

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Jack Valinski 529-1223
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HOUSTON GAY PRIDE WEEK 1984

COVER PAGE

HGPW 84
2001 Branard 8
Houston, TX 77098

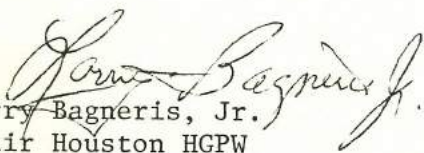
Dear Producer/Editor/Announcer:

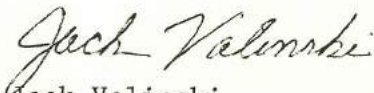
The Houston Gay Pride Week Committee, in conjunction with the Gay Political Caucus and The National Gay Pride Week will hold it's annual media conference on Thursday June 14, 1984 at 11:00 a.m., at Kindred Spirits, 5245 Buffalo Speedway.

For the first time, this year Houston will be celebrating National Gay Pride in association with other Gay Communities in our great nation. Details of events comprising Houston Gay Pride Week will be announced and representatives of the different community organizations participating in the celebration will be prepared to answer questions.

We ask that you consider attending this conference, as we believe this event is newsworthy and of intrest to the majority of citizens to whom you communicate.

Thank you for your intrest in this matter.


Larry Bagneris, Jr.
Chair Houston HGPW


Jack Valinski
Media Coordinator HGPW

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Statement of Purpose

Houston Gay Pride Week, Inc. was founded in 1979 by a small group of Houston gay activists to coordinate a formal program and celebrate each year for the gay community of Houston.

HGPW, with the idea of National Gay Pride, through its many cultural athletic and educational events, seeks to "increase understanding of social, racial, and sexual minorities, and to encourage acceptance of and tolerance of alternative lifestyles so that, together, the citizens of the City of Houston, the State of Texas and the United States of America may work in the spirit of peaceful cooperation to build a better society."

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2001 Branard #8
Houston, TX 77098Background of Gay Pride Week Celebrations

"One of the more volatile and emotional social movements in the nation's history emerged on a summer night 15 years ago at a ramshackle bar in New York City's Greenwich Village."¹

The Police assumed that this would be a routine raid, never before had their constant harrasment caused any reaction from what the police considered to be a lot of limp wristed sissy's, unable to stand up for themselves. So on Friday June 27, 1969, Deputy Police Inspector Pine and seven other officers set out to close the small, dimly lit, "mafia" owned gay bar for allegedly selling liquor without a license.

No one suspected what would happen when they raided the Stonewall Inn.

The patrons that were released and the croud outside grew to over 400 people within minutes. Bottle and rock throwing led to burning of the Stonewall Inn, with the police inside (no one was injured). A riot followed in nearby Sheridan Square, there were more disturbances the following nights.²

"A minority shrouded in mystery, fear, self-deprecation and widespread loathing decided it had enough. This was the Lexington of the gay rights movement, a gathering of forces and the beginning of a tumultuous march."³

1 Ledwell, Tony. "Stonewall opened gay activist age." Associated Press 1979

2 Marotta, Toby. "The Politics of Homosexuality." Houghton Mifflin Co. 1981

3 Ledwell.

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The facts surrounding what became known as the Stonewall riots have always been a bit elusive and the media accounts printed at the time reflected blatantly biased ~~opinionated~~ and were notably lacking in detail. However, the above ~~quotees~~ tell the story that is most widely known. The results of that night in New York City can be seen today as the ~~National Gay and Lesbian~~ Community grows in both influence and stature in our society.

In 1970, a noted gay activist from Los Angeles named Morris Kight was responsible for "Remember Stonewall" vigil that became a yearly event around the country.

In 1975, the first gay and lesbian march in Texas was held in Dallas as part of the Stonewall remembrance. Community activists in Houston held a widely attended news conference that summer which announced, among other events, the formation of a political action coalition that has become the Gay Political Caucus of Houston.

In 1976, an estimated 200 people held a march in downtown Houston to commemorate the Stonewall riots, which was sponsored by the fledgling Gay Activists of the University of Houston.

