

insidepride

PRIDE COMMITTEE OF HOUSTON

SUMMER 2001

HOUSTON CELEBRATES PRIDE AT PARADE AND FESTIVAL

by Troy Christensen

THE FIFTH NIGHTTIME Houston Gay & Lesbian Pride Parade was witnessed by over 100,000 people lining the parade route on Westheimer on Saturday, June 23, and by countless others watching extensive media coverage at home. For the first time in five years, the Parade was followed by a Pride Festival, held at Garden in the Heights on Sunday, June 24.

The parade was the largest ever, featuring about 135 entries sponsored by organizations, businesses and individuals in the Houston gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community as well as community supporters and groups from several other Texas cities.

The 23rd annual Pride Parade was preceded by a rally and march to support legislation being introduced in City Council that would bar discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in city employment, contracts and access to city services. Houston Mayor Lee Brown presided over the rally and was joined by several other government representatives at the rally and in the parade. Other parade participants included Houston City Council members Chris Bell and Annise Parker, State Representative Cornelia Cabeza and District



The bright, colorful floats and other entries in the parade showed the diversity of the groups in Houston's GLBT community. Award-winning entries were: the Texas Renaissance Festival, which won the "Ruby Slipper" award for the best walking unit; Razzle Dazzle Dallas, which won the "Gypsy Rose" award for best out-of-town unit; Rich's, which won the "Edison" award for best lighting on a non-professionally built float; Hollywood Food Store, which won the "Houston" award for best non-professionally built motorized unit; Miss Camp America, which won the "Rainbow Lights" award for best lighting

Christy Claxton, Marcus Hutcheson and Dave Hall. The Front Alley Girls were very popular, with their drag-king act parodying the Backstreet Boys.

The final two acts of the day were very different but both were excellent and fan-favorites. Suede performed classic standards and sexy jazz tunes with a gorgeous voice, keyboard and trumpet. She was a big draw for many women at the Festival. The headline act, Bob Smith, had the entire crowd in stitches with his gay stand-up comedy. His recollections of growing up gay were dead-on and hilarious.

Another highlight of the Pride Festival was the Marketplace, which featured a variety of GLBT community organizations and businesses.

We on the Pride Committee have been overjoyed with the success of the Pride Parade and Festival, as well as the other events and activities of 2001, especially in light of the difficulties created by the economic downturn and the flooding from Tropical Storm Allison. It is very likely that there were fewer people attending the Parade this year than last year, but the number was still higher than that of many past years and it was to be expected with

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Christy Claxton was one of the many performers at the Pride Festival.
All photos by Dalton DeHart

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Judging the entries in this year's Pride Parade were Mayoral assistant Carol Alvarado, Texas Triangle publisher Todd Cunningham, poet Donna Garrett, Houston Voice staff member Carolyn Roberts and Houston Buyers' Club Executive Director Fred Walters, Jr. The judges also gave honorable mentions to entries sponsored by AssistHers, Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, Cheer Knights, H.A.T.C.H., Houston Gay and Lesbian Parents, Houston Pride Band, Inergy and LOAF. Parade awards were announced at the Pride Festival on Sunday.

The Pride Festival rounded out an amazing weekend of beautiful diversity. For a low ticket-price, \$5 in advance and \$8 at the door, about 2000 community members were treated to a full day and two stages of entertainment. The indoor (and air-conditioned!) stage featured great local performers, like the hilarious Nancy Ford & The Dyke Show and the funky R&B of the duo Tru Sol.

The large outdoor stage featured fantastic national performers, including several singer-songwriters like

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everything on people's plates. On the other hand, the Festival provided a brand-new venue for the community to express its Pride and media coverage of Pride activities was the most extensive ever, with 14 separate stories on local television.

We hope that the success of the 2001 Parade and Festival, along with the extensive and positive publicity received, will encourage others to get involved in the Pride Committee or other community organizations. The Pride Committee is active year-round and will hold volunteer interest sessions in September to introduce interested individuals to the organization. Planning meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the first and third Tuesdays of every month at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center and are open to the public.

See other stories in this edition of *insidepride* for more information about getting involved in Pride activities or call the PrideLine at 713-529-6979 or e-mail info@pridehouston.org for more information. ✧



Pride Committee of Houston, Inc.

Mission Statement

The Pride Committee of Houston, Inc., is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization whose purpose is to coordinate and promote events that celebrate the diversity, unity, and history of the lesbian and gay community. We do not discriminate on the basis of age, color, gender, transgender, or bisexual identification, nor do we discriminate against the physically challenged or those who are differently abled.

We are here to commemorate, educate, and celebrate our pride and create a path toward a positive future for all humanity, not excluding any aspect of who we are as a people.

Board of Directors

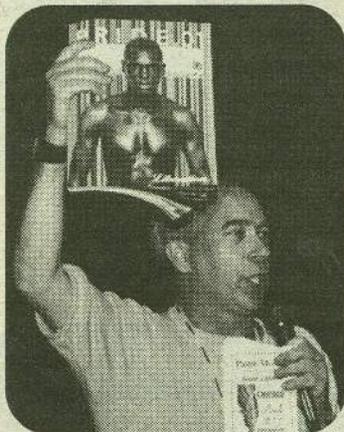
Jack Valinski	Executive Director
Paul Radous	Celebration 2001 Co-Chair
Lynn Sixkiller	Celebration 2001 Co-Chair
Troy Christensen	Secretary/Marketing & Publications
Nick Brines	Fundraising
Brian Keever	Banner District

Celebration Committee

Paul Radous	Co-Chair
Lynn Sixkiller	Co-Chair
Roy Hendrick	Secretary
Mark Leger	Treasurer
Jamie Wenner	AstroWorld
Richard Alvarado	Events
Jim Halloran	Events
Todd Amdor	Festival
Jeffery Neaves	Festival
Matthew Stone	Festival
Joseph Weinman	Festival
Mark Willis	InterPride Region 3
Ryan Rice	Media
Billie Hogan	Merchandise
Russell Ben Williams	Insidepride
Jim Shumsky	Parade Facilities Management
Paul Damin	Parade Float
Lee Wright	Parade Float
Manny Gutierrez	Parade Logistics
Bill Burford	Parade Production
John Taylor	Parade Production
Bob Farquarson	Pride Guide
Ken Donnelly	Publications
Cindy Archer	Volunteers
Raul Chavez	Web Site
Brian Sadler	Web Site

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

AS WE WRAP UP PRIDE 2001, I would like to thank all of you for your support. The Parade has grown immensely from the first nighttime Parade in 1997 to become the largest Pride event in the Southwest and probably the second largest parade in Houston. Also, feedback from the return of the Pride Festival has been very positive. Compared to other major cities, our Festival is small, but it was the first in five years and we can grow from our experience.



