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ONLINE Q.POLL
www.q-notes.com

Do you think President Bush's stance on gay marriage has endorsed an atmosphere of intolerance?
Yes . No

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Great gay travel destinations!

Gay Chapel Hill student attacked

Thomas Stockwell, 21, brutally beaten

by David Moore
Q-Notes staff

Despite the liberal reputation of North Carolina's Triangle region, Thomas Stockwell, a student at The University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (UNC-CH), was the victim of a violent anti-gay attack in the early morning hours of Saturday, Feb. 26.

It was just before 2 a.m. when Stockwell, a former Charlotte resident, said he was talking on his cell phone and became separated from his friends outside of a restaurant on Franklin St.

According to Stockwell's mother, Linda Silver, her son was initially unaware that the anti-gay taunts that a group of about six men were shouting were aimed at him.

"He only realized it when he was walking back to the restaurant and they started chasing him," she recalled.

"I took off running to this corner, Columbia and Franklin, where they caught up to me," Stockwell confirmed. "I turned around and they punched me in the face.

"After the first punch hit my face, I punched the guy back and he kind of fell backwards. That's when his friends jumped

on me. I have a three-inch wide gash down the side of my face, a boot print on my forehead, a concussion from where I hit the ground on the back of my head and a broken nose."

The group of attackers left Stockwell on the street in a bloodied heap, only relenting when passersby interrupted the beating. Friends eventually arrived on the scene and took Stockwell to the hospital, where he was later released.

Stockwell says that the events transpired so quickly, he didn't get a good look at most of the attackers. "But I did get a pretty good look at the one who punched me in the face," he recalls. "I remember what he looks like. Long, fluffy blonde hair, blue flannel shirt, chubby, about five-ten or six feet tall." Other media reports indicate that all of the men were in their early twenties.

Stockwell was speculative about why he was attacked, indicating that perhaps one or more of the men recognized him from school. "Or, I was in the wrong place in the wrong time. And just the fact I happened to be me. I'm sure they had their own agenda. How quick these guys were to jump on somebody they thought was a 'fag' — they obviously had thought about it before."



Stockwell says he'll continue to attend classes at UNC-Chapel Hill, despite the fact there are no current suspects.

At press time, Chapel Hill police spokesperson Jane Cousins said that there were no witnesses or leads to the attack, but a report from a Triangle area television station indicated that there was at least one witness.

"It wasn't a fight, it was a beating," said Tyron Edwards. "They caught him and beat him. They came across the street laughing about it."

see **GAY** on 21

HRC Carolinas Dinner a huge success

Move to Charlotte brings increase in attendance and funds raised

by David Moore
Q-Notes staff

CHARLOTTE — This year's HRC Carolinas Dinner, held in Charlotte for the first time on Feb. 26, attracted a record 1,345 attendees to the event.



Actor Robert Gant was one of the keynote speakers at the HRC Carolinas Dinner.

sent to Q-Notes.

"During the course of the dinner and Sunday see **HRC** on 13

"We thought our original goal was going to be 1,000 to 1,200," says HRC Carolinas Dinner co-chair Shane Windmeyer. "It blew us away when we realized we had exceeded that, and actually sold out."

According to Joni Madison, also a co-chair for the event, the growth in attendance was a whopping 68 percent.

"Between ticket sales, silent auction and corporate sponsors, we have an approximate profit of \$195,000 for HRC," Madison said in an email

Young Americans most tolerant group

More supportive of gays and lesbians, immigrants and racial and ethnic groups

by Alissa Schulman

With turnout rates among young voters up sharply (to more than 50 percent) in 2004 and social commentators considering the growing diversity of our society, the attitudes of younger people on such hot-button issues as gay marriage, immigration and race are more important than ever.

New analysis of 2004 exit-poll data, along with other research, shows that young Americans are more favorable than other age groups toward people sometimes targeted by intolerance, including gays and lesbians, racial and ethnic minorities and immigrants, according to analysis released Feb. 28 by the Center for Information on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE).

The data shows that young Americans are the most tolerant age group, and this tolerance and support for diversity is increasing over time. Some key findings include:

• Sixty-nine percent of 18-29 year-olds see **MOST** on 4



As much as 69 percent of 18-29 year-olds support gay marriage or legal civil unions for gay and lesbian couples.