

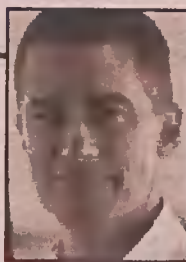
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# QNotes

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## Vote for Equality Nov. 7!

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## HRC Carolinas gearing up for '07 dinner

This year's theme is  
'007 Equality is forever

by Bert Woodard

CHARLOTTE — With a nod to the year 2007 and affirming the mission of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the HRC Carolinas Gala committee has chosen "2007: Equality is Forever" as the theme for its annual fundraising event.

The 2007 HRC Carolinas Gala Dinner will be held at the Charlotte Convention Center on Saturday, Feb. 24, 2007. Event planners are projecting more than 1,600 in attendance in hopes of making the 2007 HRC Carolinas Dinner the largest in the country. The Charlotte Westin will be the host hotel for the third year.

"One of our goals with this year's dinner was to provide an exciting, fast-paced dinner, and what could be more exciting than James Bond?" explains Rodney Tucker, one of the co-chairs for this year's event. "We played with the year and came up with '2007 Equality is Forever' theme. Throughout the gala our guests will see how HRC fights for equality throughout the year."

Tucker is serving as dinner co-chair with LaWana Mayfield and Dan Mauney.

As in years past, the event will feature celebrated speakers and performers, though a confirmation announcement isn't expected until early December. Again this year, extensive involvement from South Carolina's LGBT community is part of the annual celebration.

"We have a subcommittee of volunteers from South Carolina who bring a lot of excitement and energy to this year's dinner," Tucker says. "Our City Host committee has developed an ambassador program, with representatives from Charlotte who visit cities in North and South Carolina to invite them to the gala and provide information about HRC."

The HRC Carolinas Dinner is not an "invitation only" event and is open to everyone including straight allies. Tables are organized around table captains, but individual attendees are welcome and encouraged.

Nominations are currently being accepted for the 2007 HRC Carolinas Awards, which include an Equality Award that recognizes an organization that has done great work in the LGBT community, a Trail/Blazer Award that recognizes an individual who has laid an outstanding foundation for LGBT advancement, and the Community Service Award, which rec-



ognizes an individual or organization for superior contributions at the grassroots level to the LGBT community and its allies.

Nomination forms are available on the organization's website.

Founded in 1980, HRC is America's largest

civil rights organization working to achieve LGBT equality. HRC effectively lobbies Congress, provides campaign support to fair-minded candidates, and works to educate the public on a wide array of topics affecting LGBT Americans, including relationship recognition, workplace, family and health issues. HRC currently has more than 500,000 members, including more than 18,000 in the Carolinas.

HRC hosts annual fundraising dinners throughout the country to support its mission of building an America where LGBT people are ensured of their basic equal rights, and can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.

The 2007 HRC Carolinas Gala committee is currently seeking volunteers to assist with the weekend's events — details are available at the website.

info: www.hrccarolinas.org

## A soldier's story: home from the war

exQlusive

One day short of a year in Iraq —  
he's back in the U.S.

by David Moore . Q-Notes staff

Over the past year he's penned an ongoing column for *Q-Notes* about his experiences as a gay man serving in the U.S. Army in Iraq. Many of you have followed his experiences,



read his words and even worried about him. We did, too.

In mid-October, he returned home. Now he's sitting in the office of his North Davidson home — shirtless, in a pair of jeans and still wearing the military-issued dog tags he was required to wear

while on duty.

Plaques adorn the walls of the room — citing his exemplary military service, while a rather sizable mound of army equipment covers a corner of the floor. Nearby his rottweilers roughhouse together while we talk. They were puppies when he left and now they're practically fully-grown.

Much has changed during his time away.

**Q. Did you bring anything back with you from Iraq?**

A. A piece of shrapnel about eight inches wide and four inches long that nearly killed me — and two helmets with bullet holes in them. They came off this monument representing the Iran-Iraq war. You've probably seen pictures of it before — you know the giant crossed swords.

**Q. Let's talk about your last few weeks in Iraq. Where did you go?**

A. I went to Mosul and worked with the ammunition depot. I consolidated two different depots into one. Then I went to Ambar province and worked with some U.S. marines.

We took several trips to Baghdad — which is pretty much the most dangerous part of the country. Then I wound

up at Balad — it's a garrison base for soldiers

see soldier on 6



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