

The Front Page

Letters: Who Reads The Front Page?

Dear Michael Baker,

Janelle Lavelle told me I should get in touch with you. Since I consider myself a gay activist I have sent copies of the enclosed letter to many gay support groups around the state and I run a counseling-support group for young gays ages 16-24, so I'm trying to find out the state of the gay population in N.C., I understand you did a survey through the *Front Page* at least a couple of years ago. Are any of those still available? And what other information might you have that would help me carry on my work?

Sincerely,
Stuart Norman
Greensboro, N.C.

Dear *Front Page* readers:

I am a gay activist in Greensboro, NC, where there is little sense of community or communication among gay people, although it is a very tolerant city. We do have a strong Gay Student Association at the University of North Carolina and an active Gay Academic Union chapter, but these organizations do not and cannot serve the entire gay population. I would like to create an organization which could serve all the needs of gay people in Greensboro, but that will take some time and

hard work getting people interested and committed. And I would like to reach out further. That's why I'm writing you to let you know what I'm attempting to do. I need to know what your groups are doing.

I would like to start a network of communication among the gay activists in North Carolina. Perhaps in the near future we could meet here to discuss the needs and problems of gay people in our state.

Currently I am coordinator and chief counselor for a Gay Counseling and Support Group for young gays ages 16-24. Unfortunately there has been little response. I am now advertising the group in the *Front Page* and passing information by word of mouth. My group is sponsored by a rehabilitation center for young people, and we have support from many community agencies, although all the work is strictly volunteer. We formed the group after seeing the need of many young people having trouble with their sexuality. Last year two boys committed suicide here because they had nowhere to turn when their parents discovered them and rejected them.

By next year I plan to start a business to give New Age Consciousness workshops. One major workshop script I'm now working

on is a weekend-long Gay Awareness Workshop which would cover all aspects of gay culture and by using self-awareness processes help us to integrate ourselves as confident, loving, fulfilled and openly gay human beings. The workshop would be limited to 30 people. If there is sufficient interest I would try to hold one at least twice a year. I plan to advertise over the entire Southeast. The fee would be in the range of \$50-\$75 per person, exclusive of meals and lodging.

If you are interested in sharing information and/or participating in the Gay Awareness Workshop please write me, in care of *The Front Page*. Please let your friends know what I'm attempting to do—spread the word and get some feedback. Thank you.

In Gay Brotherhood,
Stuart Norman

The *SLAM* survey did point out, however, that even though a lot of newsletter's readers live in the Triangle, they do travel to Charlotte fairly frequently. The Capital Corral in Raleigh was the clear winner of our survey, attracting nearly twice the number of *SLAM* readers as its nearest competitor—42nd Street in Durham. That a Raleigh bar should be the most popular with *SLAM* readers is partly a reflection of the large number of readers in the Triangle. But there was a strong showing by the two (non-dance) cruise bars in Charlotte: 30% have visited the New Brass Rail and 28% have visited Tags.

One other item that might be of interest to you: while 45% of *SLAM* subscribers read every issue of *Drummer*, 65% read every issue of *The Front Page*.

By the way, whatever happened to *The Front Page* survey? It's been more than a year since it appeared in the paper, but you still haven't published the results. What happened? Other than that, you're doing a great job. Keep up the great work.

Tak Loufer, Editor
SLAM Newsletter
P.O. Box 1201
Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514

Now About Those Surveys...

Dear Michael Baker:

As the editor of *SLAM*, the S&M newsletter which covers the same area as *The Front Page*, I recently undertook a survey of my readers. I thought you might be interested in the results.

When I put the first ad for the newsletter in *The Front Page* last summer, I expected to get about a dozen responses—20 at the most. I got that many readers the first two weeks. After that, the number kept growing slowly but steadily. As of December 15—the cut-off date for the surveys—total readership was 85. By the time you read this, it will be over 100. *SLAM* is averaging 4 new readers per week, with no sign yet of any tapering off.

The most interesting thing about the *SLAM* survey, to me, was this: a high cluster of readers in the Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill area, and a surprisingly low readership in Charlotte. Of the total of 85 *SLAM* readers, 15 are in Chapel Hill/Carrboro, 12 in Durham, and 10 in Raleigh. But in Charlotte, there are only 3! Does this represent a circulation problem for *The Front Page*? Is the paper widely read in eastern and middle North Carolina, and much less popular in the western portions of the state?

First of all, Tak, thanks for writing, and blessings upon your readers who say they read every issue of *The Front Page*. Thanks also for enclosing a copy of your newsletter, it was helpful to see the total results of your survey. The remark on your cover, though—"SPECIAL BONUS: Nothing about Stephen's in this issue!"—was a little smart-alecky. Did I perhaps oversell the new Chapel Hill nightspot?

Thanks for asking about our Reader's Survey. I know many readers are curious as to whatever became of it. It's still around; but it's proved to be a bitch to compile. When I put it together, I never really thought about that...I didn't code the multiple choice answers in such a way that they could be easily tallied, either by hand or with the help of a small computer. One volunteer labored with the damn things for almost a year before giving up, now the box full of them is sitting in my kitchen.

Compounding the problem is the fact that the survey got such phenomenal response.

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NEWS NOTES:

ERA FILM FEATURES NC

A highly-recommended documentary film on the battle for and against the proposed Equal Rights Amendment in North Carolina will be shown on PBS Friday, April 16. The program is entitled "Who Will Protect The Family?", and features Pulitzer-Prize winning author Frances Fitzgerald doing on-camera interviews and commentary, and segments on Jerry Falwell, Jesse Helms and Sam Ervin. Check your local TV listing for the date and time.

GAY UNITARIAN TO SPEAK

The sermon at Raleigh's Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship April 25 will be delivered by Robert Wheatley, the head of the national church's Office for Gay Concerns. The church is located at 3313 Wade Avenue.

GAYS PROTEST HELMS, EAST

Gay demonstrators joined in a group of about 50 people in Raleigh March 21 who were protesting an appearance by Senators Jesse Helms and John East at the state fairgrounds.

An Associated Press story on the event noted that one sign read "Gay and Lesbian Christians."

KKK PLATFORM

A Republican candidate for the state House of Representatives has pledged to "work to outlaw any form of public display of homosexuality or pornography," according to the *Kinston Free Press* (3/16/82).

John W. Gooding, 29, who is running on what he calls "a Ku Klux Klan platform," is seeking the GOP nomination for the state house seat from the Third District.

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