

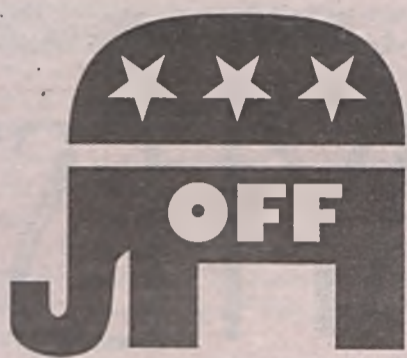
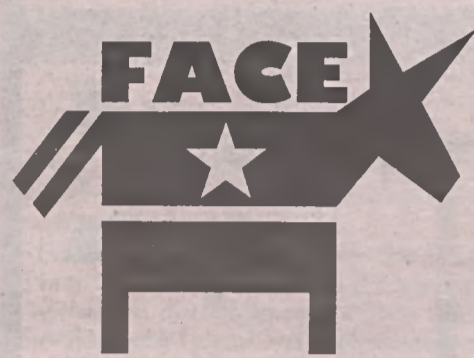
Q Notes

The Carolinas' Most Comprehensive Gay & Lesbian Newspaper

Frank calls march a "diversion" Page 5

Gay play sure to raise protest Page 20

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PRIMARY COLORS

When Mecklenburg County voters go to the polls May 5 to vote in the Democratic and Republican primaries, they will be participating in one of the most crucial elections to face the community in some time. Out of these races will come the next set of Mecklenburg County Commissioners. It will be a pivotal moment in local politics.

Because the foundation of our region will, in large part, be built upon the men and women selected from the candidate slate, it is vital that we know what we want before casting our ballots. Here are some questions to ponder in that regard: Do we want elected officials who value diversity or those who only value citizens like themselves? Do we want elected officials who believe in the spirit of compromise or those who entrench themselves in their own positions — no matter how wrong-headed? Do we want elected officials who have the vision to lead us into the next century or those who

are too blind to even join us in this one? In short, do we want elected officials who will stretch toward the highest ideals of this community or those who have already demonstrated how low they can drag it down?

It is not hard to guess how everyone answered these questions. It is difficult, though, to gauge how committed everyone is to making their answers reality. Because, even though there are unending calls for change, voter turnout remains abysmally low from year to year. We have to fight that apathy; there is simply too much at stake. If we defeat the Gang of Five commissioners, we can curb the divide and conquer politics that have vilified us as the enemy for the last year and splintered this community in the process.

We have heard plenty about "traditional family values," now it is time for us to display our values (solidarity, integrity and civic responsibility among them) in voting booths across the county.

— David Stout, Editor

CANDIDATE RECOMMENDATIONS

Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners

(Recommendations are not given in races where all candidates will advance or if there is no preference or insufficient information.)

At-Large (3 seats; 2 years)

Republican: William C. Focht; Tom Vance (only vote for these two)

District 1 (1 seat; 2 years)

Republican: Edna Chirico

District 4 (1 seat; 2 years)

Democrat: Lloyd Scher

District 5 (1 seat; 2 years)

Republican: Tom Cox

District 6 (1 seat; 2 years)

Republican: David Misenheimer



Need a Ride? If transportation is an issue, Mecklenburg Gay and Lesbian PAC volunteers will take voters to their polling locations. Call them at (704) 553-7906 to make arrangements.

RAIN walks a mile (plus) for AIDS

by Brian M. Myer
Q-Notes Staff

CHARLOTTE—The Regional AIDS Interaith Network (RAIN) will hold its second annual one and one-half mile AIDS walk Sunday, May 3 with registration being held inside the Fellowship Hall of the First United Methodist church beginning at 1:00pm. The walk is organized to heighten awareness of AIDS and of the non-judgmental service offered through the faith community. The short-walk enables those living with HIV/AIDS and other disabilities to participate.

Chris Werth, RAIN's director of development, has high hopes for this year's Walk. "Last year we had 267 walkers and raised \$33,000. This year we hope to have 500 walkers and our goal is \$50,000."

The Walk will begin in the courtyard of the TransAmerica building directly adjacent to the First United Methodist Church. The walkers will proceed down Tryon Street to St. Peter's Catholic Church, turn around and end inside the sanctuary of the church.

