



Buy A Boy Auction raises Whopping \$3,354 for Southern Decadence & almost \$800 for Miss Gay Louisiana America @ Oz ~ New Orleans ~ Photos by Steven Mora

27TH ANNUAL GAY APPRECIATION AWARDS

TOP 5 FINALISTS

[Voted on-line by the Gulf South Readership of *Ambush Mag*]

Circuit Party/Event of the Year

Baton Rouge Pride, Gay Easter Parade, Halloween XXX, Oz White Party, Southern Decadence 2013

Hair Salon of the Year

Bobby Blue Beauty Parlor, Fee & Art's Revival Studio, Fifi Mahony's, Head Quarters Salon, Mickey Nolan's Salon

Gay Mardi Gras Ball of the Year

Krewe of Amon-Ra, Krewe of Armeinius, Krewe of Petronius, Lords of Leather, Mystic Krewe of Satyricon

Neighborhood Bar of the Year

Corner Pocket, Four Seasons & Patio Stage Bar, Golden Lantern, Good Friends, GrandPre's

Buzzy Fanning AIDS Award

Darren Ferris, Gay Easter Parade, Gia GiaVanni, Toby Lefort, NO/AIDS Task Force

Bitch of the Year

Electra City, Reba Douglas, Chi-Chi Rodriguez, Persana Shoulders, Princesse Stephaney

Show Club of the Year

Bourbon Pub & Parade, Corner Pocket, Four Seasons & Patio Stage Bar, Golden Lantern, Oz

Donnie Jay Performing Arts Award

Golden Girls, La Familia, New Orleans Gay Men's Chorus, Running with Scissors, Southern Barbichuates

Restaurant/Deli/Coffee House of the Year

Clover Grill, Eat, Little Vic's, Quartermaster, The Nellie Deli, Verti Mart

Dance Club of the Year

Bourbon Pub & Parade, Corner Pocket, Lucky Pierre's, Oz, Rawhide

Bartender of the Year

Frank Joseph/Oz, Ashlee Logan/Corner Pocket, Jeff Palmquist/Cafe Lafitte in Exile, Chris Peterson/Oz, Wayne Penton/Oz

DJ of the Year

Jason Emrick/Golden Lantern, Dominick "Dom" Kolb/Corner Pocket, Four Seasons, Robbie Martin/Bourbon Pub & Parade, Phoenix, Tim Pflueger/Oz, Jonathan "JRB" Reed/Oz

Leather Bar of the Year

Phoenix, Rawhide

Cheridon Comedy Award

Jeff DeRouen, Rikki Gee, Gia GiaVanni, Persana Shoulders, Princesse Stephaney

Fly Fashion Glamour Award

Dominique DeLorean, Connie Hung, Monica Synclaire-Kennedy, Karli LaCorre, Aubrey Synclaire

LGBT Business of the Year

Bourbon Pride, Crescent City Tour Booking Agency, Delaney & Robb Attorneys at Law, Panda Bear, Rab Dab Clothing & Gifts

Leather Person of the Year

Alan Bowers, Toby Lefort, ADKus Supps, Jeff Turberville, Gary Vandeventer

Transgender of the Year

Regina Adams, Adrian Claveria, Joann Guidos, Rikki Redd, Chi-Chi Rodriguez

Lesbian of the Year

Misti Ates, Stacy Bundrick, Mina Hernandez, Pat McArdle, Courtney Wilson

Gay Man of the Year

Chad Boutte, Tommy Elias, Frank Joseph, Toby Lefort, Tony Leggio

Marcy Marcell Entertainer of the Year

Gia GiaVanni, Connie Hung, Monique Michaels, Aubrey Synclaire, Persana Shoulders



Honoring Tommy Elias 27th Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient

Presented by the GAA Board of Directors
(Photo by Larry Graham)

Featured Performances:

2013 Entertainer of the Year
Monique Michaels

Top 5 Show Club of the Year Finalists
Production Numbers:

