

You and the Q.

Newsletter of the Jersey Shore Community Center Project

Issue 2, January 2006

PROGRAMS & PROJECTS ARE NEXT STEPS FOR Q-SPOT

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step”
– Lao Tzu

The idea of founding the **jersey shore Q spot** sprang partly from the notion that the GLBT community in Monmouth and Ocean Counties has grown to a point where it is now not only appropriate, but necessary for the community to begin to identify and care for its own needs. And as a result, since their first meetings in the fall of 2004, your **Q spot** founders have recognized the successful development and offering of programs that address those needs as the cornerstone of the **Q spot** mission. They have also learned over the course of the last fifteen months that the task of identifying and developing those programs is monumental in both scope and complexity. To date focused assessment of the community's needs and thoughtful consideration of alternative ways to address them have resulted in slow but steady progress. Here, now, a report on our first enthusiastic steps:

Elsewhere in this edition of *You and the Q* we introduce you to our **Quesdays** program, a regular series of workshops, seminars and panel discussions meant to engage, educate and inform the community about various topics of interest.

In addition to **Quesdays**, the Board of Trustees has approved the establishment of four **Q spot** initiatives. “Each initiative is designed to address specific areas of community concern,” said Trustee Sue Henderson, who sits on the Jersey Shore Community Center Project's executive committee and who also serves as chair of the Programs, Project and Events (PP&E) Committee, which will oversee these initiatives.

“For example,” Henderson continued, “the **Q spot Health Initiative**, which is the farthest along in devel-



A crowd of almost 200 Q-Spot supporters turned out on Sunday, October 30th, for a preview of "Taka Tea" -- a tea service being offered through the winter at TAKA Japanese Restaurant in Asbury Park. In their spectacularly appointed restaurant, co-owners, Taka Hirai, Billy Kessler and David Martocci, presented a sampling of their wonderful TAKA Tea lunch and dessert treats. Attendees were overwhelmingly impressed and the event helped raise over \$3,200 for the Q spot.

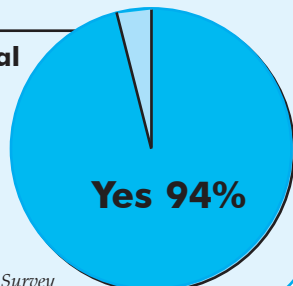
opment, will seek to improve the long-term health and well-being of both its individual participants and the **Q spot** community at large.”

According to Henderson, Dr. Brent Pawlecki, who also serves as a Trustee, has taken on the job of developing and implementing this Initiative. “The Initiative will aid the community in addressing issues of general health, specific types of addiction and behavioral health, breast cancer, HIV, obesity, nutrition and fitness, as well as issues surrounding health insurance, and caregiver and end-of-life issues, to name but a few,” said Dr. Pawlecki. “In terms of delivery, we hope to make very effective use of the web and **Quesdays** program for the initiative's referral
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SURVEY SAYS...

Are you interested in legal and financial issues for GBLT people?

Yes 94%
No 6%



Source: 2005 Q Spot Needs Assessment Survey

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OUR MISSION

The jersey shore Q spot, a program of the Jersey Shore Community Center Project, was established to address the unique needs and concerns of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals living in and around Monmouth and Ocean Counties, New Jersey. Its mission is to foster the health, well being and pride of Monmouth and Ocean County's GLBT community. Through its provision of resources, referrals and general support, the jersey shore Q spot cares for individuals, groups and families in need and provides public education and outreach services that empower GLBT individuals and families to live their lives in freedom and dignity.

HOW YOU CAN CONTACT US

For the time being, our home is virtual. We're coordinating all our activities through our mailing address, our mailing lists and our website. For more information, or to volunteer or make a donation:

FOR U.S. MAIL: 57 So. Main St. #234
Neptune, NJ 07753

ON THE INTERNET: www.jsQspot.org
info@jsqspot.org

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jersey Shore Community Center Project
MaryAnn Vitiello, chairperson
Jim Nappi, vice-chair
Joe D'Andrea, Secretary

Trustees:

Sue Henderson	Tom Oprea
Brent Pawlecki	Jill Potter
Tamara Richardson	

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

It's difficult, to say the least, to convey in a four page newsletter any sense of the amount of time and effort that has been expended to get us as far as we have come in our work to establish the **jersey shore Q spot**. While our progress to date has been mostly "behind the scenes", in this issue of *You and the Q* we take our first steps toward center stage by highlighting our recent development activities in response to the needs identified by our community assessment survey, which, by the way, remains accessible on our website www.jsQspot.org. The Board of Trustees and committee volunteers have been working to develop a 2006 calendar of programs and events we know you will find enlightening and fun.

On January 24th we kick off our new *Quesdays* program with a session aimed at helping you start your New Year on the right legal and financial footing. As outlined elsewhere in this issue, *Quesdays* is a series of workshops, seminars, and panel discussions designed to address a variety of topics relevant to the GLBT community. The *Quesdays* series provides an opportunity to remain informed while socializing with others in the community. It will be regular part of the **jersey shore Q spot's** scheduled activities.

