

QNotes

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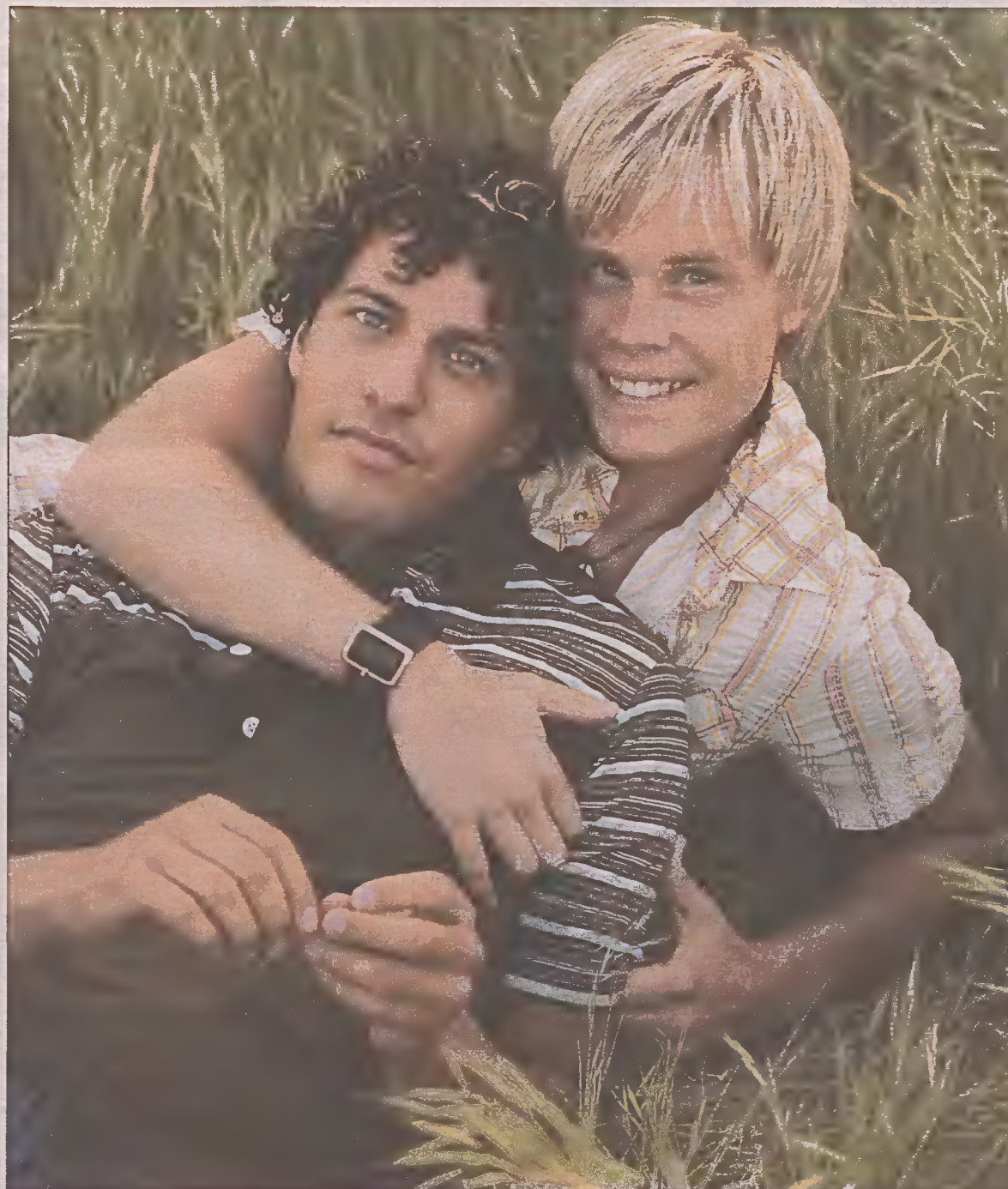


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Jason & deMarco — This is love

by David Stout . Q-Notes staff

Duo will sing to 'Stop The Hate' at Nov. 7 concert in Charlotte



'We really try to be patient because we know we're lucky to have each other,' deMarco (foreground) says thoughtfully.

Photo Credit: Van Der Kolk Photography

The Great Smoky Mountains are a world away from the Great Plains, but the prairie is nonetheless on the minds of popular vocal duo Jason & deMarco while they grab a few days rest in Gatlinburg, Tenn. The reason is because the musical and life partners have agreed to headline a benefit concert in Charlotte to mark the 10th anniversary of the death of anti-gay hate crime victim Matthew Shepard. On Oct. 6, 1997, the University of Wyoming student was brutally beaten and left tied to a fence to die in the lonely expanse of Laramie's great wide open.

Jason Warner and deMarco DeCiccio live in Houston and Los Angeles. They are in Gatlinburg to visit Jason's retired parents and the getaway has come at an opportune time. Their new album, "Safe," has just been released on the men's own RJN Music label (mega music retailer Best Buy has picked it up) and in the previous two and a half weeks they've performed in six cities spanning from Hawaii to Ohio.

Jason & deMarco's fame has grown substantially over the last year thanks to a multi-format hit song and an absorbing documentary that examines their music, home life and Christian spirituality.

The romantic clip for "This Is Love" was named 2007's "Music Video of the Year" by LOGO. DJ Scotty K's thumping remix became a surprise Abercrombie & Fitch in-store favorite. After making the film festival rounds, the documentary "We're All Angels" debuted on Showtime in June and was issued on DVD last month. In September, the duo was covered by America's pop-culture bible, *People* magazine.

On Nov. 7, Jason & deMarco are slated to top the bill for the "Stop The Hate" memorial concert at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. (The following evening at 7 p.m., they are in Raleigh for a free concert sponsored by St. John's MCC. The next morning they perform again during the church's regular Sunday worship service. See "Out & About" in this issue for details.)

Joining Jason & deMarco at "Stop The Hate" will be singer-songwriter Randi Driscoll and the Queen City's LGBT chorus, One Voice.

Driscoll's work has been featured on her own albums, in commercials and documentaries and even on the hit TV show "Dawson's Creek," but her finest career accomplishment might be "What Matters," the song she wrote and recorded in response to Matthew Shepard's death. The track has become the official benefit single for the Matthew Shepard Foundation.

The Foundation and Campus Pride, a national group working to create a safer campus environment for college students, are the beneficiaries of the "Stop The Hate" concert.

Q-Notes spoke with Jason & deMarco by telephone while they were in Gatlinburg.

What does it mean to you to be a part of this memorial concert?

deMarco: This is a big part of what we do. Jason and I feel that not only do we have a career, we have a responsibility to help change the world in whatever way we can with our music and message. Just like Judy Shepard and Campus Pride are doing, we want to make a positive impact. We want to bring a message of unconditional love, replacing hate with unconditional acceptance.

Jason: On the anniversary of Matthew Shepard's death, it's amazing to think

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