



QNotes

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Durham gay man arrested and charged with murder

Partner insists he's innocent

by Donald Miller

DURHAM, N.C. — According to Tyrone Lacour's partner of three-and-a-half years, there's no way he could be guilty of murder.

"In the entire time we've been together, he's never lifted not one finger against me," Richard Crowther told *Q-Notes*. "I know this man. He's not capable of such violence."

Police in Durham and Person County claim to know a much different Lacour, however.

This report was issued by Durham police two years ago, listing Lacour as their number one most wanted fugitive:

**#1 Mr. Tyrone Joseph Lacour
Case Number 04-31829**

At 1:50 p.m. on November 23, 2004, Durham Police Department discovered the body of Mr. Dennis Wayne Rowe at his residence in the 400 block of west Maynard Avenue. Mr. Rowe was brutally murdered by his attacker(s). Detective V.P. Bynum, the lead investigator, with the Durham Police Department has obtained a warrant for First Degree Murder for Mr. Tyrone Joseph Lacour. He also has outstanding warrants on file with the Person County Sheriff's Office for Obtaining Property by False Pretenses and Forgery and Uttering. Mr. Lacour has not been arrested as of yet. He is a forty-one year old white male about five feet nine inches in height and one hundred and eighty-five pounds.

Despite the fact that police were actively pursuing Lacour for two years, Crowther says that neither he nor his partner had any idea police were searching for him when they showed up to with an arrest warrant on Friday, Oct. 13 in Kilmarnock, Va..

"None at all, says Crowther. "We knew nothing about it."

Reports about Lacour's relationship with Rowe are conflicting. According to a story carried by a Durham newspaper, Lacour lived with Rowe in Durham at the time of his murder.



Tyrone Joseph Lacour at the time of his arrest

Crowther says that's not so. "He didn't live with him. He had gone home to visit family and the two of them met through mutual friends. They were casual acquaintances." Despite that assertion, Crowther can't explain why police say that Lacour was at Rowe's home.

"I don't know the answer to that. I wish I did. It would probably help [Tyrone]."

Crowther is insistent that his partner is being railroaded by a

failed justice system that is seeking to punish him for not just one murder he doesn't believe Lacour committed, but two.

According to the police department of Person County, Lacour was wanted in connection with the death of another gay man, Eric Pennebaker, 33, but charges were later dropped due to lack of evidence and a confession by the victim just before he died. Pennebaker died of burns after being set on fire with gasoline in August 2001. According to media reports, Lacour and Pennebaker also lived together in Person County, N.C.

Lacour admitted to fighting with Pennebaker the night of his death, but says he did not set him on fire. According to Cpl. David Addison, coordinator for Durham Crime Stoppers, Lacour allegedly forged a check he had stolen from Pennebaker and cashed it the day after Pennebaker's death. Even after the murder charges were dropped against Lacour, he was still wanted for "obtaining property by false pretenses, forgery and uttering," Addison said.

In April 2002, Lacour was indicted for murder in Pennebaker's case, but the charges were later dropped because of statements that

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N.C. Baptists say no way to affirming gays

by Mark Smith

GREENSBORO — The North Carolina Baptist State Convention voted Nov. 14 to expel any church that voices support for gays and lesbians. This action increased the already restrictive prohibitions of the national Baptists Convention on sexual orientation and seeks overt exclusion.

In previous Baptist doctrine, the local church has been autonomous — free to make its own decisions as to how, to whom and with whom the church ministers.

In a press release from the N.C. Baptist State Convention, Norman Jameson, executive leader for public relations and resource development, said the following:

"In regards to the recent annual session, messengers decided that churches which promote, affirm, bless, support ... homosexual behavior — though free to make those decisions — will not be viewed to be in 'friendly cooperation' with the churches that comprise the Baptist State Convention.

"Individuals who choose to remain in homosexuality or any other sinful lifestyle, according to Baptist doctrine, are not candidates for baptism, and as a result not candidates for church membership. When autonomous Baptist churches baptize and accept into their memberships unrepentant homosexuals, those churches have left Baptist doctrine."

The nationwide Southern Baptist Convention had already barred gays and lesbians from becoming members or entering the clergy but North Carolina Baptists had no such policy in place until now.

By barring churches that support gays from membership, North Carolina has the dubious distinction of having the most restrictive of any Baptist state organization in the country. The measure passed on a voice vote with more than the two-thirds majority.

With more than 4,000 churches and 1.2 million members, the N.C. Baptist Convention is the second-largest association of Baptist churches in the nation.

Seventeen of those churches in the state already have a welcoming policy, according to a story that appeared in *The Associated Press*. Those congregations will be placed under review.

Despite the ruling, it appears some Baptists in North Carolina are not jumping on the get-rid-of-gays bandwagon.

According to a story that appeared in the *Stanley County News and Press*, Rev. Roger Thomas of First Baptist Church in Albemarle thinks the convention is overstepping its boundaries.

"Historically, Baptists have believed in autonomy of the local church," Thomas told the *News and Press*. "Certainly the issue is addressed in scripture, [but] how it is dealt with was determined by each church."

"This deviates from that long history," he

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It's time for holiday shopping



Check out the guides on page 29 and 33 to see what's hot for the season.