

Q-NOTES

Switchboard, Charlotte (704) 525-6128
AIDS Hotline, Charlotte (704) 333-AIDS
PFLAG Hotline, Charlotte (704) 364-1474
AIDS Hotline, Columbia (803) 779-PALS
Call Line, Wilmington (919) 675-9222

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TO ADVERTISE: 364 1467

NCARRV Sponsors Conference On Homophobic Violence: First Tuesday Calls For Letters Detailing Violence

By Adam Robinson
Special to Q-Notes

The weekend of July 6-8 saw a gathering of state leaders to discuss the problem of homophobic and the need for further victim assistance. The program, sponsored by North Carolinians Against Racist and Religious Violence, included workshops on improving documentation around the state, understanding the criminal justice system and the special problems involving homophobia, AIDS, racism and sexism.

Representatives from all parts of the state attended. Chris Werte of First Tuesday was the lone representative from Charlotte. Speaking at the conference was Danny Addison, Associate Director of the North Carolina Human Relations Council.

A statewide steering committee was created following the conference to coordinate the individual efforts of groups from around the state. All areas of the state were told to continue their documentation of homophobic violence and ideas on ways to expend such efforts were discussed. Further, the committee reiterated the importance of victim assistance and the need to have adequate support systems for all those who need them. The North Carolina Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality has proposed to oversee the steering committee's efforts.

The most important way to fight homophobic violence is through documentation. However, work by steering committees are unsuccessful without the support of those who have been victims of discrimination and violence. Therefore, it's your turn. Are you angry at the people who have harassed you or have discriminated against you because they thought you were gay or lesbian or had AIDS? Are you angry at the city and state officials who refuse to do anything about these hate crimes?

Apparently many government officials are well meaning; they just don't believe that gays and lesbians are jeered at, fired from their jobs, beaten or sometimes killed. If you are angry when you think of your own pain, your brothers and sisters who have been hurt and those who will be hurt in the future, do something about it.

"Document it!" says Ann Hammond, Charlotte City Councilwoman. She was frank when she stated that it was up to the gay and

lesbian community to prove such violence exists before the city would do anything about it.

Therefore, First Tuesday, Charlotte's Gay and Lesbian advocacy group, asks for your story. If you have experienced any incident of harassment, discrimination or violence, write us about it!! Send your letter to:

First Tuesday
P.O. Box 220293
Charlotte, NC 28222.

Do something about your pain and anger.

Strike back by destroying the silence. You do not have to sign your name to your letter. There is no risk involved. But if you do not sign your letter, tell us why.

If you would rather talk to someone about your experience, call the Gay and Lesbian Switchboard at 525-6128 (provided by Metrolina Community Service Project). There is a safe and powerful way to help end discrimination. Help by doing your part.

Community Invited To Join One Voice SummerSing

"Pack up all your cares and woes — singing high, singing low." ONE VOICE, Charlotte's new gay and lesbian chorus, invites the community to join them at SummerSing on Thursday, August 16, 1990, from 7:00-8:30 pm at the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, 1900 The Plaza.

SummerSing is an evening of fun, song and comradeship, and will be a chance for interested community members to meet the Chorus before formal rehearsals begin in September. No special materials are required. Just come and enjoy. A social hour will follow the SummerSing.

ONE VOICE is working on specific plans for the 1990-91 season. Rehearsals for the Christmas Concert will begin on Thursday, September 6, at a location to be announced.

New singing members will be welcome during the entire month of September, and rehearsals will be held on Thursday nights throughout the fall. The Chorus also hopes to mount a cabaret show in late February, and give an early summer concert in June 1991.

Chorus members have been meeting informally since their successful June 22 concert, socializing over desserts, attending the theatre, and enjoying a safe sex party given by MAP.

Persons interested in becoming members of ONE VOICE are urged to attend SummerSing, or call Dan Kirsch, President, at 536-1372 and leave your name, phone and address so you can receive the Chorus newsletter. More details on the fall season will be in the September Q-Notes.

