifts," said Donna Redwing, an organizer with the gay-supportive granting agency the Gill Foundation. Redwing was just in Charlotte trying to teach local gay and lesbian groups successful fundraising techniques. "That way when these groups are faced with a provocative gift like Coors, they can respond in an appropriate way."

Coors Brewing Company is now considered one of the most progressive companies when it comes to gay and lesbian issues, but it wasn't always that way.

"Drama, drama, drama," said Bob Witec whose firm does LGBT targeted public relations for Coors. "Coors has seen a lot of drama over the years from the gay community."

In 1977, gays and lesbians across America began boycotting Coors products to protest the Coors, discriminatory treatment of its gay and lesbian workers and to protest the Coors family members, financial and public support of right wing groups. High profile gays and lesbians like Harvey Milk, the first openly gay person elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors led the charge against the company.

The November issue of the gay and lesbian magazine, *The Advocate*, said that this boycott was the first time gay economic power had an

effect on a company. Profits were down slightly, and well into the 1990's customers would be hard pressed to find a Coors, Coors Light, or a Zima served in a gay or lesbian bar.

"Coors back in the 70's, had been anti-organized labor," said Witec. "But the company began to put steps in place to prevent discrimination



with a different kind of company management."

The new management paid off, at least where the LGBT community is concerned. In 1995, V Management, a gay social investment company, ranked Coors as one of the top 20 companies for gays and lesbians. And in January 2000, *POZ Magazine* listed Coors as one of the nation's top 25 employers with the most enlightened policies towards employees with HIV

and AIDS.

Coors gets these awards because they have put specific company policies in place that makes LGBT discrimination at their company difficult.

* In 1978, Coors became one of the first companies to offer its employees a non-discrimination policy, which included sexual orientation.

* In 1993, Coors, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered employees formed an employee resource group called LAGER. The group continues to have management support and company funding.

* In 1995, by an unanimous vote by its board, Coors became the first national brewing company to offer same-sex domestic partner benefits.

* And currently, the company mandates a sensitivity training, which includes gay and lesbian concerns for all its employees.

The company has gone even further than company policies to solicit the gay community's support. According to spokesperson Witec, in the last decade Coors has given over a million dollars to gay community and AIDS-related non-profits throughout the United States.

Columbia, South Carolina's Gay Pride Week, Atlanta's Hotlanta River Expo and Armory Softball Classic even the IGBO International Gay Bowling Organization are just a few LGBT groups the region to receive Coors, money. At the national level, they've given thousands to groups like the Human Rights Campaign, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), and the Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG).

In Charlotte, the Pride committee received a \$5,000 check from Coors. According to former board member, Kevin Washburn, this made Coors one of Pride's largest sponsors. Through the local distributor, Cunningham Wholesale, Coors saved the organization thousands of additional dollars — providing the beer

See COORS on page 11

The art of giving and taking and giving and getting and maybe even getting taken

by Leah D. Sepsenwol
Editor

People's names get on buildings in one of two ways. They put it there themselves — Trump comes to mind; or someone else puts it there to honor lives of selfless contribution — Blumenthal comes to mind. Trump built towers. Blumenthal funded foundations.

Herman Blumenthal's generosity flowed from a compassionate, ethical core: parental example, Torah precepts, his own appreciation of opportunity, sense of right, search for justice, which shaped the breadth and vision of his philanthropy.

No limelight. Just light. No hoopla. Just hope. He made us understand that giving was less about money and far more about everyone's obligation to do good with whatever we possessed. He did plenty.

Andrew Reyes gave plenty. He left us with questions. He took all the answers.

"He did such good." "He worked so hard." "He gave so much." "You just don't know." "He was a good man." True enough.

True also: twelve years before all this, he was bankrupt. No crime. But getting a second social security number ... instead of opting to do whatever it took to build renewed fiscal trust, that's troublesome. Did he leave here for the same reason he left there — to finally get out from under?

For all he gave, he got. His giving was primarily public, predominantly political and cap-

tured in pictures by his own hired photographer who chronicled the famous with Reyes — mounted and framed and mounted again on what he called his "wall of fame."

Other giving was secret, kind of anonymous, albeit very generous, but alas, perhaps illegal. What to make of frenzied, allegedly-fraudulent finagling of candidate financing, bypassing the legal limits of campaign contribution? We won't know. Unless Reyes tells us.

Church groups to chorus groups sang his praise. He helped. He lifted. He pledged. He delivered ... until recently: Great Aunt Stella never got her \$10,000.

Employer Doug King (who died in a motorcycle crash) trusted Andrew as friend and accountant, he told his daughter so. Perhaps King had authorized the otherwise-secret, second checking account and knew of the \$426,000 Andrew paid himself, \$891,000 to Andrew's businesses, the \$300,000 for Andrew's favorite democrats, local, state and national. And perhaps King knew also of two six-figure dividend checks to Andrew's ex, Butch, a banker. What does he know? His lawyer won't tell us. We'll have to ask Reyes.

Had King not died suddenly, there would be no family fighting, no FBI prying and all King's documents and all King's money would still be accounted by Reyes.

No one knew the promises would become empty, maybe not even Andrew. The small places where so little goes so far to so many —

in all of this — pity the struggling non-profits whose coffers were boosted and futures bolstered by the promise of more from the disappeared donor. These folks who miraculously stretch dollars as thin as strudel dough, deserve all we can do to help them keep going. We don't know who you all are. Please tell us.

As for the larger beneficiaries of Reyes' largesse — \$50,000 to the Democratic National Committee in one check in one day, for example, imagine their quandary. Of course, it's in escrow, no? We'll never know. They'll never tell us.

Everyone still wants the hero to be real and the reality to be perfect. We still want so to believe, despite the "if it seems too good to be true ..." adage relentlessly interrupting our good, kind thoughts.

Andrew Reyes, "our boy" of the LGBT community. Andrew Reyes, honored man among Latino brethren. Andrew Reyes, cheered Chair of the Democratic Party. Andrew Reyes, partner and Andrew Reyes, friend. You are champion and lesson for us all.

We have learned to accept rather than take, understanding it is responsibility which separates the two.

And it is the way we give away, from which place inside us, and how much of ourselves we give along with it that really matters: this becomes legacy — or not — when we leave or when we're gone.

Andrew, we care, we are worried, call us.