

Q-NOTES

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1990 — A Year Of Accomplishment

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 Q-Notes Staff

Last year, at this time, we wrote about all the successes that the community has experienced and this year who would have thought we would have come so far, done so much and made such a difference.

Here is a list of some of the year's accomplishments:

- 1990 brought the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations Committee to amend its mission statement to include the phrase "sexual orientation";

- the City of Raleigh joined in supporting the display of the AIDS Memorial Quilt and hosted the Southeastern Conference of Lesbians and Gay Men;

- Charlotte witnessed the creation of the Charlotte/Metrolina chapter of The NAMES Project and the subsequent spectacular success of the Quilt display at the convention center. We also saw the formation of the Triangle Chapter which sponsored the display in Raleigh;

- Metrolina AIDS Project in Charlotte created a Minority Outreach Coalition and got a new executive director (That was a positive and a negative - we welcomed John Conley and said our good-byes to Les Kooyman);

- we picketed the Concerned Charlotteans' banquet at the convention center;
- we listened to the wonderful music of ONE VOICE;

- we organized a committee and helped Harvey Gantt mount a courageous and nearly successful battle against NC Senator Jesse Helms;

- we watched as the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina held a conference for gay and lesbian Christians to explore their place in the Church family;

- we held successful gay pride marches in Chapel Hill and for the first time ever in Columbia, South Carolina;

- we witnessed First Tuesday changing its name to include the "G" and "L" words, a move that affirmed its mission of fighting against the invisibility of lesbians and gays;

- we listened as Charlotte City Council member, Ann Hammond addressed the gay/lesbian community at the First Tuesday Association of Gay and Lesbian Equality's general membership meeting;

- we raised the consciousness of many with regard to hate crimes by participating in documentation projects that catalog crimes against people because of race, religion or sexual orientation and witnessed the first-ever vigil against violence held in Raleigh;

- we have participated in the preparations for the 10th Annual Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) convention to be held in Charlotte, October 11-14, 1991;

- we watched with great interest as the "Friends For Life" campaign succeeded in raising our consciousness about the continuing need to talk to each other about AIDS and participate in "safe sex";

- we fought hard and won the battle over anonymous HIV testing in the NC legislature;

- we participated in the first statewide conference on anti-gay violence organized by North Carolinians Against Racism and Religious Violence (NCARRV). This conference brought together experts from all walks of life on how to address violence issues;

- we helped in the organization of the First National Lesbian Agenda Conference;

- we experienced several military victories, including Judy Mead at Camp Lejune and Perry Watkins;

- we celebrated Brandy Alexander's 25th anniversary as an entertainer and as one who continues to raise money for AIDS support;

- we saw the formation of a Raleigh ACT-UP chapter: ACT-UP Triangle;

- and on and on... I am certain that I am leaving out a number of accomplishments.

The point is, we have much to look back over the last year and be proud of - which brings us to the next issue - the future.

1991 will have its share of challenges, its ups and its downs. But it is important through all the turmoil that we continue to grow - continue to care for each other and for society in general. Let's make 1991 even better!

BEST BETS

Jan. 5 Mature Gay Men
 Potluck

Jan. 7 Bowling League every
 Monday night

Jan. 8 Fun N' Games Night

Jan. 10 Last night to join ONE
 VOICE for Cabaret

Jan. 20 OWLS Meeting at
 Liaison's

Founders Day Dinner
 New Life MCC

Jan. 21 Martin Luther King
 Day

Jan. 22 Business Owners
 meet at Liaisons

COMING UP: Feb. 15-16
 ONE VOICE Concert



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Metro AIDS Project Puts Men In Touch

Men In Touch, Metrolina AIDS Project's newest program for gay men, completed its first six-week session in mid-December. The program consists of six two-hour sessions and is designed to promote awareness and self-esteem through support and group discussion.

The groups, which meet once a week at the MAP office, are designed to facilitate self-discovery and personal empowerment in a non-threatening environment.

Charles, the facilitator of Men In Touch, describes the program as informal, yet structured. "It's a combination of support group and educational workshop," he says.

"Each session has a specific topic, like growing up or relationships or AIDS awareness, and there are structured exercises I use to get the group talking. How the discussion proceeds, though, depends on the guys themselves. We share our experiences, our hopes and fears, and learn a lot about ourselves in the process."

