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NO/AIDS Task Force programs and services include:

HIV Prevention Education

Community Awareness Network (CAN) (507 Frenchmen St)
re:Vision Project (for gay and bi men, 18 - 35)
HIV Counseling & Testing
Community Outreach
National HIV Behavioral Surveillance Project

Primary Medical Care

HIV Medical Clinic
Medication Assistance
Medical Nutrition Therapy

Client & Supportive Services

Case Management
Mental Health Services
Substance Abuse Therapy (with *Odyssey House Louisiana*)
Peer Support
Support Groups
Housing Coordination & Assistance
Emergency & Transportation Assistance
Food For Friends (Home Delivered Meals & Food Pantry)

Rural Services - Houma, LA

Collaborative AIDS Support Services
Exchange House (transitional living facility)

2601 Tulane Avenue, Suite 500, New Orleans, LA 70119 | 504-821-2601 | www.noaidtaskforce.org



THE PINK PASTOR

by Rev. Clinton Crawshaw
Email: pastor@bigeasymcc.com
www.bigeasymcc.com

Community

We are very quick to use the expression 'Gay community' or 'LGBT community'. This is not far fetched, or wistful thinking – there is indeed such a community, and it is more closely knit than many others, but again we need to accept that frequently this is a 'gay men's community' or even a 'white gay men's community', and that there are other, parallel 'women's communities' and 'African American LGBT communities' and 'trans communities'.

I understand how we have arrived at this situation, but from a moral and political point of view it is calamitous that it does happen. Instead of one voice we too often have several, or we have groups that hope to speak for us but conspicuously leave out one or more sector's of our society – more often than not either the 'Trans' section or the 'African American' section. Thankfully groups like the HRC and the Forum for Equality have put in a lot of work to rectify the wounds inflicted on Transgender folk by previous omissions and oversights, but almost all LGBT advocacy groups under-represent people of color and other minorities.

From a pastor's point of view this is all very grim – 80% of American churches are

racially segregated, and overcoming that has defeated better minds than mine! The Big Easy MCC is indeed a mixed congregation, but it doesn't yet come close to fully reflecting the demographic of the New Orleans area – we are still under represented in women, and as yet have no ministries catering to NOLA's burgeoning Latino population. The common cultural 'normality' in this country, and many others, is whatever is most comfortable to people (men generally) originating in North Western Europe. That includes me, and combating this, and avoiding the assumption that being diverse is fine as long as everybody acts like Caucasians is a lifetime's work. It is a lot harder fighting racism and oppression when you are in the position of privilege – it is easy to identify the problem when you are faced with it every day; but for those of us who benefit from white privilege it is often very hard to see where the comfortable assumptions end and the hardcore racism begins.

The gay community – male and female, sometimes fails to live up to it's responsibilities as an oppressed minority – as an oppressed minority ourselves we cannot claim ignorance, we **KNOW** what it feels like to be dehumanized and

abused, we know better, therefore we must **DO** better!

This 'doing better' is not dependant upon other people living up to **their** responsibilities, if you want to change things then you have to model the change you want to see.

Ultimately, speaking as a pastor, all the labels we put upon ourselves are meaningless in the face of the loving God.

Galatians 3:28

There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

We might add that there is no longer white nor black, gay nor straight.

Too often we think it is safe to flirt with issues that threaten to devour us. We may pass comments about Mexicans without accepting that when we bite into that particular cake we taste a world of bitterness and grief. That poisoned cake includes racism, homophobia and every other form of hatred that has plagued humanity – nibbling at its edge is a dangerous business! When you lie down with dogs you generally catch fleas. If we, as a community touched uniquely by prejudice and violence can do no better than continue to parrot the racist nonsense we were brought up on, then what hope is there for the rest of society?

The world is changing. The attitude where the prevailing ruling class (that Northwestern European hegemony I was talking about) always demands the right

of veto, the right to put a stop to something by withdrawing their support is ending. In the future if we cannot be properly and fully multicultural we will find ourselves a footnote in history, one of those many groups who sat on the summit for a while then faded away. By abandoning our discomfort at anything that doesn't sound or feel like us then we guarantee ourselves a place at the table.

During advent we are going to be running two services at The Big Easy MCC – a solemn mass at 12.15pm and a praise and worship service (our main service) at 5pm. It is my hope that it will not merely draw those who find comfort in the worship they grew up with, but will allow people to experience something very unfamiliar to them. Most of my growth has happened when I have been challenged by difference, and I hope some of our traditional folks will find inspiration in a Spirit led service, and some of our more Pentecostal members will find inspiration at the mass. More than that – I hope that we as a **community** find inspiration in each other, and in our diversity.

