

North Carolina to eliminate anonymous HIV testing

by David Jones
Q-Notes Staff

RALEIGH—State Health Director Ron Levine, MD, has announced that the state health department's position is that anonymous HIV testing should be ended in September 1994 based on a recent study by the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) of the impact of restricting access to anonymous testing to only a few counties over 16 months. Former state health official David Jolly responded that the study by the CDC of HIV testing in North Carolina demonstrates that eliminating anonymous HIV testing does not increase the state's ability to reach more total people at high risk of infection and discourages gay and bisexual men from seeking testing, proving that anonymous HIV testing is needed.

The state health department proposed a regulation in 1990 to end all anonymous testing. The Commission for Health Services restricted it to 16 counties instead and decided to end it by September 1, 1994. ACT UP/Triangle sued the state and won an order

in 1992 that restored anonymous HIV testing to all counties because making anonymous testing available in some but not all counties was considered discriminatory. The ruling does not prohibit the state from ending all anonymous testing. Unless a new regulation is adopted, anonymous testing will end automatically on September 1, 1994.

Levine's statement, to a meeting of the Commission for Health Services on February 1, 1994, comes one year after the administration of Gov. Jim Hunt announced that it would begin a series of meetings to seek a consensus on the issue, and after testing strategy was discussed extensively by a committee of activists, health and state officials. It came just as the state's new AIDS Advisory Council was being organized and before the new council had an opportunity to discuss the matter. It has left many health advocates questioning the state's good-faith in meeting with activists over the past year and in forming the new advisory council.

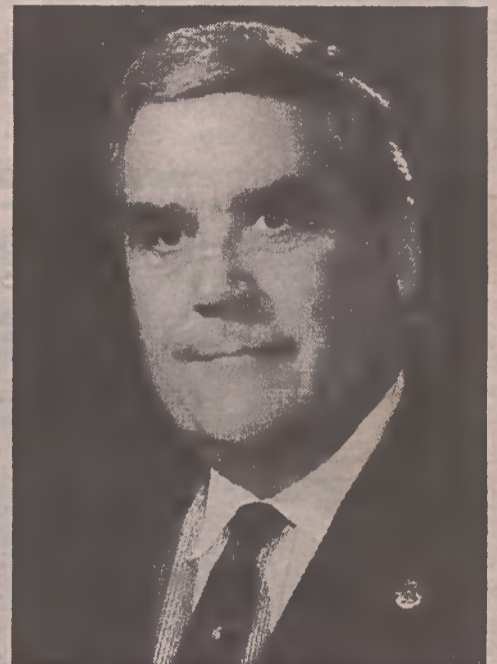
At the second meeting of the new advisory council on February 22, 1994, and in a

statement faxed to *Q-Notes*, Secretary of Environment, Health and Natural Resources Jonathan Howes, which includes the health department, said that Dr. Levine's statement had "regrettably...highlighted the need for improved communication" and "caused some confusion that the State has made its final decision on the availability of anonymous testing. This is not the case." He went on to say that the department wanted to hear from the new advisory council on this and other policy decisions.

Levine squared off at the council meeting with David Jolly, former head of the state's AIDS Control Branch and now a staff member of the North Carolina AIDS Training Network. Levine presented the state health department's view that the CDC study supported ending anonymous testing.

Levine reported that the CDC study concludes that total testing and the number of positive tests performed continued to increase during the time when anonymous testing was unavailable in most counties. In

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Sec. Jonathan Howes

GROW confronts support crisis

by Dan Van Mourik
Q-Notes Staff

WILMINGTON, NC—GROW, begun in 1979, is a multi-faceted, membership organization serving the gay and lesbian community in the Wilmington area of North Carolina. It is not unlike the United Way, coordinating many of its own projects while assisting other groups with their various needs. And like so many other gay and lesbian organizations, GROW has found itself in the middle of a support crisis.

The January 1994 issue of *Backgrounds*, GROW's monthly newsletter, laid out their support problems in both dollars and volunteer hours. The three most immediate concerns center on their newsletter, the Gay & Lesbian Switchboard of Wilmington and their Transportation Project.

The newsletter is without an editor, a job requiring a volunteer commitment of approximately 34 hours per month. With the cost of the newsletter running about \$1,750 per year, the board of directors is questioning whether to continue the newsletter, possibly charging members for a subscription.

The Gay & Lesbian Switchboard operates on an automated voice mail system while attempting to staff the line with operators from 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. seven evenings per week. Early in 1993, the board voted to operate the line through the voice mail system only. However, a few of the operators volunteered to coordinate staffing, only four

people covering the schedule over the past nine months. The coordinator was forced to resign in November due to a job change, and the interim coordinator resigned in January. The board is once again faced with an automated system due to a lack of volunteers.