Many of you may not know that we had some real challenges in producing this year's event. One major sponsor had pulled out after we carefully budgeted for all of the activities and expenses. We did our best to scale back our spending without compromising the quality of the celebration. Some of our longtime friends—both corporate and individual—came through to help us when we really needed it.

Pride 2001 started with major concerns about the celebration's first weekend. A week before Pride Day at AstroWorld we only had a few tickets sold. We questioned our decisions about how we marketed this event and whether it had been scheduled too early in June. But on the day before the event we sold hundreds of tickets. Our community does everything at the last minute, which puts a strain on community-based organizations that sponsor events.

Shortly after weathering the first weekend of Pride, the hundred-year flood hit Houston. The flood could have devastated our celebration, but due to hard work and the very good relationship we have with the city, things turned out remarkably well. We had a big concern that the mosquitoes that infested the city after the flood would keep people away from the Parade and Festival, but the city had both sites sprayed with mosquito repellent that weekend.

The need to repair damage from the flood also left roadwork in the Parade line-up area unfinished. With about 130 entries in the Parade, including many large floats, lining everyone up in the residential area around the Parade route has to be done very precisely. Fortunately, the city readily responded to our request and covered the holes in the

roads so our entries could park without difficulty.

Our worst loss from the flood was 9000 copies of our beautiful Pride.01 magazine. These had flown off the shelves after the first distribution and our volunteers were planning to distribute the rest on the Saturday following the flood. Magazine editor Ken Donnelly went to the storage facility that morning and found it completely underwater. We did get 5000 copies of the national edition of the magazine from the publisher to distribute in its place.

I have been part of Houston Pride for almost 20 years and 2001 had some unique challenges. But as volunteer Executive Director I am very proud of everybody who served on the Board and the Celebration Committee and all of the volunteers. Pride is made possible every year not only with hard work but with the dedication and the passion of all involved. We were very fortunate to come through this year's challenges, but our perseverance isn't simply a matter of luck.

Pride is also a success because of all the organizations and businesses that sponsor events, participate in the Parade and have booths at the Festival and because of all those who may just come to see the Parade or the Festival.

So now the dust from Pride 2001 is settled and some of us are catching up on sleep and trying to lead a somewhat-normal life. Still, we are already planning for Pride 2002 and we co-sponsored a media-training workshop with the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center on Saturday, July 28, that featured Regan Rhyne from GLAAD.

I would highly encourage anyone who is interested in getting involved with the Pride Committee of Houston. We always want to do better each year and now is a perfect opportunity to get involved in planning for 2002.

It's easy to get involved. Come to a meeting, call us or download a volunteer application from our web site, www.pridehouston.org, fill it out and return it to us. We will get you involved in an area that interests you.

If you are already involved with another organization, you can help Pride by helping them sponsor an event or a Parade entry. Either way, our community and our celebration can only become stronger as more and more people get involved.

Jack Valinski

JUST HOW EARLY WAS YOUR PRIDE 2001?

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Todd Amdor	Festival
Jeffery Neaves	Festival
Matthew Stone	Festival
Joseph Weinman	Festival
Mark Willis	InterPride Region 3
Ryan Rice	Media
Billie Hogan	Merchandise
Russell Ben Williams	Insidepride
Jim Shurnsky	Parade Facilities Management
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Manny Gutiérrez	Parade Logistics
Bill Burford	Parade Production
John Taylor	Parade Production
Bob Farquarson	Pride Guide
Ken Donnelly	Publications
Cindy Archer	Volunteers
Raul Chavez	Web Site
Brian Sadler	Web Site

Legal Counsel
Debra Hunt
Moore and Hunt, Attorneys

Contact Information
PrideLine 713-529-6979
Fax 713-529-6929

Pride Committee of Houston, Inc.
PO Box 66071
Houston, Texas 77266-6071

E-mail info@pridehouston.org
Web www.pridehouston.org

Meetings
Board of Directors and general meetings are held the first and third Tuesdays of each month, respectively. All meetings are held at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center (1475 W. Gray) and begin at 7 p.m. All meetings are open to the public.

Submissions
We encourage you to submit articles or photographs for possible inclusion in *insidepride*. Submitted materials may be edited and cannot be returned without prior arrangement.

InterPride The Pride Committee of Houston, Inc., is a member of the International Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Pride Coordinators (InterPride).

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Jack Valinski

JUST HOW FABULOUS WAS YOUR PRIDE 2001?

NO MATTER HOW GREAT Pride 2001 was, we know that with your help, Pride 2002 can be even better.

The Pride Committee of Houston is a year-round non-profit organization that produces and promotes a series of events to celebrate the Houston GLBT community's history, unity and diversity each June. The grand finale, the popular nighttime Pride Parade, is our community's highest profile event. We have a variety of openings for volunteers, such as newsletter writing, party planning, fundraising and publicity.

Working with the Pride Committee of Houston is an excellent networking opportunity and an enriching experience. Our group works closely with many of the non-profit organizations, businesses and political leaders of our community. Our activities have a major impact on GLBT lives and have the power to transform society. If you want to see Houston have the most fabulous Pride ever, come join us!

Come and learn about the structure of our organization and the variety of ways you can become involved. We will host two Volunteer Interest Sessions in September. There is no obligation—just attend and learn about our exciting activities as we begin planning for Pride 2002.

Session 1

Thursday, September 6, 7 p.m.
Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center
803 Hawthorne St.