Rev. Clinton Crawshaw is the Pastor of the Big Easy Metropolitan Community Church in New Orleans. They meet every Sunday at 5pm (praise and worship service) at St. Matthews Church at 1333 S. Carrollton Ave., NOLA 70118 and from November 29th 2009 at 12:15pm (solemn mass) as well – ring or email for details. pastor@bigeasymcc.com, 504.214.4340. Sermons streamed online at www.bigeasymcc.com.

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sappho psalm

by Toni J.P. Pizanie
Email: psalmwrite@att.net

Sharing Political Speak

Recently I have been sharing feelings about my political activities with Barry Marino. I like making this space available to those who wish to make their feelings known. My dialogue with Barry started when I complained to him about my disgust with the general lack of respect for President Obama. I said that I was getting tired of trying to make a difference. Below is some of Barry's response.

Barry: "Don't stop hoping or voting. Even if we don't win, we can make it less easy for them." (Barry, I need you to explain who you think "them" is.)

Louisiana is not only a red state; it's a talk radio state. Even in good old 2009, the Caucasian population is still out to "stick it to the blacks." In an effort to keep African Americans down they will keep voting for the evil Vitters, Jindels and Bushes. Their blind racism, phony patriotism and extreme religious beliefs are more important to them than reasonable utilities and safe levees. They fear "big government" but have no problem having their employers rule their personal lives. They go ballistic if a welfare mother buys a lottery ticket, but would have no problem giving all their money to a sleazy car salesman to build a new stadium, even though he has billions. Until these people wake up, we will never progress.

I really thought Katrina would have been a wakeup call. I mean G.W. Bush may as well have peed all over Louisiana from that plane. One would think that these people would see the light, but they choose to blame Blanco instead.

I thought the election of President Obama was a sign of hope. I'm afraid now. Don't be surprised if Sarah Palin winds up in the White House one day. Never mind that she couldn't handle even one term as Governor of Alaska. She's telling them what they want to hear. A very dangerous lady.

Toni: We've both lived in New Jersey, and their politics are not much or any better. What did you think when you were there?

Barry: "Yes, New Jersey is Louisiana's sister state. Given a choice, I'd have to choose Jersey's politics. There is a lot of corruption, but the people have much more heart. Louisiana is a very mean spirited state. In the wake of Katrina, I spent time in Dallas, Texas, Baton Rouge, New York City, New Jersey and Connecticut. You know who treated us the worst? BATON ROUGE, a city seventy-five miles from ground zero. You would think that we asked to be washed out just to "ruin" their fine city. (It looks to me like it was ruined long ago.)

Fred (Barry's partner who died after coming home from Katrina) and I were staying in a house my brother rented. A neighborhood woman saw me enter the house and called the police. I would have understood had she called and reported something suspicious, but she called 911 and reported a robbery in progress. The

BR Police came to the house, roughed me up, threw me on the ground and put a gun to my head. I was on the cell phone with my mom (at the time) and she was extremely upset. After my sister-in-law's mother told them who I was, they let me go. You know what this stupid <BLEEP> told me? "You have to understand, we can't be too careful with you people in town." And my mother can't understand why I despise that town."

Like so many New Orleanians, Barry, his father and Fred had a difficult time during and after Katrina. Their treatment was far from good while they were away. And it got worse when they returned. President Bush did a very poor job caring for this city and state while our local leaders were being blamed. The President and his appointees used us for photo ops without doing the job that would help us rebuild. But this is old news.

I asked Barry why there was a huge lack of respect for President Obama. No matter how much I dislike our president, mayor or governor, I do try to show the respect their office deserves. Barry agreed that for years, he read my articles that voiced a need for respect during the Bush Administration.

Barry and I came to the conclusion that the mean-spirited attitude fed to the public and nurtured by the Republican Party is the greatest reason for the problems we have in our country. If these outstanding brains would realize that working together with respect instead of backstabbing, the country could grow healthier and more comfortable here at home and in the international community.

Forum for Equality

Congratulations to the Forum for Equality on the impressive job of bringing the GLBT and straight communities together with their organization of the Equality Rally at City Hall recently. Hundreds cheered speakers from all areas of the GLBT New Orleans' community.

I must admit that my feet and knees were really hurting from standing with Fr. Michael Des Jardins and Ray Bates holding the banner from Church of Christ the Liberator while the hour long rally proceeded. We were only three of a dozen volunteers who stood to represent our churches and organizations with Pride.