RAIN will appeal to businesses to underwrite Walk expenses so that 100 percent of the money collected by the walkers will support direct services for persons living with HIV/AIDS. Members of walk teams are not limited

to faith communities but will include those recruited through businesses, civic organizations, clubs and neighborhoods as well as congregations of all faiths. Individuals raise donations for the one and one-half mile Walk through family, friends, co-workers and fellow congregation members. Proceeds will help expand RAIN's development, training and coordination of new and existing AIDS Careteams which provide direct care to those living with HIV/AIDS.

Regional AIDS Interaith Network



AIDS WALK '98

Prizes, all of which are donated, will be awarded to both the individual and the team receiving the most pledges. Teams participating have the opportunity to create a special banner for their group which will be judged by members of the Hodges/Taylor gallery.

RAIN was founded in 1992 to engage area congregations (eight counties in two states) of all faiths in meeting

the challenges of the AIDS pandemic. RAIN identifies, cultivates and provides on-going pastoral support, education and leadership for congregation-based Careteams partnered with persons living with HIV/AIDS. To date, RAIN's Careteams have served more than 230 men, women and children suffering from AIDS.

For more information on how to take part as a walker, create a team, be a sponsor or to receive general information, call the RAIN office at (704) 372-7246. ▼

SC Pride anti-rally rally planned

by Dan Van Mourik
Q-Notes Staff

MYRTLE BEACH, SC—The 9th Annual SC Gay and Lesbian Pride March and Festival will be held over the weekend of April 30 - May 3 in Myrtle Beach. Since the event was announced, opposition has been voiced in many forms — from church leaders to private citizens to Myrtle Beach Mayor Mark McBride.

The latest protest will take the form of a thinly veiled anti-gay rally. Organizers are choosing to classify it as a gathering of like-minded individuals who seek a return to traditional family values. But the timing makes its true intent rather obvious.

The Citizens for Traditional Family Values will hold their rally from 6:00-9:00pm on Sunday, April 26 in an as yet undetermined location in the Myrtle Beach area. The rally sounds very similar to one held a week after the 1997 March and Festival in Greenville, SC.

"It's nothing more than an event to promote the solid, community-based values that have held our community, our country and our society together since the beginning of time," said Conway resident and associate pastor at the Grand Strand Baptist Church Steve Hubbard.

The rally is intended to send the message to local lawmakers that there are still people here appalled by the "onslaught of topless clubs, the Memorial Day weekend motorcycle event, the Gay Pride week and gambling establishments," according to rally organizers.

Hubbard said a "traditional family would be one man and one wife and their children." Traditional family values, he said, would be the values of that family structure.

The purpose of the rally, he said, is to set a new course and direction for Myrtle Beach and Horry County. And maybe, he said, they can even help some practicing homosexuals overcome that lifestyle.

Hubbard said, "Living that lifestyle is mis-

erable. The problem with attaining happiness is that they are deviating from what they are created for. We want to help them come out of the homosexual lifestyle. Many have come out of it to lead a normal, happy life."

Community Forum

On April 2, a community forum was held by the Coastal Carolina University Student Government Association and Psychology Club along with the SC Gay and Lesbian Pride Movement on the upcoming festival. The forum gave participants a chance to talk frankly about homosexuality, spirituality and the law.

Participants in the forum at Coastal Carolina University were the Rev. Tom Summers; Bill Clinard, a member of Parents, Friends and Families of Lesbians and Gays; Myrtle Beach City Manager Tom Leath; Heather Lee; Linda Robertson, co-chair of the festival; Myrtle Beach Police Chief Warren Gall; and Steve Hubbard.

Forum organizer Amy Love said Mayor Mark McBride and representatives from Burroughs & Chapin Co. Inc. declined to participate. Both McBride and the company have publicly opposed support of the festival.

"I am a little concerned we are parading sexuality in front of the community," Hubbard said. "We are not condemning the person, but the sin."

But Robertson said the festival is not about parading sexuality. "Our organization lobbies for equal rights, not special rights," she said, adding that the march is just to show people that homosexuals are normal people.

Summers urged everyone to focus on working together and to enjoy the diversity of the community. "I am strongly convinced orientation is not necessarily chosen," he said. "These are issues of the heart. I'm not sure sexual orientation is the right term. I think maybe we should call it affectional orientation. I think when we look back in 10, 15, 20 years, the re-

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