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QNotes

noted . notable . noteworthy GLBT issues

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Editor's note

Feelings of negativity

President George W. Bush came to Charlotte Apr. 5. He tried to visit in late February, but the Mayor asked him not to come because of the severe weather.

I wish it had snowed again.

Unfortunately it didn't and our appointed President showed up as scheduled this time to make a speech during a luncheon held downtown. There were a handful of Internet alerts that came across the wire throughout the weeks preceding Bush's arrival that spoke of plans for a mass anti-Bush rally. I had my doubts early on.

A war rages seemingly out of control, an economy still languishes enough that more than five percent of our population is struggling to find jobs and the country's president is endorsing legalized discrimination. In times like these you'd think like-minded individuals might want to come together to let their feelings be heard.

They did.

Several hundred of Charlotte's wealthiest Republicans showed up to pay \$2,000 a head to eat and listen to Dubya ramble on and on about what he saw as the high-points of his career.

Outside, I'd estimate that less than 50 protestors were on hand at McDowell Park. Not including myself — I was there to cover the event — there was only one queer in attendance.

That made me a little mad. Perhaps disappointed would be a better word choice.

The following day I read in Charlotte Observer columnist Danny Romine's summarization of the minor protest that Charlotteans were "just too polite" and that most people felt a demonstration would be "disrespectful to the commander-in-chief."

Disrespectful? How many LGBT people feel disrespected when Dubya wants to permanently amend us into second class citizenship status?

Then I was mad. Forget disappointed.

It's ingrained for Charlotteans to smile in the face of hatred, I know. I was born here. A few years away will clear your head I prom-

ise. We can't just go on smiling quietly, nodding and shuffling to our place at the back of the bus just because people tell us to do so.

A few days later it was a local politician that raised my ire again.

How many of you felt patronized by Mayor Pat McCrory's mass email answer to our inquiries about domestic partnership benefits for the same-sex partners of city employees?

Thank you for contacting me regarding Domestic Partnership Benefits for Charlotte City employees. I know this issue is very personal for many and political for others. While I have been open to the discussions on this issue, which is nationwide, I am opposed to adding domestic partner benefits to the City's benefits and compensation plan, no matter if it is for gay or straight employees. My opposition is financial because of the potential impact on the City budget and I believe we currently offer a significant benefit package to be an attractive employer. Further, I have a strong view on the structure and value of marriage in our society. Although we may disagree on this issue, I appreciate your feedback and hope to work with you on the many areas where we do agree.

Mayor Pat

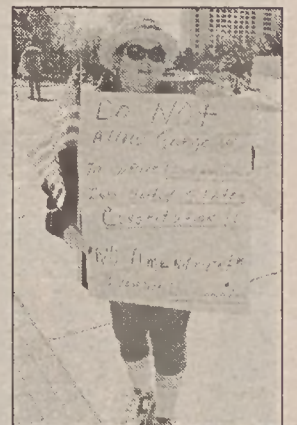
Man did I feel patronized:

Mayor Pat. How sweet. We're on a first name basis. Don't talk to me about the "potential impact" on the city budget when proof already exists in other North Carolina towns

that the impact is negligible. As for your "strong view on marriage" — you can't begin to fathom the strong views of an estimated 70,000 Mecklenburg County residents who are fed up with clear-cut discrimination rooted in misdirected religious beliefs. How convenient it is to forget about that separation of Church and State when it comes to the city's LGBT population. Your refusal to acknowledge the importance of just the small number of gay and lesbian city employees' relationships as valid as your heterosexual one is a slap in the face to the Charlotte LGBT community at large.

Couched oh-so-politely, of course.

— David Moore
Editor



New to Q-Notes



Gordon Marcelo is a new advertising sales consultant for Q-Notes.

He grew up in American Samoa but moved to the United States with his family just after he graduated from high school in 1994.

Folks around Charlotte will probably

recognize Marcelo's name — he was actively involved with Time Out Youth since his arrival in the city and served as a board member before he took on the role of youth program director, a position he held for three years.

In addition to his new position with Q-Notes, Marcelo is also a singer/composer and an artist, as well as an administrative assistant at New Life MCC. He makes his home in Charlotte's Shamrock-Eastway neighborhood.

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