In this issue we also outline four programming initiatives currently under development. Three of these address issues and concerns of unique populations within our community - Youth, Seniors and Families - while the fourth focuses on Health. These initiatives will form the foundation of the **Q spot's** outreach and education services.

And last but certainly not least, we provide an update on our all important search for a home.

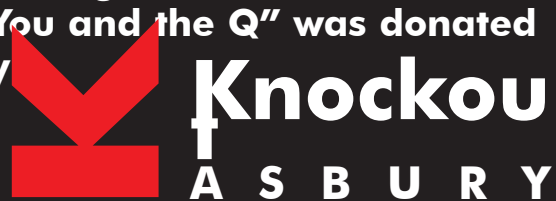
Our task is monumental; our progress slow and steady. With every step we learn something new; with every step I am more certain we are headed in the right direction. I hope you will agree and I urge you to stay with us as we continue on this exhilarating journey.

Finally, I would like to thank all the volunteers who are so generous with their time and enthusiasm for the **Q spot** vision. If you have signed up as a volunteer and have not been contacted yet, you haven't been forgotten, we'll be calling you as our events and programs scale up. We encourage you to contact us and relay any ideas you may have regarding interests and topics for future **Q spot** programming.

Wishing you all a healthy and peaceful New Year.

—MaryAnn Vitiello, Chairperson

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"QUESDAYS" AIMS TO INFORM, EDUCATE & ENTERTAIN

The Jersey Shore Community Center Project, a non-profit group working to build the **jersey shore Q spot**, a community center dedicated to serving the needs of the gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender communities of Monmouth and Ocean Counties will present a series of workshops on Tuesdays throughout 2006 at a popular Asbury Park restaurant, TAKA. The workshops, seminars, and panel discussions are designed to engage, educate and inform the **Q spot** community. The subject matter for the programs will include a broad range of topics, however the specific content will generally be geared to the unique needs and concerns of the gay, lesbian,

bi-sexual and transgender community. Each "**Quesday**," as the series of programs is being called, will provide an opportunity for social interaction among attendees as well as between the attendees and the panelists.

"We hope people will stay and mingle with old and new **Q-Spot** friends," said Joe D'Andrea a co-chair of the Quesdays Program. "Our needs assessment survey told us that people want opportunities for social interaction that's outside of bars and clubs."

In general, the doors will open at 7pm for **Quesdays** programs allowing some time to socialize before the program

begins at 7:30pm. There will be another opportunity for attendees to socialize at the completion of the program which lasts 1.5 to 2 hours. Refreshments will be provided and a small suggested donation will be accepted at the door. Unless otherwise noted, all "**Quesdays**" programs are open to the general public and take place in a wheel-chair accessible location. Some programs will be presented in English and Spanish.

Additional details of all of the **Quesday** programs, as well as some additional programs that might be added after press time, are available on our web site at www.jsqspot.org **Q**

January 24th

LEGAL AND FINANCIAL ISSUES AND PLANNING FOR GLBT COUPLES AND DOMESTIC PARTNERS



Our first **Quesday** program will be presented by **Stephen J. Hyland**, an attorney and "partner-in-charge" of the Trusts and Estate practice at Hill Wallack, Princeton, and author of a new book, *New Jersey Domestic Partners: a Legal Guide* (Rutgers University Press 2005) and publisher of the blog, www.njdomesticpartners.com; and **Tamlyn Wilbourne**, a Financial Planner at UBS Financial Services in Red Bank with over 20 years experience in the financial services industry. The program will be moderated by **James A. Nappi**, an Asbury Park attorney in private practice.



Mr. Hyland will discuss the benefits and limitations of entering into a New Jersey Domestic Partnership, the current rights

of GLBT individuals and same-sex couples in New Jersey, the new laws that have been passed in regard to domestic partners, the legal issues related to marriage and domestic partnership, and the status of same-sex families.

Ms. Wilbourne will discuss the planning considerations for partners in same-sex relationships, partners shared financial goals and additional hurdles partners face from federal and

states laws that were written for traditional marriages. She will give an overview of investment planning considerations for same-sex couples including retirement planning, asset ownership, life insurance and estate planning.

February 7th

MEET THE AUTHOR



Martin Kantor, author of *Together Forever: The Gay Man's Guide to Lifelong Love* (Sourcebooks Casablanca 2005) will be our guest speaker in February. Kantor, a psychiatrist, believes that a committed gay marriage is infinitely more satisfying than the jungle of the gay single scene, and in the book, he lays out a framework for building a fulfilling long-term relationship.

March 14th

HIV PREVENTION AND OUTREACH UPDATE: "IT AIN'T OVER... YET"

ENGLISH / ESPAÑOL
presented in both languages.

HIV counselors **Dennis Rivera**, **Frank Englebert** and **Kelvin Roman** will present the latest information on HIV testing, safer sex and risk reduction outreach to gay youth. **MaryAnn Vitiello**, a Nurse Practitioner with over 20 years experience in HIV/AIDS and community development/ mobilization will moderate this panel.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteers are the backbone of the Q-Spot. We do have two very special volunteer positions that we are trying to fill. If you, or anyone you know, meets the qualifications, please forward a letter of interest and a current resume by email to info@jsqspot.org or by fax to (732) 775-4357.