Session 2

Tuesday, September 11, 7 p.m.
Lobo Bookstore and Café
3939 Motrose Blvd.

For more information, call the PrideLine at 713-529-6979 or visit our web site at www.pridehouston.org



The Pride Committee has many volunteer opportunities like selling merchandise and setting up the Pride Parade.

PARADE REFLECTIONS FROM THE PRIDE 2001 GRAND MARSHALS

EACH YEAR THE HOUSTON GAY & LESBIAN PRIDE PARADE is led by some of our community's most honored members. This year's Grand Marshals reflect on the Parade.

MITCHELL KATINE

THE 2001 PRIDE PARADE was more exciting and fun than I ever imagined. I have been attending the Houston Pride Parade every year since 1982, and this year appeared to attract more of the public than ever before. It was particularly nice to see so many families watching the parade. I must have thrown 25 frisbees to small children sitting along the parade route. The families were of all shapes, sizes and colors. As this year's theme was "Embrace Diversity," I was happy to see that everyone got into the spirit of the theme. It was my honor and privilege to be the 2001 Male Grand Marshal. Thanks to everyone who helped put this wonderful event together.

DALIA STOKES

BOBBIE AND I CELEBRATED OUR 25TH ANNIVERSARY this June in some style, riding in the No. 3 position in the Houston 2001 Gay & Lesbian Pride Parade with my mother, my daughter, and my granddaughter, as I had the honor of serving as the Parade's Female Grand Marshal! All of us, except little Eleanor who is not yet two, had to reflect with a bit of a smile on how none of us would have guessed 25 years ago where we would be or what we would be doing today.

The crowd lining Westheimer (with the notable exception of the protesters) was so very welcoming, supportive and grateful, that we quickly forgot any self-consciousness we might have had at the beginning. We also appreciated the support of people who watched or marched, some of whom had never even been to a Pride Parade, and some of whom marched for the first time with groups in which I have been particularly active, like River Oaks Area Democratic Women ("ROADwomen") and the Human Rights Campaign. As I wrote in my thank-you letter to ROADwomen, the protesters can be intimidating, especially when you know you are the object of their hatred, but that is what makes having good people stand with you all the more meaningful.

On several occasions since I was selected to serve as Grand Marshal, I have had someone thank me and tell me how much he or she appreciated what I have done for the GLBT community. Those words of gratitude or encouragement have meant so much to me, but I always have to add to that conversation that we owe the whole thing to the Pride Committee, their leadership and their all-volunteer army of hard-working, creative people who work as a team to put on this extravaganza for equality. The Pride Committee could not have been more pleasant to make this year's Parade "the best ever" and to make our experience a memory to last a lifetime. Many thanks go to PCOH and to the community from my family and me, and a special thank-you goes to Brandon Wolf for nominating me for Female Grand Marshal.

THE PRIDE PARADE FROM A PFLAG MOM'S POV

by Sue Null

WHEN OUR DAUGHTER CAME OUT to us some 12 years ago, she mentioned there was a group called PFLAG, but I hastily answered that we were okay with her, but I wasn't about to march in the street.

Several years later, in March of 1995, I did come to PFLAG, but this time I was looking for support for a young gay man from another country. By June, we both marched in the Pride Parade and my husband Jim joined us the following year. Since then, Pride Parades have become an annual event for us if we're in town. One year we got off the Nantahala River in North Carolina at 5 p.m. on Friday, loaded our canoes on top of the car, threw the wet canoe gear and ourselves into the car, and drove the 17 hours home in order to march in the Saturday night parade.

Perhaps our most impressive march was the Millennium March on Washington in 2000, where we saw PFLAG groups gathered from around the country, all with a common goal: to make this world a safer place for our GLBT loved ones. Tears came to my eyes when young people on the sidelines would yell, "Thank you for coming! I wish my parents were here."

This year, I nominated Blake and Gordon Weisser of PFLAG for Honorary Grand Marshals and Jim nominated PFLAG for Honorary Grand Marshal-Organization. And when we all won, we were again delighted to march down Westheimer and hear the swell of applause as we approached Montrose. It was a truly magnificent experience.

Now if we could just find a way to get rid of the small ugly band of dissidents... but sadly, that may take quite some time.

BLAKE WEISSER

EVERY TIME GORDON AND I HAVE MARCHED in a Gay & Lesbian Pride Parade, we have found the experience overwhelming. The cheers and the signs of love from raised hands are always heartwarming. It is thrilling to know that the crowds are responding to accepting and supportive parents—to all members of PFLAG Houston.

As this year's Honorary Grand Marshals, we rode at the front of the Parade and we now have a new perspective on the Parade. Not just from riding rather than marching—we have seen the planning, work and creativity needed for the Parade. We have met the many people who volunteer hours, weeks and months to see that the Parade starts on time and moves on schedule. We have felt the heart that is poured into the planning an event that will make our entire GLBT community proud.

It was an honor to ride, but in 2002 we will be marching again with our PFLAG family and friends. We will march with a new understanding of Houston Gay & Lesbian Pride and the wonderful Pride Parade for having had the honor and privilege of being the Honorary Grand Marshals in 2001.

ASTROWORLD AND

EVENTS HIGHLIGHT DIVERSE PRIDE SEASON

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ASTROWORLD AND PRIDE GO RETRO



PRIDE 2001'S KICK-OFF WEEKEND featured a fabulous disco-filled day at Houston's premier theme park, AstroWorld, on Saturday, June 2.

Pride ticket holders were treated to a barbecue lunch in the Pride Committee's private picnic area, where they had a chance to mingle with other community members and sample the donated Coor's Beer, Red Bull Energy Drink and other freebies. Ticket holders could come and go from this great air-conditioned building and grassy area in between the thrilling roller coasters and other rides.

Everyone in the park got to see some real, live disco legends in concert at the Southern Star Amphitheater that evening. The weekend was, "coincidentally," Retro Weekend at AstroWorld, and disco music wafted through the park throughout the day. The finale was a fun concert by the world-famous Village People (pictured above), who were preceded by Thelma Houston and Evelyn "Champagne" King.

