

the "official" dish ...from 4

all kinds. While some of us are fortunate to have blood families that still welcome us for the holiday even though we are of the GLBT variety, many do not. But what is wonderful in our community is that many of our hangouts and businesses make us all feel as we belong to the special GLBT family on this special day across the country and in New Orleans.

There are so many places to celebrate Thanksgiving in The Big Easy. If you want to partake a great dining experience with great service, you might want to try one of the following two offerings with Thanksgiving specials.

Over at Bywater Restaurant, Deli & BBQ, Chef Mike Murray will lay out his 2nd annual Traditional Thanksgiving Day Feast from 11am-3pm. For \$20 you can enjoy many of your holiday favorites on this all-you-can-eat buffet. Reservations and walk-ins welcome. Call 504.944.4445 for reservations.

The County Club is presenting Chef CoyLeBeau's "Give Thanks & Eat" holiday special complete with deep fried turkey, Andouille cornbread stuffing, green bean casserole, corn maque choux, cranberry sauce and sweet potato pie. It's \$30 per person, or you can get a take-out for two for \$55. Call 504.945.0742 for reservations or take-outs.

If you find the club scene more to your liking, their are many presenting complimentary buffets, and your choice is endless. They will be listed by start times.

The first is at 12noon as manager Candise presents Le Roundup's annual Thanksgiving Buffet.

The next ones up are at 4pm. You can catch the Thanksgiving Buffet at Starlight By The Park, and Thanksgiving Dinner at Tubby's Golden Lantern.

At 5pm, head on over to the Double Play for their Thanksgiving Dinner.

The 6pm hour brings the Happy Thanksgiving Dinner to 4 Seasons in Metairie, as well as the Happy Thanksgiving Dinner to Billy's in Slidell. Billy's will be opening early at 4pm.

But if you have the 'envee for sweets, you'll want to visit 700 Club at 6pm as they present their Happy Thanksgiving Complimentary Desserts.

It doesn't end there. The last complimentary Thanksgiving Dinner is celebrated at The Corner Pocket on Sunday, November 29 at 5pm.

Make sure and give thanks for what's been good for you this year, and by all means, thank the chefs and cooks everywhere.

Lords of Leather American Bandstand Nov. 28

The Lords of Leather take to the stage of JohnPaul's, 940 Elysian Fields, for their annual production of American Bandstand on Saturday, November 28th at 8pm. This year's theme is **One Night In Nashville** and you're sure to see your favorite country western divas as interpreted by the members of the krewe.

If you've attended previous versions of this event you certainly know the Lords put on an outrageous and hilarious show. If you've never attended, be prepared for an evening of the most unlikely performers you can (or can't) imagine.

Admission is \$10 at the door and the

evening will include a 50/50 raffle. In addition, a table for 10 at Bal Masque XXVII will be auctioned to the highest bidder.

For more on the Lords, visit **LordsOfLeather.COM**.

23rd Annual Art Against AIDS at The Shops at Canal Place Dec. 5

On Saturday, December 5th, The Shops at Canal Place will be the setting for the 23rd annual Art Against AIDS holiday gala & auction. Art Against AIDS will, as always, feature incredible art, cuisine from some of the areas finest restaurants & caterers, stellar entertainment from Johnaye Kendrick and the New Orleans Gay Men's Choruds and an open bar.

23 years ago Art Against AIDS was initiated by Arthur Roger as a sale of ornaments displayed in his gallery. In that first year over 1,000 ornaments were sold and helped raise over \$60,000 for AIDS awareness and services for people affected by HIV and AIDS.

This year NO/AIDS Task Force is honoring the roots of this event by returning to the initial item that made this fundraiser a success: the ornament. Local and national artists will design and create original ornaments which will be available at our first ever Patron Ornament Sale.

The Task Force hopes you will be able to join them as a Patron this year, and be part of an extremely exciting and unique celebration. For the first time ever, your patron ticket will also guarantee you an original work of art. Included in the patron ticket price is one ornament from the Patron Ornament Sale. Ornaments will be available on a first come, first serve basis, so it is suggested that you arrive early for the best selection.

