

Notes

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Agreeing to disagree

...page 17



Helpline opens in Raleigh

...page 8

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Charlotte gains ACCESS

New group adds another voice to AIDS education

By Frank Dalrymple
Q-Note Staff

CHARLOTTE — Save MAP was formed as the direct result of the forced resignation of Metrolina AIDS Project executive director, John Conley, this past July. Increased apathy among MAP volunteers and staff, as well as the MAP Board of Directors policies regarding safe sex education and client information were also contributing factors in the formation of the ad-hoc group.

Wednesday evening, November 6, Save MAP, after continuous failure to achieve in-person dialogue with the MAP board, announced its future plans. Save MAP has changed its name and will open a new AIDS service agency, known as ACCESS (AIDS Coalition of Charlotte for Education, Service and Support).

The "town meeting", held at Charlotte's Unitarian Church was attended by about sixty people and moderated by a panel of ACCESS members.

Former MAP volunteer Aleksei Reid delivered a lengthy, comprehensive opening statement tracing the events that led to the formation of Save MAP (most of which has been published in *Q-Notes*). Her detailed statement also included the prolonged stalemate with the MAP board, and chronicled numerous resignations of MAP volunteers and staff in recent weeks.

Reid was followed by panelist Vickie O'Neal, who made the formal announcement of ACCESS. The new AIDS service agency is scheduled to open its doors in January 1992 at an undetermined location.

O'Neal outlined the proposed programs and objectives of ACCESS: "The mission of ACCESS is to provide education, service and support to all people affected by HIV disease and AIDS, and to empower its clients with an active voice in their own care."

Declaring education and caregiving as primary objectives, O'Neal outlined plans that included caregivers training, volunteer caregiving teams, a "buddy" program, self-care and empowerment skills training, as well as educational programs for teens and substance abusers (following outside counseling for their abuse).

She also spoke of outreach programs for gays, minorities, and heterosexuals in AIDS prevention, a speakers bureau, a hotline service, grief counseling, various support groups, and peer counseling.

O'Neal was quick to point out that infected and affected patients and clients should seek the services of both MAP and ACCESS. She cited the benefits of such MAP programs as its food pantry, individual counseling, and financial assistance.

While ACCESS intends to establish a productive and harmonious relationship with MAP, she emphasized ACCESS support programs and educational outreach.

The new agency currently does not hold tax-exempt status, but will in the near future.

Other panelists were Rick Carswell, David Parsons, Charles Foesch and Dan Van Mourik.

Also in attendance were former MAP employees and Save MAP members Toni Tatu, David Prybylo and Dorothy Triplett.

Following Vickie O'Neal's statements, the panel fielded questions and comments from the audience.

During the two-hour meeting, there was some dispute and much discussion regarding statements made about MAP, its board of directors and the Citizens Review Panel.

ACCESS budgets, funds and fund-raising strategies were the first concerns raised by some individuals.

Community input, outreach, education and accessibility of leadership with the new agency were cited as strong points by the panel.

The following Monday evening, November 11, ACCESS members held another public meeting to elect a board of directors and

officers.

The 17-member board will be headed by Rick Carswell, president, David Parsons, vice president, Dan Van Mourik, secretary, and Charles Foesch, treasurer.

On November 13, ACCESS became incorporated.

ACCESS membership fees are \$5.00 for non-clients, while client services are free of charge.

Contact and meeting information regarding ACCESS can be found in *Q-Notes* Organizations section.

A blue ribbon group



The Capital Cowboys, Raleigh's gay country-western line dance group, recently won first place in the Folk Festival Dance Competition at the 1991 North Carolina State Fair. See story page 4.

ONE VOICE gives holiday concert

by Dan Kirsch
Q-Notes Staff

CHARLOTTE — Selections from Handel's "Messiah," along with a song by PDQ Bach and "Grandma Got Run Over By A Reindeer" are just a few of the numbers planned for ONE VOICE's *Holiday Festival Concert*, December 13 and 14 at 8:15 pm at the Unitarian Church of Charlotte. Last year's sold-out Christmas concert inspired the Chorus to add a second performance this year.

Conducted by D. Jan McCoy, the gay and lesbian chorus features 45 voices. The Chorus has been rehearsing since the first week of September, and music selections will include "In The Bleak Midwinter," "Dona Nobis Pacem," "Throw the Yule Log On, Uncle John," "The Three O'clock Rehearsal," "Christmas Dreams," "Silent Night," and other holiday favorites. In addition, there will be an audience sing-along. Following the concert, a reception will be held for all audience members.

This concert will mark the end of the ONE VOICE's second year. When they begin rehearsal in January, the focus will be on preparing a May concert and getting ready for their appearance in Denver in July at GALA Festival IV (Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses). Ticket proceeds from the Holiday Festival Concert will help support travel and housing costs for the more than 30 members who are planning to make the trip. Persons wishing to join the chorus in January are urged to contact Vice President Dan Kirsch at 704/536-1372 by December 15.

Tickets for the *Holiday Festival Concert* are \$7-10 on a sliding scale, and are available from chorus members, Rising Moon Bookstore, or by calling 704/536-1372. The concert will be interpreted for the hearing impaired at the Saturday performance. "The Bear Men of Charlotte" 1992 calendars and chorus tee-shirts will also be on sale at the concert.

The concert will be held at the Unitarian Church of Charlotte, 234 N. Sharon Amity Road. The church is handicapped accessible.

HEART STRINGS tour to raise AIDS awareness

by Dan Kirsch
Q-Notes Staff

CHARLOTTE — A Broadway-style musical show will light up Ovens Auditorium on Monday, June 15, 1992, and all the proceeds will go for the fight against AIDS in Charlotte.

The HEART STRINGS National Tour, An Event in Three Acts, will benefit The Brothers Foundation, the House of Mercy, and the Metrolina AIDS Project. The event, awarded to the Brothers Foundation by DIFFA (The Design Industries Foundation for AIDS), is co-sponsored by the three beneficiaries and the Charlotte Chapter of the NAMES Project.

"For us, this is a great way for AIDS service organizations to work together and sing from the same sheet of music," said Sister Mary Wright, executive director of the House of Mercy in Belmont.

Billed as an event in three acts, the first act is the HEART STRINGS production, an upbeat musical fundraising benefit. Celebrity narrators and actors tie the musical selections together with the words of mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, people living with AIDS, their friends and caregivers. The show

will feature a national touring company of twenty singer-dancers. A few local acts will be asked to participate in the show. Tickets for the event will range from \$25-\$250, and local corporations will be asked to participate as sponsors.

Act two will be a display of the AIDS Memorial Quilt later that same week. The Quilt display will be coordinated by the NAMES Project. Displayed free to the public, it will provide a continued look at the issue and dramatically illustrate the humanity behind the statistics. The Quilt visited Charlotte once before, in September 1990.

Act three is you. The event will involve hundreds of volunteers, and thousands of persons contributing dollars or services to help the fight against AIDS. Goals of the event include mobilizing a broad-based response from the medical, religious, social, corporate, entertainment, PLWAs and political communities, thereby empowering local communities.

On-again, off-again

Heartstrings began in 1986 in Atlanta as a local benefit for AIDS organizations. A re-

Continued on page 10



HEART STRINGS • THE AIDS MEMORIAL QUILT