Community members who purchased Pride Day in the Park tickets were also given complimentary admission into Rich's nightclub on Saturday and a pass to WaterWorld good for the rest of the season.

Feedback from community members who bought Pride tickets continues to be very positive and this event gets more and more popular every year. It definitely looks like it will be a long tradition for Houston Pride! ✧

EVENTS HIGHLIGHT DIVERSE PRIDE SEASON

by Richard Alvarado

THIS YEAR'S PRIDE CELEBRATION was the longest ever, beginning with the Kick-off Party on June 1 and ending with the Pride Festival on June 24. Still, there were plenty of community events to fill the many days of Pride.

There was incredible variety in the array of social, charitable, educational and cultural events sponsored by many organizations in our gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. Unfortunately, some events had to be cancelled, postponed or moved due to the flooding caused by Tropical Storm Allison. What is amazing is how many went off without a hitch in the midst of the citywide clean up. Our community's perseverance for Pride is commendable.

This year was Jim Halloran's and my first as Events co-coordinators and it was rewarding to work with the many community groups in planning and scheduling their events. We also had a great time planning the events

SHAPE THE DIRECTION OF PRIDE FOR 2002

YOUR FIRST CHANCE TO HELP decide the activities of Houston Lesbian & Gay Pride 2002 comes with the election of the year's officers.

The first general meeting of the 2002 season takes place at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, September 18, at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray. Self-nominations of individuals to the Celebration committee's male co-chair, female co-chair, secretary and treasurer positions will be taken and officer elections will take place at the same meeting.

Anyone attending the September 18 meeting will be eligible to vote. To vote at any other Pride Committee general meeting, you must attend at least two consecutive general meetings, not missing more than one in a row.

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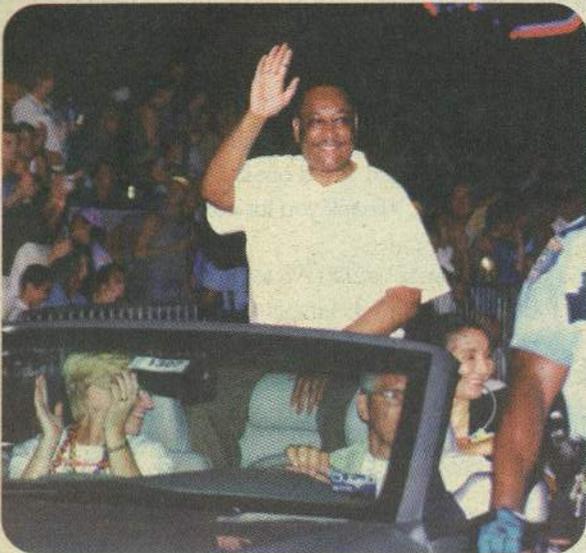
sponsored by the Pride Committee. Along with the Kick-off Party, these included two that took place well before Pride, the Logo Unveiling Party on January 18 and the Grand Marshal Announcement Party on March 8.

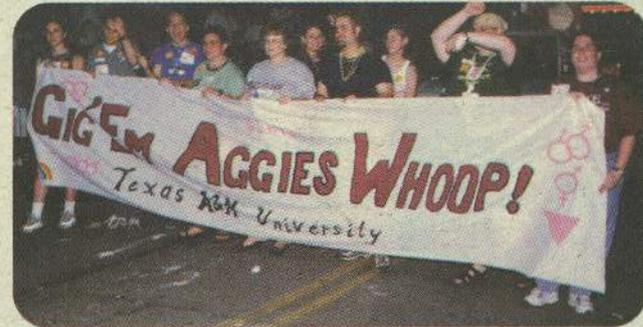
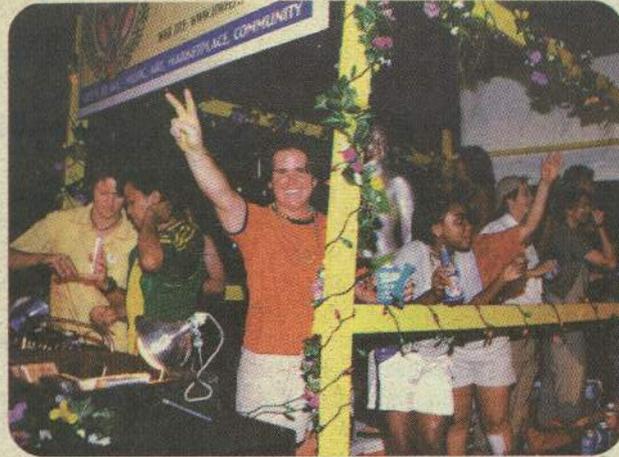
We thank several sponsors for helping to make these parties happen. P. F. Chang's provided food for the Logo Unveiling Party and Zula's provided food for the Grand Marshal Announcement Party. La Griglia, Ciro's Italian Restaurant and Pappas Bros. Steakhouse provided gift certificates that were given as prizes in a raffle at the Kick-off Party. These restaurants helped make a great Pride 2001. When you have a chance, stop by for dinner and thank them for their support. We also thank the Art League of Houston for providing space for the Logo Unveiling and Grand Marshal Announcement parties and Sonoma for providing space for the Kick-off Party.

