

Glitter & Be Gay!

A cabaret show to benefit OutCharlotte 95!
Featuring a talent competition with cash prizes!

Friday, June 23 - 8:30PM
Saturday, June 24 - 7:30PM* & 10:00PM

*This performance will be interpreted for the deaf and hard of hearing.

Theatre Charlotte, 501 Queens Road

Creative Team

Dan Kirsch, Rodney McAllister,
Mark Propst, Elaine Rhodes

Cabaret Performers

Emory Clark, Doug Dozier, Diann Hinson,
Lisa Hammond, Matt Hough, Travis Osley,
Tamera J. Whisnant

MC: Sidney Horton

Stage Manager: Lois Webster

General Admission tickets:

\$10 - \$17.50 sliding scale

(Sliding scale allows a person to determine their level of ability to pay. We are committed to keeping paid events accessible to people of various economic backgrounds.)

Reserved Patron tickets: \$25.00

(includes reserved seating, name in program if ordered by June 19, and complimentary beverages)

Tickets available at:
Rising Moon Books & Beyond ▼ Urban Evolution

Order by phone **563-2699** or by mail

(write OutCharlotte, PO Box 32062, Charlotte NC 28232-2062)

Talent Competition

All kinds of acts are needed! At each show, the audience will vote for the top two acts. First prize for each show is \$50.00. Second prize for each show is \$20.00. Call 563-2699 to receive competition guidelines. All acts must register by June 12, and will be notified of acceptance by June 16.



OutCharlotte is an annual cultural festival celebrating the lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender community.
October 11-15

Candace Gingrich thrills North Carolina audience

by David Jones
Q-Notes Staff

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC—Candace Gingrich hadn't planned on coming out publicly, at least not when she did and certainly not so dramatically. But when her brother, Newt Gingrich, was elected the first Republican in a century to be speaker of the US House of Representatives, the media swarmed around her family.

A reporter interviewed her mother and wanted to know about the family. Her mother took out a 10 year old photo of Candace in high school, complete with long hair and a permanent, nail polish and lipstick. Then Mrs. Gingrich said to the reporter, "I don't want to show you a picture of her in college," but promptly did. "It's something my mother does, tells you she can't tell you and then does," said Gingrich. That photo showed her in her college rugby uniform with a crew-cut. The reporter followed up later with Candace Gingrich and, after a 45 minute routine interview, asked "the question." She said, "Yes, I am a lesbian," and has been in the news ever since.

That was just one of the stories that drew gales of laughter and thunderous applause from a packed hotel ballroom of over 300 lesbians and gay men in Research Triangle Park on May 10. Part of a 48-city speaking tour, Gingrich spoke to a special meeting of the Triangle Business and Professional Guild, an organization of some 400 lesbian and gay professionals and business people in the Triangle area. The tour is sponsored by the Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF), the country's largest gay and lesbian political organization, as part of its National Coming Out Project. It was an unprecedented open meeting of the Guild, which allowed reporters and TV cameras in for the occasion. Members were notified before and at the meeting that the press would be present.

The story of her mother's interview was just one, and the last, of her three-part coming out story. The first was in college when she joined the rugby team and met a number of women who were openly lesbian. "They were proud of it," she said, "and it meant that all of the things that I felt as I was growing up were true — I didn't stop smiling for a year." The second happened when her mother found "the box we all kept in the closet," which contained a copy of *The Lavender Letter*, a local lesbian newsletter. Her mother asked and she told her that she was gay.

Gingrich said that her brother's election as speaker of the House gave her a "unique opportunity and ability to be heard," and that the road she has traveled has been "a long and gradual process." "I'm glad that all of you are here," she told the audience, "and that you didn't wait for your brother to become speaker to get involved." Saying that no one can change what they didn't do in the past but everyone can get involved in changing the future, she said that there was no road map to coming out or a right or wrong way to do it. But she called coming out a way of ending the bias against gay people by "promoting the values of openness and honesty."

As for her relationship with her family and powerful brother, Gingrich said there was no hostility toward her when she came out to them; "We just didn't discuss it much." When

Newt Gingrich found out, he told their mother that "it's her life and she has a right to live it as she needs to." There was not much contact between Candace and her brother over the years. "I had just sort of blocked him out of my mind," she said, until it was clear that he would be the Speaker of the House in a new, conservative Republican House of Representatives. When the news broke about her sexual identity, HRCF invited her to be the national spokesperson for the National Coming Out Project, and she accepted.

Gingrich said she believed she could talk to her brother about lesbian and gay issues and he would listen. Answering a question about seeming contradictions between Newt Gingrich's words and actions, she said, "I think his heart is in the right place. He says the right words about tolerance, but then he goes to work with the right wing and does things that are inconsistent with that." She speculated that Speaker Gingrich and others could not ignore what she stands for because, "I represent the truth to America because gay men and lesbians are a part of the fabric of America."

"The American people are way ahead of the Congress on gay and lesbian issues," she told the crowd, "because when people are told that it is legal to discriminate against us, 77% say that it is wrong to do that." HRCF is supporting federal legislation to ban discrimination against gay people.

She pointed to what she called "a radical minority in public life" that is controlling much of the debate now, but that "America is in the midst of a coming out revolution" through the work of the Human Rights Campaign Fund and other groups and individuals all over the country. She invited her audience to "come out and join the revolution" by participating in National Coming Out Day on October 11. She said that coming out may seem like a burden, but it is really a gift, quoting Richard Bach's book *Illusions*, "There is no such thing as a problem without a gift in its hand."

Gingrich was followed by Kris Pratt of the HRCF staff who gave an overview of the Fund's programs and a tour of the newly conservative political landscape.

She pointed out that the Fund has 100,000 members, but the anti-gay Christian Coalition has over 1.5 million and strong political influence in Washington. She called for gay men and lesbians to let politicians know how they felt. She seemed to anticipate a question in the mind of her audience, and said, referring to Jesse Helms, "Yes, write to him, too. At least bother him a little. He needs to know where we stand."

As a sign of why it is important to communicate with every politician, she pointed out that Republican Congressman Frank Heineman, the conservative former police chief of Raleigh, has signed a statement agreeing not to discriminate based on sexuality in his office hiring. She said that HRCF was seeking meetings with every member of Congress, including two conservative members of the US House, former Charlotte mayor Sue Myrick and former ambassador David Funderburk.

At the end of the evening, Candace Gingrich was greeted by a loud, sustained ovation from the crowd.

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Saturday 10:00 - 2:00