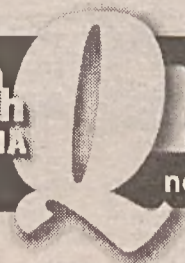


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Notes

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editorial ...we are all transgender

In the midst of a groundbreaking US Supreme Court case whose positive decision just might overthrow of all sodomy laws in the remaining 13 states that still cling to them; in the midst of war which still expels our queer military heroes; there is earth-shaking news right here at home almost lost to such intense national and international tumult.

Hate crimes. Sexual privacy. Employment Discrimination. North Carolina Senators have stepped up to stand by their convictions and our rights in three major pieces of legislation.

Remember their names: Sens. Charlie Dannelly (D-Mecklenburg), Katie Dorsett (D-Guilford), Robert Holloman (D-Hertford), Wib Gulley (D-Durham), Jeanne Lucas (D-Durham), Eleanor Kinnaird (D-Orange), Vernon Malone (D-Wake) and Stephen Metcalf (D-Buncombe).

Political paths are rife with pork barrel compromise and people are afraid to positively promise what they can not absolutely predict. On the introduction of such promising legislation, it is hard to breathe for fear of undoing delicately balanced legislation and its hard won positioning by lobbyists.

Though Equality NC still cannot predict outcome, the advocacy group is confident in

the Senators who will make the case for the entire LGBT community. We have lived the life of LGB too long...

When we leave people behind, their blood runs in the streets. They are murdered and maimed and left to die — discarded, disregarded. They are not conveniently defined. They each have a niche all their own. The truth is, LGBs owe them the life we enjoy.

Those brazen, boa-clad, banner-waving transgenders cleared a space for all queers on the planet. They are the ones who live life in everyone's face and taught the rest of us not to settle, and above all, not to be quiet. So...

If transgender activists are seemingly impatient, if their impassioned voices seem piercingly shrill, if their words are unkindly blunt and their finger-pointing 'accusations, unsettling, thank them. Promise to pay back by stepping up. They let us go first because they trusted us to fight for everyone.

We can not go forward without the whole community. We are all transgenders. We criss-cross dress, flip-flop roles and fly in the face of hetero norms. We are one ... in a million, each of us.

Demand gender inclusion in all legislation. See ActionAlert-ENC, page 3.

editor@q-notes.com • comments encouraged

Maybe it's all about what you call it

Ed note: Cliff Tupin and Kelly last moved to Vermont from Mebane, NC.

My heart goes out to Officer Coppola. ("Poster boy for gay marriage", Q-Notes, March 15, 2003, NYPD officer lost partner on 9-11 relegated to a back seat at his funeral.) It is time for the Gay/Lesbian Community to stand up and say, "Enough is enough. I'm not going to be treated as a second class citizen any more."

I am very lucky my partner's parents are understanding and realize the love and relationship we have is no different from theirs. My partner and I had our Vermont Civil Union November 5, 2001, in Bennington, VT, because we wanted to be recognized as a couple.

Our lives are no different from any other married couple. We have constant discussions about all those critically important "married things:" who washes dishes, who does laundry, who makes the bed, who does grocery shopping, etc. We differ only in that we do not decide based on traditional male/female roles.

In February 2002, Q-Notes honored my partner, Kelly and me with an article about our Vermont Civil Union and this fall, the Advocate recently included us in a Civil Union article.

Kelly and I are life partners and the best of buddies. A Civil Union was right for us, even

though Vermont still defines marriage as the "joining of a male and female." Am I content with that definition? Certainly not, but for the time being it's the best we can have. And no one stops me using the word "married" when discussing our relationship.

What matters most is that I can make legal decisions on Kelly's behalf and he on mine. We don't have to worry about being denied visitation rights in a hospital, death benefits, or survivor rights on our joint checking account, and the list goes on Civil Unions guarantee our life rights.

Marriage is just a word, what counts is what you have in your heart, how you feel and your love for each other.

Same-sex marriage in other states has been defeated, perhaps because the word "marriage" was used in the legislation. Maybe those states need to use another word, like union — just to get something passed.

Am I wrong in not demanding it all? You may think so, but our Civil Union has given me what I need and wanted with my partner — equal rights under the state laws of Vermont. Even if it isn't every thing, it is a very significant step on the way to it.

Our web site started out as a place to announce our Civil Union. It has grown into an indepth educational resource for Vermont Civil Unions. Please feel free to visit our web site.

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Beware, prisoner was less than honest

You just ran an ad for an inmate by the name of Bronald Johnson #89572, address of KSP PO Box 5128, Eddyville, KY 42038, who said he was 24 and getting out soon. He is not — for sure — getting out soon. And he definitely is not 24. He's about 42.

KY Corrections has a web site where anybody can check. You can too. He has defrauded several of your readers who responded to

his ad. Allowing this inmate to run another ad with you would be negligent and not to (sic.) considerate of your outside readers.

— Greg Chapa

Thanks for the information. To check Kentucky prisoner information, use the The Kentucky Online Offender Lookup (KOOL) system: www.cor.state.ky.us/~kool/.

It is wise when dealing with any incarcerated person to be cautious, vigilant and utilize all forms of information available. Q-Notes has not heard from anyone "defrauded" by said prisoner.

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