2001 was our first year as Events co-coordinators, but we are looking forward to continuing next year and producing even greater events for Pride 2002. ✧



VISIONS



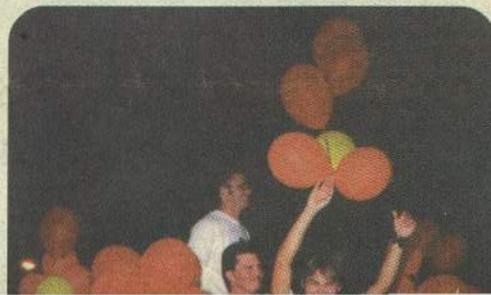


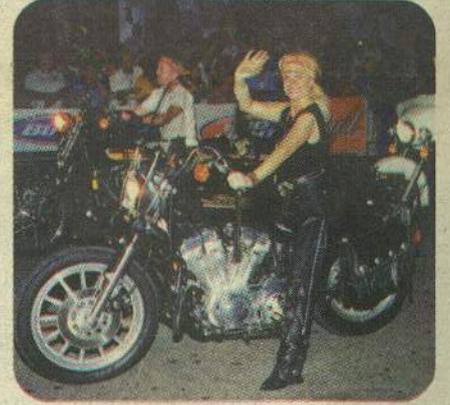
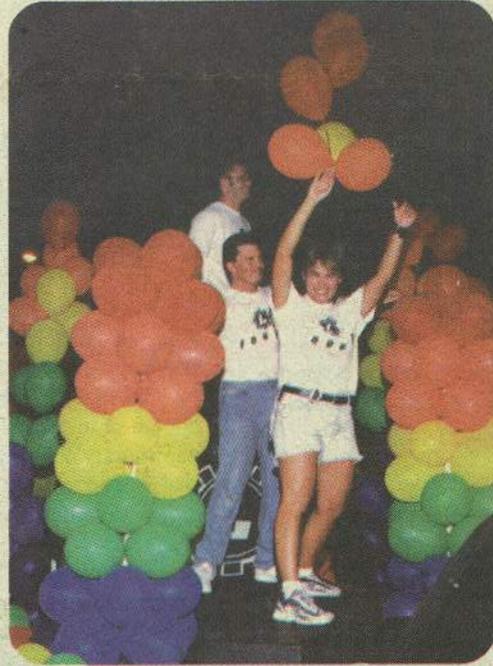


OF PRIDE



Photos by Dalton DeHart





PRIDE VOLUNTEERS EMBRACED PLENTY OF HARD WORK IN 2001

by Cindy Archer

THIS JUNE, WHILE THE REST OF THE CITY was "embracing diversity" in keeping with the 2001 Pride theme, the Pride Committee's volunteers were busily embracing the many tasks that go along with presenting our fabulous Parade, Festival and other Pride events.

They worked throughout the rest of the year as well: mailing out our quarterly newsletter, hauling and delivering Pride magazines, helping out with various office chores, updating our community database and assisting the Celebration Committee and Board of Directors in countless other ways.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the Pride Committee. Everyone is a volunteer, from the Executive Director down, so we understand the value of freely given time. Our dedicated base of volunteer helpers makes everything we do a bigger success.

Each year, the Pride Committee holds a Thank You Party to show appreciation for our volunteers, as well as our sponsors, donors and other special friends. We also use this occasion to give special recognition to outstanding Pride volunteers.

This year's party was held on Thursday, July 19, and featured food from Don Carlos Catering and beverages from Bud Light and Silver Eagle Distributors. Our backdrop was the beautiful and historic Lovett Inn, generously offered for our use by Innkeeper Tom Fricke. The inn filled with music, laughter, and conversation as friends of Pride mingled, recounting stories from this summer's great events. Guests gathered in one room to watch video footage from the 2001 Parade, while others checked out the buffet or relaxed in the library.

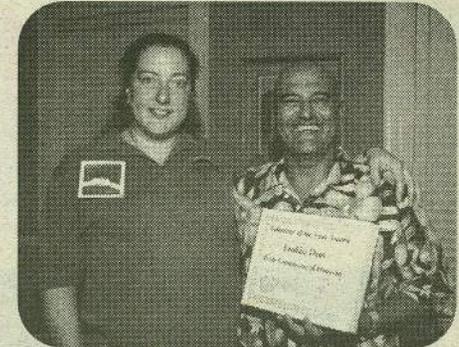
Executive Director Jack Valinski gathered everyone together for a summary of this year's accomplishments, and co-chairs Lynn Sixkiller and Paul Radous thanked the various Pride coordinators for a job well done. Nick Brines thanked our many corporate sponsors and individual donors, who helped us through what would otherwise be a much more difficult year.

The final announcement was for the Volunteers of the Year; this year saw such a bumper crop of outstanding volunteers that four awards were given. The 2001 recipients were Allison Brown, Freddie Dees, Christopher Lizotte and Brenda Kaye Silva.

Each of these volunteers made contributions to the Pride effort that went beyond our expectations. Allison helped out during the year with mailouts and office work, and then took one of our toughest jobs on Parade day with very short notice. Freddie spent all day Friday before the Parade working on the Committee's float and came back for more on Saturday. Brenda handled radio communications spectacularly on Parade day, and then came back Sunday to work at the Pride Festival. Christopher pitched in for many events throughout June, from newsletter and magazine distribution to the Parade and Festival, and hauled vast amounts of Pride "stuff" in his pickup.

The following is a list of all of this year's volunteers, without whose support our Pride events would not have been possible. Please note that while we've tried to include every name on this list, we may have overlooked someone; we sincerely apologize for any omissions.

Lisa Bass • **Allison Brown** • Holly Bruce • Brian Buzby • Carlos Camargo • Mike Chan • Patrick Chees • Steve Childers • Dave Clayton • Lamanda Cobb • Savanna Cobb • Margaret Crabtree • **Freddie Dees** • Jim Duke • Robert Estrella • Raul Farias • Melanie Barr Fitzpatrick • Michael Flickinger • James Fulton • Scott Galecki • Annie Gonzales • Tina Harris • Cynthia Hernandez • Donald Johnson, Jr. • Bobbi Kinney • Marc Koenigs • **Christopher Lizotte** • Pat Louque • Harmony McConnell • Jen Meklenburg • Linda Joy Mellman • Andy Morales • Jay Mynar • L. Allen Nelsen • KC Nelson • Chris Nixon • Bill O'Rourke • Ruby Onion • Shawn Patrick • Will Perry • Andersen Phan • Kay Pooagith • Jim Ritter • Cynthia Rodriguez • Nelly Romero • Christian Sanders • **Brenda Kaye Silva** • Kelly Tanton • Michael Thorne • Kristen Traywick • Kim Traywick • Beverly White



Pride Volunteers of the Year are (from top, left to right) Allison Brown, Freddie Dees, Christopher Lizotte and Brenda Kaye Silva

PRIDE IN THE SOUTHWEST

by Mark Willis

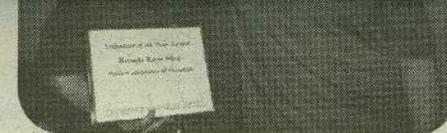
the rally.