Singer and former beauty queen Anita Bryant's appearance as featured entertainer for the Texas Bar Association convention in 1977 brought an estimated 6000 angry gay women and men down Houston's streets in protest. The heavily publicized march, headed by such notables as gay publisher David Goodstein and the Rev. Troy Perry of the Metropolitan Community Church, was in vivid reaction to Ms. Bryant's active anti-gay statements and work to successfully

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overturn the gay rights ordinance then in effect in Miami, Dade County, Florida. A few weeks later, Houston's gay community held its first Gay Pride Rally in Cherryhurst Park to celebrate what had become a national holiday for lesbians and gay men.

Over 4500 community activists met at the Astroarena in 1978 for Town Meeting I, the first organizational gathering in Houston that included gay men and women from every aspect of Houston society. Former state legislator and vice-presidential nominee Frances "Sissy" Farenthold was the keynote speaker; the meeting was chaired by Virginia Apuzzo, a leading gay activists who ~~is now~~ ^{became} the executive director of the National Gay Task Force in New York. Many of Houston's gay services, including the Montrose Counseling Center and the Montrose Clinic, were formulated and organized at this historic meeting. The first full week of events commemorated our pride in being free gay and lesbian Americans ^{also} ~~was held in this year.~~ ¹⁹⁷⁸

Since 1979, the gay community of Houston has celebrated Gay Pride Week with a full schedule of events spanning 11 days in late June. More than 67 gay and lesbian-related organizations sponsor a variety of events for the entire community, ranging from juried art shows to athletic events and everything in between.

The final days ^{of} ~~of~~ the Gay Pride Week Parade ^{wind} ~~through~~ the heart of Montrose; and the traditional community celebration sponsored by the Gay Political Caucus.

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This year's Gay Pride Week theme is "Unity and More in '84." Adopted nationally, it reflects the tireless and united efforts of all gay communities in the United States, to build a ~~national~~ ^{national} socially and politically influential gay force that can not, and will not ever again, be denied.

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Thursday, June 14. PRESS CONFERENCE

The Houston Gay Pride Week Committee, in conjunction with the Gay Political Caucus of Houston, will hold a media conference at 11 a.m. on Flag Day. Details of the upcoming events comprising Houston gay Pride Week 1984 will be announced, and representatives of the different community organizations participating in this year's celebration will be prepared to answer questions.

11 a.m. Kindred Spirits, 5245 Buffalo Speedway.

Thursday, June 14. Kickoff.

Kindred Spirits host the opening night of Gay Pride Week 1984. Entertainment included, the Montrose Kloggers and musical performers Linda Ryne and Marine Trianie. This event highlights the fact that not all gay related business are located in the Montrose and that in Houston gay men and women work together for a better community.

9 p.m. Kindred Spirits, 5245 Buffalo Speedway, Donations.

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Friday, June 15. Salute to Gay Businesses.

Gay-owned and operated businesses are the economic backbone of our community. For many years a variety of establishments with gay and lesbian clientele have contributed beyond their share to the political, social and cultural activities of our community. This day on the calendar recognizes that steadfast support. Festivals of lights will be along Westheimer from Woodhead to Babgy provided by the GPW Committee.

Businesses will hold special functions this evening; please check their ads in the community bars and newspapers.

Saturday, June 16. Montrose Sports Association Day.

The Montrose Sports Association is one of the largest gay community organizations in Houston. Billiards, bowling, racketball, softball and flagball are only a few of the many sports the MSA coordinates for the enjoyment of the community. During past Gay Pride Week celebrations, All Star teams chosen by the members of MSA have played softball teams representing the Houston Police and Fire Departments. This year, the MSA's choice players will compete against each other.

Games start at 3 p.m. Levy Field, 3800 Eastside, Free.

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Saturday, June 16. Parents and Family of Gays.

The Houston chapter of Parents and Family of Gays will be saluted on this day. The group is an active, highly visible part of the Houston community. The organization brings together parents and grandparents, sons and daughters, friends and co-workers of gay men and women to understand and appreciate their loved ones. Their support of gay and lesbian rights is symbolic of the reality that gay men and women touch the lives of all in Houston through the people we love.

3 p.m. Levy Field, 3800 Eastside, Donations.Sunday, June 17. Walk for Unity.

Several hundred gay men, lesbians, and friends will walk five miles throughout the Montrose area to help raise money for three gay non-profit social services agencies--The Gay Switchboard of Houston, Inc., The Montrose Counseling Center, Inc., and The Montrose Clinic, Inc. The first annual walkathon affords the intire gay community an unique opportunity to exhibit community solidarity.