**Bourbon Pub & Parade,
The Corner Pocket,
Four Seasons & Patio Stage Bar,
The Golden Lantern, Oz**



Saturday, August 2nd • 8-10pm

27TH GAA GALA

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under the gaydar

by Tony Leggio
Email: ledgemgp@gmail.com
Photo by: Larry Graham, GrahamStudioOne.COM

Book of the Month

Frivolous summer reading is still continuing, so for the month of July I am spotlighting Dean Koontz. Koontz's novel **77 Shadow Street** is a science fiction/horror thriller that takes readers on a fast-paced macabre ride through a dark and spectral realm. Koontz's books are always unique reads and this one is no exception. With each chapter, you delve deeper into the twisted world of a very ancient hotel with a sinister history of murder and strange disappearances.

Being one of the few authors to achieve over a dozen books on the **New York Times** Bestseller List, Koontz understands the nature of fear. Many of his novels take ordinary people and place them in mortal danger. **77 Shadow Street** has a diverse group of characters who live in the luxury apartment building, The Pendleton and brings them face to face with an ancient evil that has been dormant for many years. Their fight for survival is the driving force of the book, as they try to deduce the reason behind their current circumstances in order to see daylight.

Like another one of his contemporaries, Stephen King, Koontz delivers a novel with vivid characters dealing with extraordinary situations. Over the course of one night, each person will learn the true nature of malevolence. The residents include a hired assassin, a disgraced ex-senator, a songwriter and her son, an autistic girl and an ambitious money manager.

Koontz weaves a tight page-turner that amps up the fear factor. You always know it is a good book when you can finish it in one or two settings. Location is everything in horror novels and The Pendleton ranks right up there with other spooky locales like the Bates Motel. The hotel itself can be considered a character with such a rich and storied history that is detailed in bloody good fashion. If you like books that keep you up all night, try **77 Shadow Street**, you will not be disappointed. For more information on Koontz and his other books, go to www.deankoontz.com.

Third Time Is A Charm

New Orleans seems to be such a natural draw to writers with our lush culture and unique characters. Damon Ferrell Marbut, a local poet and novelist (and past bartender of the month thank you very much), has written his third book entitled **Human Crutches**. This book of poems is an inside look at gay bar life in the French Quarter. Being the jewel of the city, the Vieux Carre is a vital segment of New Orleans culture. I cannot wait to get my signed copy which should hit the bookshelves this month.

From the Amazon blurb: Life in the French Quarter of New Orleans is bar life, the quintessential stage setting for unfolding dramas, dark truths and chaos borne of excess. In **Human Crutches**, Damon Ferrell Marbut tells this story with remarkable generosity and skill, providing an inside study of local lifestyle in a great American city.

Often humorous and sometimes vulgar, the poems are piercing, honest and layered with urban Southern affect as endearing as it is frightful.

Marbut received his Master's degree in Creative Writing in 2006 at the University of South Alabama and is also author of the critically acclaimed novel **Awake in the Mad World** and the Amazon bestselling poetry collection **Little Human Accidents**. Updates on the author are available at <http://www.facebook.com/DamonFMarbut> or visit <http://barebackpress.homestead.com/> for contact details and additional publisher information.

RePurposing NOLA on White Linen Night

RePurposing Nola is having their one year brand shop anniversary celebration on White Linen Night August 2nd, 2014. Get away from the maddening throngs and join the at their exclusive VIP private 21 + over party for an evening of fashion, open bar bubbles, cocktails, sultry fun and many surprises. Guests will receive their signature gift bag in white linen filled with the latest product and other ideas to tickle all of your senses. VIPs/Patrons will also receive a gift card valued at their total ticket price towards purchase of \$100 or above in shop during event (or anytime within 30 days of event) in their signature gift bag.

Patrons get exclusive first-look at their fall fashions from 4-6pm; VIP tickets from 6-9pm. Door tickets will be sold as space allows, and will not receive one of our gift bags. Ticket prices are \$25 for VIPs and \$50 for patrons. I have bought many products and love their quality and uniqueness. I am always getting compliments on my satchel. Not only is it a green product, but it looks fantastic. And their new line of candles are fabulous, they even have one named after me, Hot Mess.