Other Pride celebrations in the five-state InterPride Region 3 were held in Boulder and Denver, Colorado.

LIST YOUR GROUP IN THE RESOURCE GUIDE

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Pride Volunteers of the Year are (from top, left to right) Allison Brown, Freddie Dees, Christopher Lizotte and Brenda Kaye Silva

PRIDE IN THE SOUTHWEST

by Mark Willis

APART FROM THE FABULOUS FESTIVITIES IN HOUSTON, Pride celebrations were held in 12 other cities in our part of the U.S. As a Regional Director for InterPride, the international association of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Pride coordinators, I was fortunate enough to visit three of these events.

On June 9, Albuquerque, New Mexico, celebrated Pride 2001 with their annual Parade and Festival. The Parade stretched for over three miles along Central Avenue and disbanded at their Festival at the State Fairgrounds. An estimated 5000 guests enjoyed music, food and beverages while visiting tables staffed by various community organizations and merchandise vendors. Many people literally did not wish to leave when it was time to close. I also found it difficult to tear myself away for my departing flight.

Back in Texas, I attended Razzle Dazzle Dallas that evening. Although not a Pride event, RDD raises funds for AIDS-related causes, which are important to many in the GLBT community. For an entire evening, Cedar Springs is closed to traffic and becomes the site of a huge street festival. Over 10,000 people passed through their gates and they raised over \$80,000 for their beneficiaries.

The next weekend was Kansas Pride in Topeka. Nearly 200 people attended the Pride Prom on Friday, July 15, where one of the city's first gay activists was selected as Prom Queen and the founder of the Gay-Straight Alliance at Topeka High School was selected as Prom King. A breakfast reception for the Pride Guest-of-Honor, Dr. Robert Minor, Professor of Religious Studies at University of Kansas and author of *Scared Straight: Why It's So Hard to Accept Gay People* and *Why It's So Hard to be Human*, was held the next morning. Later that day was the Topeka Pride Picnic and Rally, held in a state park beside a lake. Over 1200 people enjoyed an afternoon of hot dogs, hamburgers and the occasional speech. I was honored to have been able to address the crowd, and I passed on the best wishes of us here in Houston as well as all of InterPride. Not even local anti-gay demonstrator Fred Phelps was able to gather a protest anywhere near

the rally.

Other Pride celebrations in the five-state InterPride Region 3 were held in Boulder and Denver, Colorado; Wichita, Kansas; Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Austin, Corpus Christi, El Paso, Fort Worth and San Antonio, Texas. Reports from these events will be posted on the Pride in the Region page at www.pridehouston.org.

There are still a couple of upcoming Texas Pride events. On Saturday, September 22, Gay Day will be held at Six Flags in Dallas. The city's Pride weekend continues the next day with the 26th annual Alan Ross Freedom Parade. Be there as Cedar Springs is draped in rainbow colors and Dallas shows their Pride. For more information, go to www.dallasprideparade.com.

On Sunday, October 7, Central Texas Pride unfurls the rainbow flags in Waco. As a smaller Pride celebration in one of the more conservative areas of our region, they deserve the short drive from Houston to show our support.

The InterPride World Conference will also be held October 4-7. For the first time in the history of the organization, the annual conference will be held in the southern hemisphere, in Auckland, New Zealand, providing a unique opportunity for Pride organizations here in North America to exchange ideas and compare notes with our counterparts in the Asia/Pacific region, where GLBT people often face repressive governments and cultures. On the other hand, it is also the region that holds the world's largest GLBT event, the Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras, every year.

Of course the expense for travel is prohibitive, and many Pride organizations have been hit badly by the downturn in the economy. For information on how you can help Houston or other cities in our region to be represented at the conference, contact me at region3@pridehouston.org.

LIST YOUR GROUP IN THE RESOURCE GUIDE

THE PRIDE COMMITTEE OF HOUSTON consistently publishes the most complete list of Houston gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community organizations.

This fall, PCOH will publish its regular semi-annual update of the Community Resource Guide. Along with community organizations, community businesses are also invited to send contact information for publication in the insidepride newsletter and on the Pride Committee web site.

Organizations and businesses in the PCOH database will be mailed information update forms in the coming month, but if you want to make sure your group is listed, call the PrideLine at **713-529-6979** with your mailing address and an update form will be sent to you. The form is also available on the Pride Committee's web site, www.pridehouston.org.



Bayou City Boys Club is one of the many Houston GLBT organizations listed in the Community Resource Guide. Make sure your group is listed as well.

OVER 130 PARADE ENTRIES ROLL DOWN WESTHEIMER

THE 2001 HOUSTON GAY & LESBIAN PRIDE PARADE was the longest ever, with over 130 entries, including:

Parade Banner • Houston Area Motorcycle Society • Mitchell Katine - Male Grand Marshal • Dalia Stokes - Female Grand Marshal • Blake & Gordon Weisser - Honorary Grand Marshal • PFLAG Houston - Grand Marshal - Organization • Honorable Mayor Lee P Brown • JP Morgan Chase • Honorable US Representative Sheila Jackson Lee • Honorable State Representative Debra Danburg • Honorable City Councilmember Annise Parker • Honorable City Councilmember Chris Bell • Honorable State Representative Rodney Ellis • Honorable State Representative Garnet F Coleman • Silver Eagle Budweiser 1 • Montrose Counseling Center • Rich's Houston • ACLU of Texas • Gary Brewton, M.D. • First Unitarian Universalist Church • CompaqPlus • Houston Women's Festival • Ron's American Limousines • Bering Omega Community Services • Houston Outdoor Group • Gulf Coast Archive & Museum of GLBT History • Pacific Street & Soundwaves • Steven's House • Integrity/Houston • Midtown Dentistry • Houston Pride Band • Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce • Krewe of Olympus Texas • Montrose Clinic • Classic Chassis Car Club Houston • River Oaks Area Democratic Women • Maranatha Fellowship MCC • Lamar University Gay & Lesbian Association • Texas Triangle • SGI - USA - Houston • AssistHers • Katz's Deli & Bar/AIDS Foundation Houston • Houston Gay and Lesbian Parents • LOAF • Asians & Friends Houston • Statscript Pharmacy • Wells Fargo Bank • Enviro-Tech Electronics • HATCH • Human Rights Campaign • Judge David Patronella, J.P. 1-2 • More Light Presbyterians of Greater Houston • Houston Transgender Unity Community • Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus • St. Stephen's Episcopal Church • GLBT Pagan Pride Society • Bayou City Boys Club • Houston Police Department • People with AIDS Coalition - Houston • Community Gospel