2 p.m. Cherryhurst Park.

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Monday, June 18. Montrose Art Alliance.

"An Evening of the Arts" salutes the contribution of our gay and lesbian artists. Historically in Western civilization, the artistic community has led the rest of society in recognizing and accepting gay artists in all disciplines. For the past four years Gay Pride Week has included art exhibits, poetry readings and photography displays. This year's event is already generating unprecedented interest thanks to the dedicated work of the Montrose Art Alliance.

7 p.m. Baha's, 402 Lovett, \$5.00

Tuesday, June 19. Diversity Theatre.

Doric Wilson's hit comedy "Street Theatre," concerns Christopher Street in the hours leading up to the Stonewall Riots. It focuses on a panorama of lesbians, drag queens, leathermen, flower children, vice cops and cruisers--the innocent and the not-so-innocent bystanders who would turn the 27th of June, 1969 into a D-Day in gay history. The play is based on the author's personal experiences, the people he knew, the encounters he participated in or witnessed in the months, days and hours leading up to that night.

8 p.m. Numbers, 300 Westheimer. \$5.00.

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Wednesday, June 20. Texas Gay Rodeo Association.

The Texas Gay Rodeo Association is a united fund for gay related community organization. This is TGRA first annual celebration on the GPW calander. The night begins at various gay bars and ends at The Brazos River Bottom.

6 to 9 p.m. Various Gay Bars.9 p.m. Brazos River Bottom, 2400 Brazos.Thursday, June 21. National Day of Remembrance.

Since Houston's first Gay Pride Week celebration, we have set aside this special day. We remember the gay men and women who died in the Inquisition and the Holocaust in Europe, and we remember Stonewall Riots. This year special emphasis is on celebration of Houston's gay community from Stonewall to the present. The program will be made up of a narrative, songs, dance music and a few more things.

7:30 p.m. Berring Memorial UMC, 1440 Harold. Donations.

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Friday, June 22. Salute to Dignity 10 Years.

Dignity/Houston will celebrate its Tenth Anniversary this year during Gay Pride Week '84. The event will be an upbeat first class event; with a theme of "Celebrating a Decade of Ministry." The evening will begin with a community celebration Liturgy of Thanksgiving at Holy Rosary Catholic Church. Immediately after at the Houston Center Club for "An Evening with Rita Mae Brown."

6:30 p.m. Holy Rosary Catholic Church, 3600 Milam. Donations.7:45 p.m. Houston Center Club, 1100 Caroline. \$25.00.

(Press conference with Rita Mae Brown on Thursday, June 21. Please call above number for details.)

Friday, June 22. Gay Latin Day.

Houston's gay Hispanic community celebrates and shares their rich heritage with the rest of gay Houston. The Gay Hispanic Caucus of Houston sponsors this special time for fiesta and sharing, including great food, music, and company.

9 p.m. Noche y Dia Ballroom, 2103½ N. Main. \$6.00.

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Saturday, June 23. Gay Pride Week Concert.

This event is organized and cosponsored by the Gay Pride Week Committee and the Lesbian/Gay Resource Services of the University of Houston. Music is provided by the Montrose Symphonic Band, the Metropolitan Community Church Choir and the Bayou B'lu Singers. This year the concert promises to surpass its reputation as a high point of Gay Pride Week.

8 p.m. Cullen Auditorium, The University of Houston-University
Park. \$5.00.

Sunday, June 24. The Houston Gay Pride Week Parade 1984.

The Gay Pride Week parade has grown and matured with the community since 1979. The highlight of the week, the parade last year attracted an estimated 80,000 gay and non-gay spectators as colorful floats, musical groups and marching units filled lower Westheimer in the heart of Houston's gay community. Many of our elected officials and community leaders are present at the largest yearly gathering of gay men and women in the South.

2:30 p.m. Lower Westheimer between Sheperd and Babgy. Free.

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Sunday, June 24. Spotts Park Political Rally.

Shortly after the parade the Gay Political Caucus invites everyone to a celebration of how we as a people have made so much progress in our common goal of human rights. Two years ago the rally attracted over 10,000 people. This year we expect an even bigger event. Entertainment will be provided with fireworks ending the rally.

6 p.m. Spotts Park, Waugh at Memorial Drive.