For tickets or more information, you can find RePurposing NOLA on Facebook or go to www.repurposingnola.com. The shop is located at 604 Julia Street.

Introducing a New New Orleans Festival

New Orleans honors every culinary delicacy in the city with a festival from the Po-Boy to the Creole Tomato, now we recognize our amazing Japanese cuisine as **New Orleans Magazine** hosts its inaugural Sushi Fest and Competition presented by East Jefferson General Hospital on Sunday, August 17 at the River City Ballroom at Mardi Gras World. Each participating chef from restaurants in the New Orleans Metropolitan area will compete in various categories with one sushi chef being crowned the 2014 Grand Champion by a panel of judges. Enjoy an evening with some of New Orleans' best sushi chefs with delicious sake and Japanese beer by official sponsor SAPPORO USA. The city's

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premier fun dance band Bag of Donuts will be the entertainment.

A special VIP Reception before the actual Sushi Fest opens includes complimentary sushi, food, wine, beer and soft drinks. The Japan Society of New Orleans and Japan Club of New Orleans will feature a traditional Japanese tea ceremony and the first 200 guests will receive a complimentary bento box with items from vendors. The VIP Patron Japanese Tea Room Party is sponsored by Sapporo Beer and from 1 to 2pm with the actual festival from 2-5pm. The cost for the VIP event is \$50 in advance (by Aug. 6) and \$75 at the door. Admission to the festival is \$10 in advance and \$20 at the door. To purchase tickets, go to www.neworleanssushifest.com.

There will also be a Japanese art room featuring origami, fan painting and Japanese bookmark painting in addition to and a Sumo Wrestler blow-up ring with wrestling matches for adults and kids over 15 years old. Door prizes will be awarded throughout the day. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Japan Society of New Orleans and Japan Club of New Orleans.

It's A Breeze

August may be hot, but there is a cool breeze blowing at the Belle Reve Breeze Gala on Saturday, August 23. That is the underlying theme behind this noteworthy event presented by Avita Drugs in the Big Room at Generations Hall. There will be lots of drinks, a silent auction, dancing and delicacies. Please come out and support this elegant evening. The patron party begins at 7pm and the gala is from 8-11pm. Tickets are \$60 or \$300 for a table of four. The dress is summer cocktail attire. For tickets, go to www.breezegala.eventbrite.com.

Party Down

Mardi Gras may be a long way away, but the Gay Carnival krewes are gearing up with fundraisers galore to help raise monies to throw these amazing shows for their guests. My first weekend was spent going to two of these events. On Saturday, the Lords of Leather hosted a phenomenal Luau BBQ and Pool Party at the lovely home of Mike Ducote and Doug Minich in the Bywater. Their little tropical paradise boasts a large pool with fountain that was the major draw for guests. The afternoon was spent lazily basking in the sun, enjoying great BBQ and fun guys. Jeff Mallon and I handled their live auction which brought some extra funds for the krewes. Doug and Mike's home was an ideal and intimate setting for this gathering of members and supporters. It was also a great opportunity to see many of these guys barely clothed.

On Sunday, it was off to let them eat cake as I attended the Mystic Krewe of Satyricon's Bastille Day celebration at the Olde Town Jazz Hall located in the Marigny. There was plenty of French delicacies to nibble on as guests danced and enjoyed the many costumes of members. You were even able to play pin the head on Marie Antoinette, very fun.

The following week I was engulfed in four little words "Tales of the Cocktail." Starting on Monday through Saturday, I handled over 25 events and attended even more. In case you are not familiar with this event, Tales of the Cocktail is the world's premier cocktail festival, bringing together the international spirits community for five days (now actually 7) of what's now, what's new and what's next in bartending. Held annually in our city which is the birthplace of the cocktail, TOTC has something for bartenders and spirits professionals with

[continued on 20]




With HIV treatment, you can live a long, healthy life.