Church • Gordon Quan Re-Election Campaign • Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church • Freed-Montrose Branch of the Houston Public Library • Covenant Church, Ecumenical, Liberal Baptist • Rainbow Ranglers Dance Club • NGLTF • Being Together • The Assistance Fund • Bering Memorial United Methodist Church • Sea Shell • Equiva • Miss Camp America Foundation • Bunnies on the Bayou • Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center • Colt 45's • Montrose Softball League • Charles Armstrong Investments • United Cab Company • Hollywood Food Store • Thomas Street Clinic • Hewitt Associates • Ada Edwards Campaign • Texas Gay Rodeo Association • Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual Alliance (GLOBAL) at UH • Raising AIDS Awareness via Education (RAAVE) • Planned Parenthood of Houston and Southeast Texas • Lesbian and Gay Immigration Rights Task Force - Houston (LGIRTF) • Houston Voice • Women in Power Society (WIP Society) • Emerson Unitarian Church • American Express - GLOBE • Houston Women's Flag Football League • Harris County Libertarian Party • Royal Sovereign and Imperial Court of the Single Star • Michael's Outpost • Emanon • Chances • Houston Area Bears • Harris County Green Party • Venture-N • Razzle Dazzle Dallas • Dallas Tavern Guild • Womack for City Council Campaign • Houston Comets • Progressive Voters in Action • Club Inergy • EJ's • Texas Renegades • Gay Men's Chorus Houston • Dignity Houston • 104 KRBE • Pride EMS • Gay Roller Ride • Texas Renaissance Festival • Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered Aggies (GLBTA) • Gay Pride Royalty • Level Houston • Log Cabin Republicans of Houston • Brazos River Bottom Club • Gallery Furniture • Ashland Street Theater • OutSmart Magazine • Incognito (The Club) • Cellmart Wireless • Toyz Disco • galleryfurniture.com • Ambush Magazine • Stonewall Democrats • Green Mountain Energy • Cheer Knights • Silver Eagle Budweiser 2 • Sprint Broadband • Pride Committee of Houston • Rainbo de Klown

FINANCIAL SUPPORT KEEPS HOUSTON PROUD

by Nick Brines

THE PRIDE COMMITTEE OF HOUSTON works year-round to produce free or low-cost events that educate, empower and entertain our entire gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. PCOH volunteers work hard to keep costs down while maintaining the high quality of our community events.

Still, the nighttime Pride Parade and the many other functions of the Pride Committee would not be possible without donations of money, products and services from a

In addition to these sponsorships and grants, the Pride Committee receives financial contributions through its yearly Individual Donor Campaign. We thank these Friends of Pride for ensuring that Houston continues to have high quality, grassroots, community-supported Pride events for everyone to enjoy.

In recognition of their financial commitment, Friends of Pride receive a package of benefits during the Pride Celebration. Reserved VIP bleacher seating at the Parade, commemorative merchandise and invitation to exclusive Pride events are a few of the benefits received.

THE DARK SILENT FLOAT

by Lee Wright

On Saturday, June 23, the PCOH Float Committee's day began no differently from that of all the other dedicated organizations with entries in the Pride Parade. Months of preparation, which included conducting a successful Parade Workshop, came down to this day. Donuts and kolaches fueled the drilling, stapling, glittering, wiring, checking and rechecking of the 35-foot-long float. Everyone toiled despite hours of melting hair gel and swarming mosquito conditions.

All ran like clockwork until the arrival of dusk. It was then that we realized we were not like all the other "Floats" and "Floatessas." Dusk was outing the Float Committee's little daylight secret. We were becoming "The Dark Silent Float." I mean that literally, honey. We

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Still, the nighttime Pride Parade and the many other functions of the Pride Committee would not be possible without donations of money, products and services from a variety of sources.

We thank these businesses and organizations that demonstrate their commitment to community diversity and GLBT consumers by supporting Houston Pride. Please show your appreciation when doing business with them.

Title Sponsor

Bud Light and Silver Eagle Distributors

Grand Sponsor

Coors Light and Hillman International

Proud Sponsors

Chase Bank • ID Lubricants • STATScript Pharmacy

Pride Supporters

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• Stonyfield Farm Yogurt • Wells Fargo

Media Sponsors

104 KRBE • Curve magazine • gay.com • HERO magazine • OutinHouston.com • Passport magazine • Texas Triangle

Retail Partners

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In Kind Donors

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• Kroger's • Momentum Motor Cars • Ozarka
• Red Bull Energy Drinks • Sprint Broadband Wireless

Community Grants

AIDS Foundation Houston • Rotheudt-Dizinger Foundation • Royal, Sovereign and Imperial Court of the Single Star of Houston

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If you are interested in becoming a Friend of Pride, please contact PCOH at 713-529-6979 or visit our web site, www.pridehouston.org.