The men who attended the first program were eager to share their experience and promote the group to others. "I wasn't sure about it when we first started," said "Joe," 22. "But it didn't take long before I really got into it."

"It was so great to be able to talk about things with other guys," explained "Mike," 40. "Most of the guys I know are either too scared or whatever to really talk about heavy stuff. It was a great experience; I learned a lot about myself."

"Jim," 34, agrees. "For a long time I thought I was the only one who was having trouble dealing with AIDS and being gay. I found out I'm not alone."

All of the participants agreed that Men In Touch helped them gain a greater sense of control over their own lives. "Mike" explains: "Being gay affects us in a lot of subtle ways — ways most of us never think of. Then there's AIDS. Sometimes it's just too much. Men In Touch helped me to begin to see how all of this works together. I'm starting to put things into perspective."

Men In Touch will begin its second series in mid-January, and is open to all gay and bisexual men, regardless of their HIV status. Interested men should contact David Prybylo at Metrolina AIDS Project, 333-1435, for enrollment information.

One Voice Prepares For February Cabaret, Invites New Members

Still basking in the glow of their successful, sold-out Christmas Concert, ONE VOICE, Charlotte's Gay and Lesbian Chorus, will begin rehearsing their cabaret/variety show extravaganza "THE BEST OF TIMES" on Thursday, January 3. The songs of Broadway and Hollywood will entertain the community on February 15 and 16 at Theatre Charlotte.

New members are welcome to join the chorus and participate in the cabaret show by coming to rehearsal on Thursday, January 3 or 10. Requirements for the cabaret period are: want to have fun!, attend every Thursday night rehearsal, pay \$10 in dues, and provide your own costumes for the performance. Rehearsals are held at the United Way Auditorium, 301 S. Brevard Street from 7:00-9:30 pm.

In addition, new members will also be welcomed on February 28 or March 7 if they want to be in the June Pride Concert.

The cabaret/variety show will need many support members to help with backstage work, refreshments, ticket sales, etc. Support members are welcome any time.

Gay/Lesbian U.S. Military Veterans of Central NC To Hold First Meeting

RALEIGH — On November 25, 1990, an informal meeting was held to discuss the needs of gay and lesbian military veterans living in North Carolina. This meeting was the result of some casual communication that had been conducted since 1985 to see if there were sufficient interest in North Carolina for such an organization.

Results of correspondence in the state showed interest from a large number of gay and lesbian veterans living in North Carolina who had served in conflicts from World War I through Viet Nam. An organization of gay and lesbian vets currently exists in Jacksonville, NC.

ONE VOICE will celebrate their first birthday on January 11. In their first year, over 90 people have participated in rehearsals, a preview concert, two major concerts and seven community appearances. In addition to the concerts noted above, ONE VOICE will sing at the Names Project Benefit this May, and perform for the National PFLAG Convention in October.

"THE BEST OF TIMES" will include many musical standards with a special gay/lesbian twist. The show might include "Anything Goes," "Standing On The Corner," "There's a Fairy in the Firehouse," "Nobody Loves a Fairy When She's 40," "You Can't Get A Man With A Gun," a Rodgers and Hammerstein medley, and numbers from "Big River," "La Cage Aux Folles" and "Merrily We Roll Along."

The show will be held on Friday and Saturday, February 15 and 16 at 8:00 pm at Theatre Charlotte, 501 Queens Road. Tickets are \$5-10 (sliding scale) and will be on sale beginning January 15 by mail, phone or chorus member. Beer, wine, soft drinks and snacks will be on sale during the show.

To join the chorus, or for ticket reservations, call Dan Kirsch, President, at 704/563-1372.

Primary issues discussed were how such an organization could help with military benefits, counseling, social contact, recreation, history projects, lobbying, military career assistance, speakers' bureau.

The meeting concluded with a decision to hold a formal meeting in the future.

On Sunday, January 13, 1991, at 3 pm, the Gay/Lesbian U.S. Military Veterans of Central North Carolina will meet at 611 North Boundary Street, Raleigh. The meeting is open to all active duty, reserve or discharged gay or lesbian persons. For more information, call Virgil at (919) 878-8315 or Willie (919) 833-1209 or write NC Veterans, P.O. Box 28863, Raleigh, NC 27611-8863.