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noted . notable . noteworthy GLBT issues

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704.531.9988

704.531.1361 FAX

www.q-notes.com

Publisher: Jim Yarbrough

Editor . Art Director: Leah D. Sepsenwol
editor@q-notes.com

Associate Editor: Brian M. Myer
editor2@q-notes.com

Feature Editor: Lainey Millen
assoceditor@q-notes.com

Administrative Assist: Christopher Siddons
info@q-notes.com

Graphic Design Production: Lainey Millen
production@q-notes.com

Distribution: Nolan Jones . Jeff Habbestad

Ad Sales NC/SC: 704.531.9988

Brent James: adrep@q-notes.com

Jim Yarbrough

Ad Sales . National: 212.242.6863

Rivendell Marketing Co, Inc.

GLBTQ Switchboards

For meetings, or guidance contact the GLBTQ Switchboard in your area:

NC: Charlotte 704-535-6277
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contributing writers

Wayne Besen, Patsy Clarke, J. Lynn Davidson, Miss Della, Jennifer Hagin, Carrie Howard, Robert Kirby, Charlene Lichtenstein, Katie Martin, Waverly Ann Moore, Brian Myer, Leah D. Sepsenwol, Anne Sweeny, Trinity, Ray Warren

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editorial

You will believe in MAJIC when you read the book

Our front page feature was simply not enough. Patsy Clarke and Eloise Vaughn deserve all the press they can get.

These two mothers who lost sons to AIDS took on the entire right side of the world, shaking fingers, reaching out and creating safe and tolerant space where it counts so much: between gay children and their families.



Keep Singing:

Two Mothers, Two Sons - Their Fight Against Jesse Helms

200 pages
1-55583-572-4
\$13.95

On June 5, 1994, Patsy Clarke sat down and wrote a long letter to her friend Jesse Helms.

In it she recounted the last night of her son Mark's life. "I sat by his bed, held his dear hand, and sang through that long last night the baby song that I had sung to all of our children. 'Rock-a-bye and don't you cry, rock-a-bye, little Mark. I'll buy you a pretty gold horse to ride all around your pasture...'"

She had hoped to touch the heart of the notoriously homophobic senator, to ask him to soften his antigay stance, and to end his opposition to AIDS research funding. She failed. His callous and self-serving reply, in which he said, "I wish Mark had

not played Russian roulette in his sexual activity," first broke Patsy's heart-and then it made her furious.

Together with her friend Eloise Clark who had also lost a son —also named Mark— to AIDS, they formed Mothers Against Jesse in Congress (MAJIC) to drive him from office. Keep Singing is the inspiring true story of two women who became the unlikely of activists and gave a new face to the fight against bigotry and hatred. Their journey would carry them from their quiet North Carolina homes to the stage of the 1998 Democratic Convention in Chicago. Their battle would put their names and faces in the pages of People magazine and The New York Times. Their lives would be changed forever, driven now by the desire that even in death their children would be given the simple human respect that is due everyone.

Patsy Clarke is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Asheville with a degree in Drama and Literature. She was an instructor for ten years at her alma mater, teaching classes in Theater, Communications, and Speech. In 1987 she began using her skills in the training of trial lawyers, serving as an adjunct faculty member at California Western School of Law in San Diego. In 1996 she shelved this career to concentrate on MAJIC, but remains active in regional theater in her home of Raleigh, NC.

Eloise Vaughn graduated from the University of North Carolina, and was a junior high-school teacher for 15 years. Her husband was a member of the North Carolina House of Representatives, serving as Speaker of the House before becoming a judge on the North Carolina Court of Appeals. After her son Mark's death, Eloise became active with a local AIDS Services Agency before cofounding MAJIC. She now lives in Blowing Rock, N.C., and remains active in AIDS causes.

action!alert . ACLU

Protect TITLE IX: Gender Equity in Education

In an action many fear is designed to undo the great strides women have made in athletics, the Bush Administration has appointed a commission to consider changing 1972 landmark legislation designed to end gender discrimination in sports and education.

The new commission is traveling around the US getting public feedback about Title IX, which bars sex discrimination in educational institutions. Title IX applies to public and private educational institutions that receive any federal funds.

The commission is receiving many baseless complaints that Title IX harms men's athletics. It needs to hear voices that strongly oppose any change.

The athletic director of the University of North Carolina defended Title IX, telling the commission, "too much progress has been made toward gender equity in sports — and too much remains to be done — to give up on Title IX now."

Take Action! Oppose changing Title IX.

Send Free Fax to the Commission:
www.aclu.org/WomensRights/WomensRights

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