ACCOUNTING/FINANCIAL HELP
Do you have experience with accounting, bookkeeping, bank reconciliations, A/P, credit/collections, payroll, financial analysis and or general ledger? Are you familiar with the special accounting needs of a non-profit enterprise (grant tracking, etc)? If so, you may be just what we need.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR
The Q spot seeks a qualified and enthusiastic individual to assist in the planning, development, implementation, management and evaluation of its volunteer program, including the design and development and appropriate and adequate means of volunteer recognition.

NO PLACE LIKE HOME... WELL... NOT YET... BUT...

In the last edition of *You and the Q* we reported that the Board of Trustees was pursuing some promising leads on a location for a home. Since that time, the executive committee has taken up this charge and at this point, while we cannot yet divulge specific details about the space, we can report that we have narrowed the search to one location and that we are developing a plan for obtaining it as the **Q spot's** first home.

Easily accessible by both car and public transportation and located in Asbury Park to best serve the GLBT populations of Monmouth and Ocean Counties, the location offers adequate space for the **Q spot's** current needs, as well as for some



future growth. The executive committee is currently gathering estimates for necessary renovations and capital improvements based upon a floor plan designed by Board member and licensed interior architect, Tom Oprea. "Fortunately the 4000 or so square feet were pretty much wide open, so we

were able to design a plan that provides us with the structure we need, yet affords lots of flexibility," said Oprea.

As hoped, the plan includes much needed office and meeting spaces, an area for computer and internet access, restrooms and a kitchenette. Additional open space is designed to be flexibly utilized for a lending library and reading room and multiple lounge and social areas. The plan also allows for the entire space to be reconfigured and utilized for events and large gathering.

We'll get news regarding further developments in this important project to you as soon as we can. In the meantime, stay in shape . . . we'll need help on moving day. **Q**

Programs & Projects (continued from page 1)

and educational elements, and to explore the possible future provision of specific health services and the **Q spot's** participation in GLBT health research," added Dr. Pawlecki.

To address the concerns and interests of those of us who are ever more quickly approaching "a certain age", Henderson noted that Art Cacossa, a member of the PP&E committee, has volunteered to develop and head up the implementation of the **Q spot Senior Initiative**. "Art expressed a strong interest in addressing these specific concerns," said Henderson, "and the Board was more than willing to give him the opportunity to channel his enthusiasm toward that ever growing segment of our community."

"We're not looking to simply find a place where seniors can meet together separately and talk about being seniors," said Cacossa. "Quite the contrary - while we will certainly look to address the needs of the "more mature" members of our community, we need to do it in a way that is proactively inclusive." Added Cacossa, "This is a segment of the population that is most often underrepresented and unsure as to how to get involved. We hope to build a program that fixes that."

"For the other end of the age spectrum, we're also developing a **Q spot Youth Initiative**," said Henderson, who has also volunteered to head up the development and implementation of this initiative. "Our community needs assessment survey showed this to be by far one of the most significant concerns of the respondents, and as faculty advisor to Ocean Township High School's newly formed Gay-Straight Student Alliance, it is an issue that is particularly close to my heart."

"We recognize that as elsewhere, GLBT youth in our area are at risk and underserved," continued Henderson. "They face many challenges that the **Q spot Youth**

Initiative hopes to address." Among these will be coming out, substance abuse, sexual health, and youth activism, all of which will be explored through youth mentoring programs, gay-straight alliances, support groups and social events. This will be our community's way of offering education and outreach programs to our youth in a safe and secure atmosphere.

Finally, the Board has also approved the development of a **Q spot Family Initiative** to address the issues of concern to families headed by gay parents, as well as those issues confronted by parents of gay kids. "We're looking forward to helping our community address the complexities of marriage, adoption and parenting, and also to provide a means by which they can socialize and gain support from each other," said Henderson. At present, our chairperson, MaryAnn Vitiello, a mother of three, and Ted Scheffler, who recently resigned his Trustee position so that he can devote more time to raising his son, are heading up this effort.

Henderson also reported that in addition to the Health, Senior, Youth and Family Initiatives, the Board is also exploring the establishment of a regular "rap group" that would be moderated by a certified counselor and provide the community with a venue for open discussion of any topic of interest or concern. "Like the Senior Initiative, this is an idea was presented by a volunteer member of the PP&E committee," said Henderson. "The Board is interested in pursuing it, because a member of the community came forward, expressed an interest and stepped up to help out. I cannot stress enough the importance of our volunteers to our success with any of our programming efforts."

For updates on the **Q spot's** Quesdays program and its Health, Senior, Youth and Family Initiatives, or for information about volunteering to help with these or any other **Q spot** project, visit our website at www.jsQspot.org. **Q**

THE TASK OF IDENTIFYING AND DEVELOPING THOSE PROGRAMS IS MONUMENTAL IN BOTH SCOPE AND COMPLEXITY