My name is Marcus McPherson, and I was diagnosed with HIV two years ago. At first, I thought I was going to die. But I have found that with treatment, you can live well and reduce the risk of passing on the virus to almost zero. So if you're HIV positive, or possibly could be, text your zip code to KNOWIT to find free HIV testing and treatment near you.

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health

Syphilis: New AHF Campaign Takes on Skyrocketing Rates Nationwide including Baton Rouge

LOS ANGELES—According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the rate of syphilis infection for the whole United States and its regional territories began rising for the first time in a decade in 2001 after steadily declining every year since 1990. Between 2001 and 2009, the rate steadily climbed from 2.1 to 4.6 infections per 100,000 people before finally showing its first decrease in 2010 when it dropped to 4.5. The national rate held steady at 4.5 in 2011, but the CDC's most recent data shows that in 2012 the national syphilis rate again began to rise with a jump back to 4.6.

In response to alarming rates found nationwide, AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) is taking a stand to raise awareness about the prevalence of this disease, its drastic medical impacts, and the simple – and only – way to completely avoid infection: condom use and routine STD testing. The nonprofit's awareness campaign launches today with a billboard that reads "California: #2 in Syphilis" which will be appearing around Los Angeles touting the un-enviable burden California bears with the second-highest syphilis rate of all 50 states.

The billboard – which is a clear homage to the California flag, but with its iconic Grizzly bear smacking a paw to its forehead in a moment of "D'oh!" – highlights the worrisome increase in the California syphilis rate over the past year. According to the CDC's 2012 nationwide surveillance of syphilis rates in the U.S., the state of California saw 3,600 cases of late latent syphilis, 2,900 cases of early latent syphilis, and 3,500 cases of primary and secondary syphilis in 2013. This is an increase of 18% from the number of cases in 2012, according to a July 1 announcement from the CDC. The billboard promotes www.freeSTDcheck.org, where the public can find locations to access free STD testing and affordable care for the treatment of chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis through AHF.

AHF provides syphilis testing and treatment in seven states throughout the U.S., all of which are facing heavy syphilis burdens. Florida, which boasts the greatest number of Wellness Center sites nationwide with six throughout the state, saw 4,470 cases of syphilis diagnosed at varying stages – primary/secondary (also known as infectious) syphilis, early latent syphilis, and late latent syphilis – throughout 2012, according to the Florida Department of Health. Meanwhile, California, home to four AHF Wellness Centers that treat STDs, reported 2,953 cases of primary, secondary, and congenital syphilis, which is when a child is born with syphilis due to its mother's undiagnosed or untreated infection.

The other five states where AHF offers services are also facing high rates of syphilis, with New York and Texas both reporting 6.3 infections per 100,000 people in the CDC's 2012 report, and Ohio recording a rate of 3.7 per 100,000. Louisiana, where AHF has a Wellness Center in Baton Rouge, has a statewide rate of 7.4 in addition to carrying the nation's highest burden of congenital syphilis with 49.3 cases diagnosed per 100,000 live births in 2012, nearly seven times the national rate of 7.8 that year. Finally, Mississippi, where the statewide rate is 5.9 per 100,000 population and where more than half of the primary and secondary syphilis cases in 2012 affected young people between the ages of 15-24.

"We are able to offer affordable testing and treatment for this needlessly devastating disease in six of the top ten most impacted states in the nation," said Albert Ruiz, AHF's Director of Wellness Center Programs. "We sincerely hope that once people realize how prominently syphilis is still impacting the lives of men, women, and children throughout the country, they will all be motivated to remain more aware of how their actions can either help prevent – or spread – a terrible infection that is en route to becoming a major public health crisis if we don't turn the tides."

As newfound media fervor over a pill that could prevent the spread of HIV with daily use leads many to erroneously believe they can safely forego condom use, the rising rates of sexually transmitted infections nationwide reflect the continued need for comprehensive prevention methods. The Foundation has expressed public concern that people incorrectly using the new prevention strategy – which is only effective if used in

conjunction with condoms and HIV/STD testing, according to FDA, CDC and WHO recommendations – could lead to a continued rise in rates of syphilis, which can be a devastating and even deadly disease if left untreated.