The Patron Party and Ornament Sale begins at 7pm and runs until 8:30. During this time, you will get to not only participate in the Ornament Sale, but also sample cuisine from some of the city's finest eateries, enjoy complimentary cocktails and preview the silent auction and place early bids.

The evening will also feature a silent

auction with items and gift certificates donated by local merchants and retailers.

Tickets to ArtAgainstAIDS start at \$50 and can be purchased by calling 504.821.2601 ext. 216 or in person at the Task Force's main offices at 2601 Tulane Avenue, 5th floor. Tickets may also be purchased at the door the night of the event for the same price. For patron party and ornament sale tickets, which are \$200 each, please contact Heidi Chapman at 504.821.2601 ext 203. For more information, please visit **noaidstaskforce.org**.

LSGRA Sets Dec. 5 Meeting, Xmas Party & Beer Bust

Saturday, December 5 has been set for the Louisiana State Gay Rodeo Association (LSGRA) Board Meeting at 5pm hosted upstairs at JohnPaul's, 940 Elysian Fields, New Orleans. The LSGRA Membership Meeting & Christmas Party follows upstairs at 6pm with the LSGRA Beer Bust 7pm-12midnight downstairs. Visit **LSGRA.ORG**.

[continued on 8]

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- **Saturday, Nov. 28th**

8pm Lords of Leather

American Bandstand: One Night in Nashville

Auction & 50/50 Raffle, \$10 Door Donation

11pm Marcy Marcell's Golden Age Revue

salutes Kevin, Therese, Richie Rich & Marcy Marcell's Birthday

- **Friday, Dec. 4th 9pm FourPlay**

- **Saturday, Dec. 5th**

7pm-12midnight **LSGRA Beer Bust**

8pm-12midnight **Country Western Dance**

Bring in 3 Cans of Food, GET A FREE DRINK

benefiting Buzzy's Boys & Girls Food Bank

- **Sunday, Dec. 6th 2-6pm Lords of Leather**

Wine & Cheese Tasting Art Auction

\$10 Door Donation (MasterCard, Visa & Discover accepted for auction)

- **Saturday, Dec. 12th**

7:30pm LGBT Community Center

Founders Day Celebration

Free Food, Cash Bar & Champagne Toast

\$25 Door Donation

- **Sunday, Dec. 13th 4pm Lords of Leather presents**

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the "official" dish ...from 6

Community Center Founders Day Celebration Dec. 12 at JohnPaul's

The LGBT Community Center of New Orleans invites you to its annual Founders Day Celebration on Friday, December 12, 7:30pm, upstairs at JohnPaul's, 940 Elysian Fields. Tickets will be available at the door for \$25 and \$20 for paid members of the LGBT Community Center of New Orleans. There will be free food, cash bar and a champagne toast. Then stick around after the awards are presented to enjoy Marcy Marcell's Golden Age Revue downstairs at JohnPaul's.

Traditionally, Founders Day or "12/12," is recognized as the day, back in 1993, when the LGBT Community Center first opened its doors down on Rampart Street. This year celebrates the sixteenth year that the LGBT Community Center has been open and serving not only the LGBT community, but the entire New Orleans community.

Also, on December 12, 1991, the City of New Orleans Human Rights Ordinance was passed. This ordinance was significant due to it including "gays and lesbians" in the group of peoples whom the city deemed in deserving equal rights and non-discrimination. Later, in 1998, the city of New Orleans finally came around in extending equal right to "transgendered" peoples under this ordinance.

In 2007, LGBT in New Orleans historian Roberts Batson, while serving on the Board of Directors of the Community Center, suggested an event in honoring this historical date for all LGBT persons. A need was felt in honoring some of the amazing people who worked so hard to make sure that the Community Center not only kept its doors open, but thrived as a part of the soul of the city. The Center also wanted to recognize people who worked hard everyday to ensure that the rights given to the LGBT community during that groundbreaking time are never taken away. The "Founders Day Award" was born! The first to receive this award for the amazing work that they performed on behalf of all LGBT persons were Steward Butler and partner Alfred Doolittle, and Norma Kearby and partner Betty Caldwell.