While the newsletter and switchboard concerns focus more heavily on volunteer hours, their Transportation Project problems center around money. This program (part of their HIV Resource Project) provides transportation for individuals and families affected by HIV disease from their homes to medical care facilities. GROW was under contract with the Coastal Carolina HIV Care Consortium for reimbursement at the rate of 22 cents per mile for the first passenger plus \$5.00 for each additional passenger from the same town. As of January 31, 1994, the Consortium owed GROW in excess of \$19,000 in reimbursements.

Due to the exceedingly slow reimbursement process, the GROW board of directors voted at its January 1994 meeting not to renew its transportation contract with the Consortium, which expires March 31. However, the Transportation Project will continue.

The board elected to contract with GROW's founder Leo Teachout, as a paid employee at a gross wage of \$75.00 per trip, to provide transportation for area HIV patients, with the stipulation that reimburse-

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Busted escort ring has ties to Fleiss

by David Stout
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CHARLOTTE—On August 5, 1993, police arrested Robert Frederick Holliday for allegedly operating a male escort ring in Mecklenburg County.

Holliday, who resides in Atlanta, is charged with prostitution, racketeering and postal fraud and will be tried in federal court in Charlotte on April 4.

The charges stem from the government's assertion that Holliday, 42, aka "Carl," owned an escort service known as Professional Modeling Agency (PMA), located at Sharon Lakes Office Plaza, which was actually nothing more than a front for prostitution.

One of PMA's former employees, Jimmy Hincemon, is expected to not only testify against Holliday but also assert that the service was handling clients for infamous "Hollywood Madam," Heidi Fleiss.

Hincemon, 31, was employed by PMA

from 1986 until 1991, when he moved to Los Angeles and went to work directly for Fleiss. Despite the fact that he admits to working as a prostitute, to date he has not been charged with any offenses. He says it's because he is cooperating fully with federal authorities, talking not just about Holliday, but also about the sex-for-sale connection between the Queen of Tinsel Town and the Queen City. "They want information that I have to offer, and I'm giving it to them. I gave them all of my client lists and computer files."

Hincemon said that PMA's involvement with Fleiss began prior to his employment there. "It was going on when I got there, I guess. The client referrals were already on the computer anyway."

Allegedly, whenever Fleiss' Los Angeles customers were in the Charlotte area for movie or television work, she would recommend PMA to them. "At one point in 1989, there

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White receives Senate confirmation

by David Jones
Q-Note Staff

WASHINGTON, DC—Jesse L. White, Jr., an openly gay Chapel Hill man and former co-chair of North Carolina Pride PAC for Gay and Lesbian Equality, has been confirmed unanimously by the U.S. Senate to head the Appalachian Regional Commission.

The Appalachian Regional Commission sponsors programs to relieve poverty and promote education, health care and economic growth in a 13-state Appalachian mountain region. It is based in Washington, DC.

White was appointed to the position by President Bill Clinton in October 1993. On February 22, 1994, the Senate confirmed the appointment without dissent. Neither of North

Carolina's Republican Senators, Lauch Faircloth and Jesse Helms, raised objections. Neither were present for the vote. White worked extensively with Southern governors and other leaders while he was the executive director of the Southern Growth Policy Board between 1981 and 1990 and drew board praise from Republicans and Democrats for his work. White knew and worked with President Clinton when he was governor of Arkansas.

White left Chapel Hill for Washington the day following his confirmation by the Senate and assumed the position immediately. He joins over 20 openly gay and lesbian senior staff appointments made by the Clinton administration.

Nominations sought for annual Q-Notes awards

CHARLOTTE—Nominations are currently being accepted for this year's *Q-Notes* OUT!Bound Award and Mark Drum Memorial Award, to be presented by *Q-Notes* in June. This year will be the third time the annual awards have been presented.

The Mark Drum Memorial Award is given to recognize an individual who has done outstanding and exceptional work in the HIV/AIDS-affected community.

Mark Drum was a *Q-Notes* staff writer who chronicled his battle with the disease until his passing in May of 1991. We are honored to pay tribute to Mark and feel this award is our appreciation in action.

The *Q-Notes* OUT!Bound Award is presented to someone who has made a significant impact on the lesbian and gay community in North and/or South Carolina. This person will have made a viable change through activism, lobbying, and community service.

If you or your community service orga-

nization know a person who should be considered for either prize, please write to us. Include in your letter a brief personal profile of the individual; a description of their work and performance; and the reasons why their contribution has been exceptional.

We are aware that hundreds of people in the gay and lesbian community are committed every day to extinguishing disease; suffering; bigotry; bashing; and discrimination, so choosing these recipients will be a difficult process.

The deadline for your submission is Sunday, May 15.

All applications will be given serious consideration by a nominating committee; finalists will be voted on by the entire staff.

Please make sure that you include your contact information, as we will be making further inquiry regarding finalists.

Send your submissions to *Q-Notes*, P.O. Box 221841, Charlotte, NC 28222.