

LAMBDA

Q378
4/9/86

Volume 13, Number 1

October 1986

Carolina Gay And Lesbian Association Newsletter[®]

Joe Herzenberg tells it like it is . . .

Triangle Lesbian and Gay March

Following is the text of remarks by Joe Herzenberg at the Triangle Lesbian and Gay March & Celebration in Durham, NC on Saturday, June 28, 1986.

Sisters and brothers, members of our family, members of the community:

My name is Joe Herzenberg, and I'm from Chapel Hill, and I am delighted to be in Durham this wonderful afternoon. For many years now I have envied my friends here in Durham for their institutions (and I don't just mean the Ninth Street Bakery and Francesca's); I mean to say the political institutions, the networks, the alliances of this city. But never before this afternoon have I felt such warm--or should I say hot--feelings for this city and its people. In recent days those who are not necessarily our friends have referred to Durham as "the gay capital of the South." Now in fairness to my hometown, I have to add that some of those same people have called Chapel Hill "the San Francisco of North Carolina." I am not sure I understand what these names mean to their inventors, but seldom have epithets thrown up in far and hatred sounded so sweet to me.

We are nearing the end of a great week in the history of this city, in the his-

tory of the Triangle. Never before has the issue of gay and lesbian rights been on the agendas of the Durham City Council, the Orange County Board of Commissioners, and the Carrboro Board of Aldermen. Never before have the media of our area, the newspapers, radio, and television, given such unprecedented attention to the local gay and lesbian community. Never before have so many lesbians and gay men appeared openly in the public press and on television. And in my humble opinion, we looked good. There were proclamations of gay and lesbian rights, such well-worded proclamations, from Mayor Wib Gulley of Durham and Orange County Commission Chair Don Wilhoit and a strong statement in our behalf by Mayor Jim Porto of Carrboro. None of these men--and none of their predecessors--had ever before taken such strong stands against discrimination against gay men and lesbians. And many more people than ever before, including lots of our friends who are not gay, attended the Triangle Pride Picnic in Pullen Park in Raleigh on Sunday, the Stonewall Community Supper at Binkley Baptist Church in Chapel Hill on Tuesday, and now all of us are here. These have been great days for all of us. And all of this is as it should be: good and just and wonderful. (see GAY PRIDE on page 10)

I'm Out — Now What?

The excitement in the air as spring semester started at Carolina was overwhelming. Christmas break had given an interlude to the chaos of the semester before. Hundreds, no thousands of people raced around frantically trying to get their routines and acquaintances reestablished.

I sat on the steps in the Pit and watched them. For a while I remained, exhilarated, looking and soaking it all in. I read the signs which had been haphazardly posted in the chaos. "Carolina Karate Club...", "Revival in the Pit Thursday...", "Anti-Apartheid Rally...", "Membership Drive...Carolina Gay and Lesbian Association. Jan. 20-24." My heart stopped. I read it again. "Membership drive...Carolina Gay and Lesbian Association. Jan. 20-24."

"Where?" I heard myself scream. The stupid thing didn't say where. Damn! So close. You're not gay, I told myself. That helped. Someone was really playing a

cruel joke on me. they left the sign there for two months. God, was I glad when they finally decided the joke was over and took it down.

Summer came and went. Time to get back into the swing of things: exams, professors, studying, and "where." The sign board outside at the Pit was empty. Oh great, I knew "they" existed, but I still didn't know where. Disheartened I walked into the Student Union. Out of boredom I began reading the announcements on the bulletin board. It caught my eye; in fact, it reached out and knocked me upside the head. "Carolina Gay and Lesbian Association--Membership Drive. Room 230 Student Union."

Mesmerized, I stood reading it over and over again. Gathering up my courage I bounded up the stairs to room 230. 222. 226. The walls were closing in. I had already acted out this scene thousands of times in my head, but the butterflies were still doing a tango.

(see NOW WHAT on page 12)