This year, the Board of Directors of the LGBT Community Center of New Orleans has decided to increase the amount of awards given due to so many amazing people coming together and working to ensure the rights given to the LGBT Community. On December 12, five different awards will be given in five different categories:

Founders Day Award – Given to a past member of the LGBT Community Center who continues to work within the community, and closely with the Center, to ensure rights for all LGBT persons.

Media Award – Given to a person, persons, or organization

representing local media that covers LGBT issues and events in an honest light and which consistently works with and exudes a genuine respect for the LGBT community.

Medical Award – Given to a person, persons, or organization representing local medical consultation which consistently works with and exudes a genuine respect for the LGBT community.

Business Award – Given to a person, persons, or organization representing a business which consistently works with and exudes a genuine respect for the LGBT community.

Lifetime Achievement Award – Given to a person, persons, or organization who has committed to working towards a day when the term "LGBT" will no longer be needed and gay, straight, lesbian, transgender,

female, male, African American and Caucasian will all fall under one word to describe the entire population: COMMUNITY.

Please join the LGBT Community Center of New Orleans and its Board of Directors on December 12, 7:30pm, upstairs at JohnPaul's Bar to celebrate this momentous day in its history and give recognition to members of the community who have strived so hard in the past to get us to where we are today.

For more information go to lgbtccno.org or contact the center at 504.945.1103.

The PANDA BEAR

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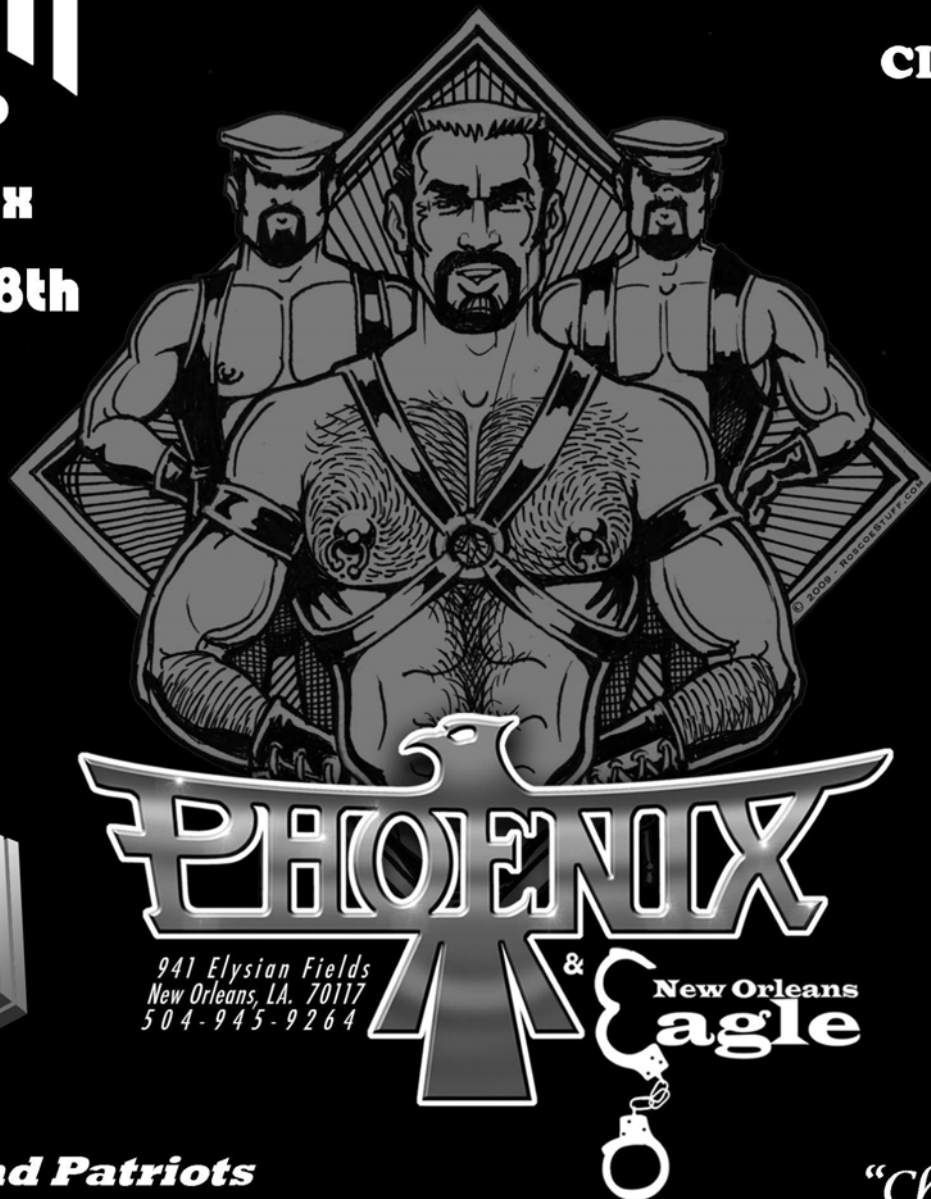
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UNDER THE GAYDAR