"There is no pill to prevent syphilis, or gonorrhea or any other sexually transmitted infection besides HIV," said Michael Weinstein, President of AHF. "These infections spread easily and can be detrimental to public health if they are not mitigated by responsible health practices like regular condom use, which is still required for Truvada as PrEP to be effective anyway. Our goal with this campaign is that people will be driven to contribute to decreasing these rates by preventing transmission in their own lives, and also to remind people that syphilis is a serious health risk that they need to be tested for to catch it before it causes significant damage to their organs."

AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) is the largest non-profit HIV/AIDS healthcare provider in the USA. AHF currently provides medical care and/or services to over 319,000 individuals in 34 countries worldwide in the US, Africa, Latin America/Caribbean, Eastern Europe, and Asia. For more information, visit www.aidshealth.org, find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/aidshealth and follow us on Twitter: @AIDSHealthcare.

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opportunities to mix and mingle with the brightest minds in mixology during an always-spirited schedule of seminars, dinners, competitions, tasting rooms and new product launches. So for five days, you get to rub "elbows" with some of the hottest bartenders from around the globe.

Bartenders just pour drinks; mixologists create an experience for the patron. Ask Princesse Stephaney who regularly creates craft cocktails to the delight of everyone. My week started on Monday evening with a murder mystery event at Race and Religion. This interesting venue located in the lower Garden District was a impeccable choice for guests to mix and mingle while actors toyed with them. Two murders happened with a prohibition style theme as the specialty cocktails flowed. The location is a walled compound that has two homes, a carriage house, a lush garden with pool and rustic appointments that make it hard to believe you are in New Orleans. My favorite drink of the night was freshly juiced apples with Jameson and just a twist of lemon. Refreshing.

On Tuesday evening, we were on the rooftop of the Hotel Monteleone which is also the festival's host hotel. Three brands, Bacardi Rum, Grey Goose Vodka and Bombay Sapphire Gin hosted a Miami Vice eighties style pool party complete with pink flamingos, synchronized swimmers and gorgeous models passing out branded iced towels to keep cool in the hot sun. You can tell already the crowd was gearing up for an incredible week.

The 12th Annual Tales of the Cocktail officially kicked off on Wednesday with two awe-inspiring events. The opening Absolut party was held at Mardi Gras World and was absolutely (no pun intended) stupendous. As an event professional, I tip my hat

to those who make me go "wow" and this party did just that. You entered through the float den and walked through a corridor of Mardi Gras floats each with a dead celebrity atop it, Michael Jackson, Marilyn Monroe and Elvis. Then you went to the riverfront area behind Mardi Gras World where they had an outdoor twisted circus, eerie music played as custom bars were set-up with the bartenders dressed as the bearded lady, monkey boy, the strongman and the tattooed woman. There were popcorn, cotton candy and corn dogs to eat as people tried their hand on the high strike game or rode the carousel horses. Inside you walked through an Andy Warhol style grocery store with soup cans aligning the entire wall and inside each can was a tee shirt for guests to have. In the Mansion Room, more bars and a specialty cocktail served from a brass fountain by a very perverted version of Dorothy and the Tin Man. Then the party moved upstairs to a replica of Studio 54 dance club with midgets dressed as Andy Warhol, go-go dancers and girls on roller skates. More cocktails were served in branded pill bottles, just wonderful attention to detail. Everything at the event was flawless.

Next up that night, I went to the William Grant party at the Lakefront Airport which was transformed into a journey around the world. Outside was a Moroccan theme with a live camel and a tropical beach complete with cocktails in coconuts. Inside flight attendants greeted you as you were whisked to far off places like China and Mexico, each with their own rooms and specialty drinks. There was also a Christmas in July room, soda shoppe and a cabaret style nightclub area. What was so fascinating about this party was you discovered something new around each corner. After two remarkable events, it was time for rest, this was just the beginning.