RED (gifts of \$1000 or more)

Enviro-Tech Mobile Electronics

ORANGE (gifts of \$500 or more)

Bobbie Bayless & Dalia Stokes • Larry Bubela & Brad Odom • Erika Freeman • Craig Overstreet • Paul Radous

YELLOW (gifts of \$250 or more)

Richard Bielec & Christopher Evers • Paul Damin & Lee Wright • Jim Duke

GREEN (gifts of \$100 or more)

Kristin Ingram • Jack Jackson • Ken Jones & Larry Simpson • J. Richard Pickering

BLUE (gifts of \$50 or more)

Andy Bowen • Timothy Baker • Troy Christensen • Rose Cimadevilla • Carol Clark • Club Inergy • Jack Cooper • James Ferea & Robert Kramp • Lynne Huffer & Tamara Jones • David Manuel • Gary Masse • Nicole Prokopishyn • Gordon Quan • Lee Sontag • Leigh Tyler

PURPLE (gifts of \$25 or more)

Nick Brines • Jim Jemelka • Thomas Johnson • Nick Rogers • Vera Taylor

by Lee Wright

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We continued working, in the dark, taping, gluing and sorting throws with one hand as we scratched our mosquito bites with the other. At that point as Float Co-chair, my morale was pretty low. Yet we all knew that the show must go on. Just minutes before our turn to strut down the runway called Westheimer, the solution to our power outage manifested. It came in the form of a perfect example of the type of volunteerism that has made the Pride Committee such a success. Volunteers fought traffic and police barricades to get a third generator borrowed from one of the floats that had already finished its route to the end of the parade. Despite my memory being clouded by three Red Bull Energy Drinks, I recall the flashing of hands, wires, connectors and the smell of gasoline followed by a collective cheer. Yes, the dead had arisen!

The silence was first broken by a "Salsa" dance track. Then within seconds, the darkness gave rise to the glare of over 300 feet of rope lighting and twelve rotating police sirens. It was a fabulous, flashy sight. In the end, we made it through the parade without another electrical glitch.

Several people have asked our committee if all the time, effort and headaches were worth it. My response is, if only for the drama, "Yes, yes and yes!" We are all part of an incredibly talented community and it is reflected in the PCOH membership. My committee is proud to be a small part of such a dynamic organization of individuals whose mission is to provide a means of celebrating Pride throughout the community.

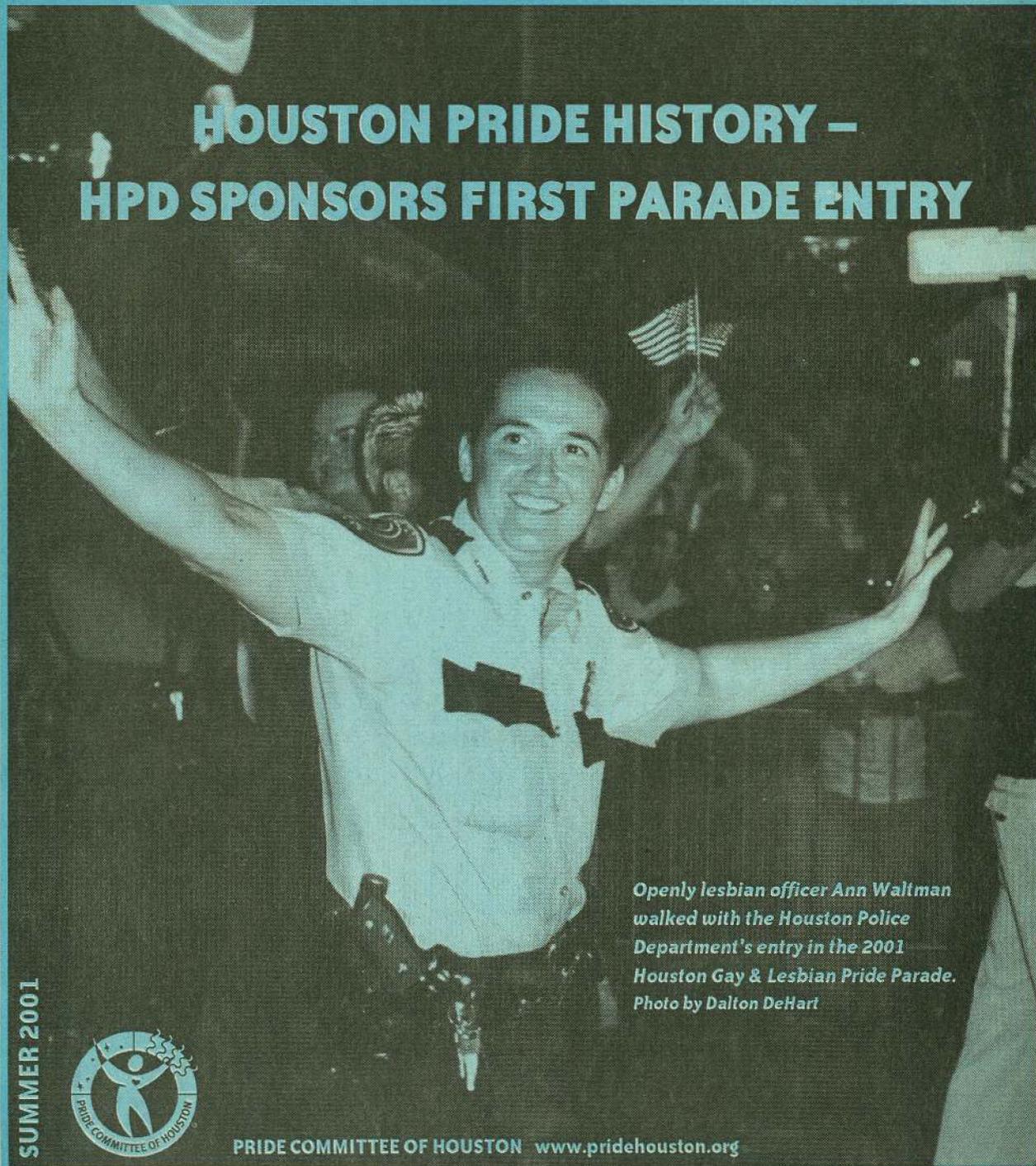
See you at next year's Parade. Look for us—we'll be in the float with the twelve back-up generators! ✨

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HOUSTON PRIDE HISTORY – HPD SPONSORS FIRST PARADE ENTRY



Openly lesbian officer Ann Waltman walked with the Houston Police Department's entry in the 2001 Houston Gay & Lesbian Pride Parade. Photo by Dalton DeHart

SUMMER 2001



PRIDE COMMITTEE OF HOUSTON www.pridehouston.org

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