by Tony Leggio
Email: tonymgp@hotmail.com
Photo by: Larry Graham, GrahamStudioOne.COM

Sweet, A Montage of Adventures

If you have read in my last few articles, I mentioned there was a lesbian cruise leaving New Orleans on Sunday, November 8. Well, I actually got an opportunity to sail on this cruise. This trip was the inaugural cruise for Sweet, a company that specializes in lesbian travel. So, as a gay man what was it like to be on a ocean liner filled with lesbians. I have to say it was probably one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. Before I go into the details about my amazing trip on the Norwegian Spirit, I want to show gratitude to a few people. First I would like to thank my friend James Williams, who invited me to come on this cruise along with his sister Kim. He is the perfect traveling companion, witty and neurotic all rolled up into one. It was like going on a vacation with Woody Allen.

Second, I would like to thank the founders of Sweet, Shannon Wentworth and Jen Rainen who gave all the passengers on this boat one of the most fantastic trips of their lives. They truly are living up to their motto about changing the face of lesbian travel, but most importantly, I believe they are setting a new standard for

travel in the entire gay community. Their entire staff was wonderful and went out of their way to make each guest feel at home, especially Sara Jane and Flavia. And their public relations staff of Leyla Farah and Rebecca Heaps was an absolute joy to work with. It was sincerely an honor to be a part of this cruise.

What was my experience aboard the SS Spirit like. It was a montage of the *Big Gay Sketch Show*, the *L Word* and a little of the *Poseidon Adventure* all rolled up into one. My adventure began quite dramatically, but I am gay so how else should it start. Well, because of a minor little technicality called Hurricane Ida, we almost missed the boat, because we had to leave the dock early to get away from the weather. Running on board, right before they pulled up the gangplank, James, Kim and myself made it just in the nick of time. The ladies were already in the life vest class when we were escorted on the ship.

"Do you think we should have learned how to do that life vest thing," James asked me. To which my only reply "don't worry, if this boat gets in trouble on a lesbian cruise and the captain gives the command women and children first, we are so screwed, we will never get on a boat anyway."

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We checked into our surprisingly luxurious cabins, each with a large porthole situated above our beds. Once settled, we could not wait to get this party started so we went topside. Don't you love my nautical talk, seven days on a boat and I believe I am Captain Ahab.

It is a wonderful sight being on the deck of the ship as it pulls out of port in New Orleans watching the life on the banks of

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the Mississippi River. We did not hesitate to get our first cocktail, something with a tiny little umbrella in it, then we went to dinner at the Italian restaurant onboard, La Trattoria. Norwegian is a freestyle cruising vessel, which means you can eat whenever you like and sit with whomever you like. You are not tied down to certain

[continued on 12]



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