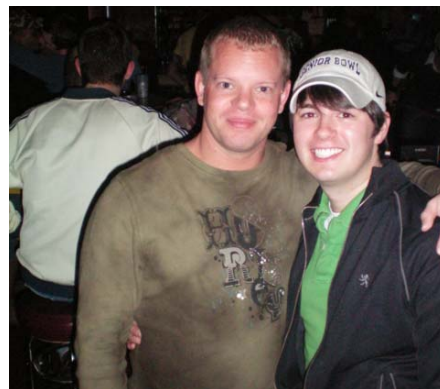
Sadly, there were no TV cameras or reporters from the *Times-Picayune* present. Last year's rally made a bigger impression on the citizens of New Orleans thanks to the coverage. Were they notified and just didn't show up? I don't know.

It would have been an outstanding step forward for the people of this city to see two City Council persons standing with us. Their speeches certainly impressed me.

I'm sure many will agree with me for giving credit to Mary Griggs for a job well done. The Forum has taken responsibility for the political momentum in Louisiana..



Mr. Ethan Mayo visiting with Miss Cie, along with his college companions @ B-Bob's



The two beautiful Paul's



The stunning Miss Florida Continental Amy Demilo from Tampa will be returning to B-Bob's New Year's Eve



B-Bob's Manager Bob Brunson & Show Director Miss Cie join one of the guys



Timothy with his buddies visiting B-Bob's from Pensacola



The stunning Miss Gay America 2006 Nicole DuBois appearing @ B-Bob's

A Message from The LGCCNO:

If you are receiving this, it is because I believe that you can assist me in this amazing cause and contest! Attached is all of the current information pertaining to the LGBT Community Center of New Orleans' 2010 Weight Loss Challenge. We are in full mode of putting the finishing touches on this contest for the Greater New Orleans Area. I am reaching out to friends, family, and leaders of other organizations and asking for your help.

We need to get the word out there! Call the phone number below for the application for contestants and the rules of the contest. Please send this to anyone and everyone whom you think would be interested. The Community Center's goal is to have twelve contestants for the January 10, 2010, initial Weigh-In and unless we get applications back at the Center, that will not be possible.

I thank you for your help and know that you can also feel free to call on me and the entire LGBT Community Center in the future for assistance in all community activities.

--Christopher J. Schlumbrecht,
Event Coordinator, 504.459.5084

PFLAG

On the 10th of December, the New Orleans Chapter of PFLAG will host the National

Director of PFLAG. We would like to have a full house to welcome him. Our meeting place is at 1333 South Carrollton Avenue at Willow Street just two blocks from Oak Street. We begin the meeting at 7:30pm (sharp) so please be on time.

Since this is our Holiday meeting, there will be goodies to eat. If you would like to bring cookies, cokes, ice, cups or napkins, please let me know at 504.833.1712. I'll try to arrange it so that we don't have a case of coke and no cups to drink from. Someone usually brings a cheese tray or seven layer dip and crackers too. This is a good time to celebrate the season with new and old friends.

Organizations

If you have an event coming up, send me your information and I will print it here for all of the community. I know we want to reach as many people as possible and hopefully you can get your message out here that some people won't see elsewhere.

Reach the Market
Ambush
504.522.8049
marsha@ripandmarsha.com

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Buster showing these foxy ladies a good time @ Sound Factory



John & Chris having a fabulous Sunday Funday @ Sound Factory



Ms. Huntress being the lovely lady @ Jules Downtown



These ladies are ready for their close ups @ Jules Downtown



In the words of Brodie, BUSTED @ Sound Factory



Don't forget 'bout the studs of the evening @ Sound Factory



Show the love for these fellows right here @ Jules Downtown



These ladies were having a blast @ Jules Downtown



Even the REAL Ladies come out and play @ Sound Factory



HOLLA!!! from Sound Factory



Smiling just to say, we're here for the party @ Jules Downtown



Big hair, big fun, big 80's Night @ Jules Downtown



One of the newest queens to make her debut out @ Sound Factory



NOLA in the house @ Sound Factory



The gentlemen of the house @ Jules Downtown



And they had a blast @ Jules Downtown



Dil & Gurt even came to welcome New Orleans finest @ Sound Factory



Ms. Jake & Miss Gay Pride at Large 2009, Kiesha @ Sound Factory



Sharing good times is the best @ Jules Downtown



And of course, this is what happens...lol @ Jules Downtown

Fabulous & Big ~ Lafayette, Louisiana ~ Photos by Chris Perkins