On Thursday in addition to the numerous tasting rooms during the day, I went to the Bacardi Portfolio Party at Generations Hall. This event had a more surreal theme where guests were given masks of a fox, stallion or panther. They wandered from room to room sampling cocktails and enjoying the cuisine of local food trucks that set up tables. The jalapeno hamburger sliders and truffled macaroni and cheese were just mouth-watering. Each room had its own flair, one you were inside a butterfly net, the next you walked through a secret bookcase into another room which was a horse stable. The entertainment waffled between a DJ and live music.

Friday was even more tasting rooms during the day and the Diageo House Party that night at the Contemporary Arts Center. They took an intriguing interpretation of a house party literally. Each bar was designed as a room in the house from the garage and the kitchen to the bathroom and living room. They had secluded little areas like the bedroom and the band played on a stage designed like the den. Each "room" had a different craft cocktail. The Chee Weez played on the stage all night long it seemed to the delight of the crowd. It was a true down and dirty house party that was oh so much fun. Still in the party mode after, we went to Oz to continue our own dance party. The fabulous Frankie Fierce and Persona Shoulders were there making sure everyone had a good time.

Saturday was my day to experience all the daytime fun that Tales had to offer. The tasting rooms were amazing, as you volleyed from the Hotel Monteleone and the

Royal Sonesta trying the newest creations from mixologists from around the globe. I discovered VEEV at this event which is an alternative to vodka and very delicious. It promises to be the newest thing on the cocktail market. The day of tastings ended with a poolside soiree complete with live band and more flowing libations. This is where my friends Beaux, Barrett and I met up with some great people visiting the city. Once the pool event closed down, we ended up at one of their hotel rooms for an impromptu cocktail party. After that, I was done and took my little self to bed and crashed.

On my final day for Tales of the Cocktail on Sunday, to quote Abba, I was like a Super Trooper and managed to make it through. It began with having some people I met from San Francisco and New York over to my house for a pre-party brunch as well as some of my friends. Then the heavens opened up and we were trapped inside for longer than expected. Once it cleared up, we went to the Pig & Punch event that was being held at Washington Square. Even though it was wet and muddy these bartenders came out in full force. The basic concept at this event is several local restaurants serve pork dishes served with different types of alcoholic punch. The punch is served out of giant trash buckets of every style of liquor, bourbon and vodka to gin and rum. Pig & Punch is like its own festival within a festival. Not only did they have lots of pork and punch but also music and games. In the spirit of Tales of the Cocktail's commitment to giving back, The Bon Vivants (who sponsor host this event) have once again partnered with New Orleans KIPP Charter Schools to donate both their time during the day of service and the proceeds from the sale of the Pig & Punch t-shirt. And the kicker was everything was free.

After getting my crazy fill of punch, I went to the Friendly Bar to help John Michael, the NO/AIDS Task Force's newest staff addition celebrate his birthday. He did not ask for gifts but donations to the Task Force and raised over one thousand dollars. It was a fun-filled way to end a very saturated weekend. Until next time, let the cocktails and good times keep flowing.

To Quote a Queen

In honor of the wonderful light that was Elaine Stritch, I thought a few of my favorite quotes from her would be fitting. Stritch was a gay man's type of woman; a brassy party girl who liked to drink and speak her mind. Her passing on July 17 was truly a sad day for Broadway. Stritch was an actress and singer who appeared in numerous stage plays and musicals, feature films, and many television programs. She was inducted into the American Theater Hall of Fame in 1995. Stritch made her professional stage debut in 1944 and her Broadway debut in the comedy Loco in 1946. She won three Emmys and one Tony Award.

So Cathy Fox these words of wisdom from a Broadway grande dame are for you.

"I never found anyone who could look after me as well as I could look after myself."

"This age thing is all up to you. It's like happiness is up to you. You just have to understand what it is before you get it."

"You can't be funny unless you're tragic, and you can't be tragic unless you're funny."

"There will always be ladies who lunch. Always. And apparently they live a long time."