Councilwoman Hammond Speaks To First Tuesday

On Tuesday, July 3, Ann Hammond, an at-large member of the Charlotte City Council, addressed the gay and lesbian community at First Tuesday's general membership meeting. This, according to Chris Werte, board member in charge of government relations, was the first in a planned series of individual meetings with elected officials from the Charlotte/Mecklenburg County area.

Ella Scarborough, city councilwoman, was originally scheduled to address the community. However, due to business in New York, Councilwoman Scarborough cancelled her appearance just three days prior to the meeting. She will be rescheduled sometime this fall.

Councilwoman Hammond addressed the audience briefly, discussing the needs that face Charlotte, including better housing, more efficient transportation, better education and a crackdown on the city's drug problem.

Following her planned remarks, Councilwoman Hammond addressed questions from the audience. Talking bluntly about equal rights, police entrapment and the political power of the lesbian and gay community, Councilwoman Hammond offered a compassionate voice in support of First Tuesday's mission to achieve human rights for all gay and lesbian people in Mecklenburg County.

Stressing the importance of coalition building, she expressed support for a policy statement from the City Council against discrimination against gays and lesbians.

Concerned about the stories of discrimination and violence that is part of everyday life for Charlotte's gay and lesbian community, Councilwoman Hammond strongly urged all people to document these incidences to establish the proof needed for protective city ordinances.

She stated that First Tuesday's Documentation Project was an important program

to achieve this end. However, without the gay and lesbian community taking a more active role in the equal rights movement, there was very little the City Council would be willing to do on its own, according to Councilwoman Hammond.



Ann Hammond

Chris Werte, coordinator of the program, was pleased with the outcome of the program. "I think this meeting shows how important it is for the community to take a more active role in the gay rights movement. Councilwoman Hammond kept asking me why the community was not more vocal in its own defense. The impression was that members of the City Council would be open to listening to our message. Now we, as a community, must be willing to be out as gay men and lesbians in order to achieve the rights that should belong to every man and woman in the community."

At the meeting, First Tuesday announced that representatives from the local chapter of the Names Project will address the First Tuesday membership at its general meeting on August 7 at 7:30 pm. The Names Project will be bringing the Quilt to Charlotte Labor Day Weekend and the representatives will be talking about its significance to the gay community. Anyone wishing more information on First Tuesday should call 376-2320 or 376-6352.

BEST BETS

- Aug. 1 Gay Parents
- Aug. 4 MENAMORE
- Aug. 5 Integrity
- Aug. 7 First Tuesday
- Aug. 8 Queen City Friends
- Aug. 10 New Life MCC Cabaret
- Aug. 11 Yadkin BWMT
- Aug. 12 WOW Mother's Group
- Aug. 15 WOW Meeting
- Aug. 16 MCC Charlotte Holy Union
- ONE VOICE SummerSing
- Aug. 18 NC Senate Vote '90
- Aug. 19 MCC Hickory
- Aug. 22 Queen City Friends
- Aug. 25 MCC Charlotte Pot Luck

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Stop Helms! Boycott Philip Morris, Inc.

Since 1986, Jesse Helms, senator from North Carolina, has had 29 chances to vote on issues that directly affect the lives of lesbians, gays and people with AIDS, and he voted wrong each time. Eight times he blocked efforts to provide AIDS education and prevention materials specifically targeted to prevent infection as a result of intercourse. Four times Helms tried to invoke mandatory HIV testing. He seems intent on furthering the spread of the disease through his opposition to AIDS education and prevention.

Philip Morris, Inc., makers of Marlboro cigarettes, among others, has been Helms' top corporate benefactor since at least 1977. They have also contributed \$200,000 for the Jesse Helms museum. ACT UP/DC and others urge you to:

1. Boycott ALL Philip Morris products and Miller Beer products.
2. Join in the phone zap of Philip Morris' Smokers' Advocate hotline (800) 343-0975 or their Retailers' Order Line (800) 446-7030.
3. Tell others about this action, and ask retailers to stop selling Marlboro, etc.
4. Write to Hamish Maxwell, Chairman and CEO, Philip Morris Companies, Inc., 120 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10017, or at his home: 1 Pierpont Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201.