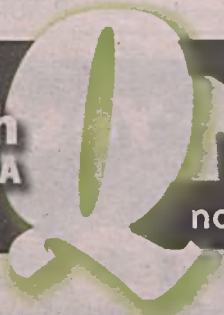


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www.q-notes.com

Do you believe it's possible to change your sexual orientation?

. yes . no

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Two Years Later

Charlotte gay man convicted in death of partner

Robert Glenn Smothers sentenced to 16 years in death of Philip Horton

by David Moore
Q-Notes staff

Last October Robert Glenn Smothers was arrested and charged with the killing of his partner Philip Horton. Eight months later Smothers has been convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to 16 years and six months.

Currently he's serving time as a medium security prisoner in a dorm-like setting at the Polk County Youth Correctional Institute, though administrators at the facility say that he'll be moved elsewhere soon.

"Inmates are not allowed to stay at Polk past the age of 25," explains Polk Assistant Supervisor Mitchell.

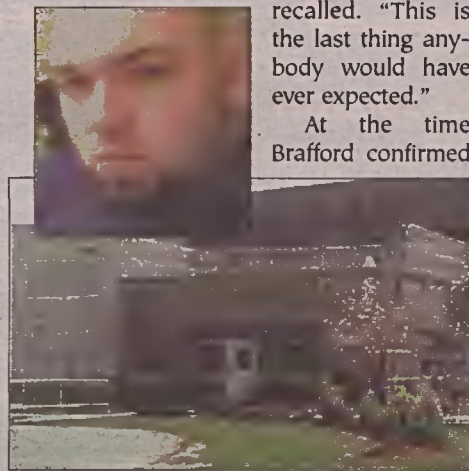
Smothers is already 25. In April 2006 he'll turn 26. As to where he will serve the rest of his sentence, Mitchell is unclear. "It depends on the availability of the facilities at that time," he explains.

Charlotte's gay community reacted with shock last October at the events that took place surrounding Horton's death.

Greg Brafford, owner of Central Station and The Woodshed, two Charlotte-area gay bars the men frequented, talked with Q-Notes shortly after Smothers' arrest last year.

"They were both very nice guys," he recalled. "This is the last thing anybody would have ever expected."

At the time Brafford confirmed



Robert Smothers (inset) is currently being held at the Polk County Youth Correctional Institute.

the men had been together as a couple for two years. "I think they probably met

through the Carolina Bears," he said. "They were both very active in that community."

As confirmed by Horton's court-appointed attorney, sometime during the day on Thursday, Sept. 30, after Horton and Smothers had been drinking, an argument ensued and Horton, who reportedly wanted out of the relationship, began to boast about sexual experiences outside of his involvement with Smothers. Smothers, who reportedly had recently discontinued use of anti-depression medication, flew into a rage and killed Horton. According to a representative at the County Coroner's office, Horton died from blunt force trauma to the head.

A few days would pass before Horton's body would be discovered in a roll-out garbage can behind the house the two men had shared with Smothers' mother, Sherry Smothers.

Brafford says that bar patrons and friends of the couple told him Smothers stole his mother's car following Horton's murder and spent the weekend at The River's Edge, a gay

see CHARLOTTE on 4

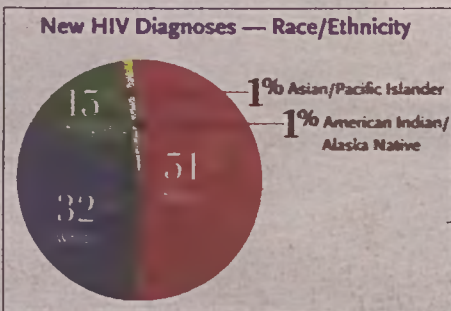
HIV infections in U.S. reach one million

Atlanta conference underscores need for testing, treatment and prevention

by Justin Burke

ATLANTA, Ga. — At the 2005 National HIV Prevention Conference in Atlanta June 12-15, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released data projecting one million HIV infections in the U.S. at the end of 2003, with HIV prevalence high among African-Americans, gay men and male adolescents.

The estimates indicate that between 1,039,000 and 1,185,000 Americans are living with HIV, of whom 74 percent are male, 47 percent are black, and one-fourth are unaware of their infection. Some 40,000 individuals become infected with HIV each year.



New data shows that 51 percent of HIV-positive individuals are African-American.

By risk group, men who have sex with men account for 45 percent of the population living with HIV. Progression to full-blown AIDS is highest among black males, black females and Latino males.

At the same time, experts warn that females, non-Latino blacks and people infected through high-risk heterosexual sex may account for a greater percentage of the HIV-positive population in the future.

"This is a heartbreaking milestone in HIV's devastating march through young,

see ONE on 4

OutWilmington Community Center opens in historic downtown district

Coastal LGBT community celebrates with 300-plus event

by L.S. Dean

WILMINGTON, N.C. — "This is what Wilmington has been waiting for," says Bob Jenkins. He's talking about the coastal town's new LGBT community center that recently opened at 317 Castle St. Over 300 people attended the opening in the revitalized area of Historic Downtown Wilmington.

Jenkins, now past 70, is a founder of St. Jude's MCC and the inspiration for the OutWilmington Community Spirit "Living Out Loud and Proud" Award. There's no question he has seen a great deal of gay and lesbian history over the years — so his pronouncement was especially moving to the leaders who helped to create this new space.

"We are so fortunate to be able see WILMINGTON on 17



Community members line the block outside Wilmington's new LGBT center.