



Richard & Little Corey



Dwayne & Joseph



Lady Rhonda rocks



Damon & David at Splash



Cody & Todd



Brad on duty at Splash



Luther again



Rocky & Chansley



Richard & Chansley smooching



Cory corners some cuties



Kyle, Joy, James & Katie



Guy & Richard at holiday dinner



Karaoke time again



Very nice foursome at George's



Jason at Hound Dogs



Danielle & Chansley



Santa Baby



Jeffrey & Walt



Michael & Graham



Miss Jeanne & Damon at Hound Dogs

Ready for the Holidays ~ BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA ~ Photos by BRAD BENEDICT





## allons ACADIANA

by Patrick Clinton  
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**G**raduation and Christmas are both less than a week away, and right afterward is New Year's Eve. The season of celebration here in Lafayette has officially begun, and the parties won't end until Mardi Gras.

And everybody's favorite pair of gay bars is already working hard to make sure this holiday season is better than ever before. The Sound Factory and Back Side are tirelessly preparing for the upcoming holidays. On Sunday, December 21st, John, Mark, and the rest of the crew are hosting their annual Christmas Party, and I know it will be a night to remember. So grab your sweaters and get ready for a night of food, fun and festivities.

And just one week afterward, The Sound Factory and Back Side will hold their unforgettable New Year's Eve Extravaganza. There will be good friends and party

### one last song ...from Expose-4

Most of us do not use over the counter discount stuff. Personally I use professional stage make-up, all of which runs a pretty penny, a well stocked make-up kit with sable brushes, sponges, applicators, toners, bases, eye colors, liners, lip rouges, lip gloss, rouge, eye lashes, glues, highlighters will run upward of hundreds of dollars. Even more if the over the counter make-up is a name brand. Add to that the cost of wigs purchased (\$35 to \$400 dollars each) styled professionally, the hair spray and sheen applied backstage. The CD's, I have spent hundreds of dollars each year buying obscure albums to find new comic material. Then there is the jewelry, go out and price some of the earrings, necklaces and baubles and try not to faint. Then there are the outfits, can we talk some cash here? Price some of those better sequined gowns in sizes that will fit a drag. Material, I sew a lot of my own things and have been known to pay upward of \$50 a yard. The outfits for the most part have to be cleaned after two wearings, and I don't mean with Fabreeze either, try dry cleaning. Now what was that? The night won't cost me that much right!

Then comes the matter of transportation, I don't drive, so unless I can con a ride from some one it means I will have to get a cab to and from the club. Let me think this through. I imagine it would be fair considering, the wear and tear on my wardrobe, the use of my material and make-up it would probably be fair to say it costs me about \$75 a show. Now here is the real kicker, I am required to turn over 100% of my stage tips. The question I pose here, the host bars doubles or triples its cash register ring or even more. Why aren't they giving a percentage of the register to the charity and maybe let the entertainers keep half of their tips if they wish to cut their expenses or if not, just let them decide. You know that in many cases there's not even a representative of the charity there to collect the money at the end of

the evening and more times than not on even at the door.

Krewes and clubs for the most part raise funds like this to help with their expenses and for the most part their members are the ones doing the entertaining. This is what they do and the volunteers they use are doing it fully aware of where the monies are going. The Gay Easter Parade raises money for Food for Friends and the Gay Appreciation Awards raises money for Buzzy's Boys and Girls and their expenses are accounted for and published with-in thirty days. PrideFest basically dies or rather did the same thing. Has anyone seen an accounting of this year's expense as yet?

Many people ask me why I am not at every fund-raiser like some others are. I am writing this to try and set the record straight. If I belong to a group or club, I am there. If I know for sure where the money is going, I am there. I cannot attend everything as I admit, I am growing old and my own health is not all that great.

To every Drag Artist and Entertainer who gives and gives and gives, my lashes are off to you, how often have you heard those words "not another drag show?" But when they need cash in their coffers who are the first people they call on? Right sisters! **THE DRAG QUEENS!**

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### hot tails of red stick ...from Ex-14

balls, and I want you to know that they were huge balls. I'd never seen anything like them before. David was assisting him with the glitter, and Quentin and a real cutie (damn – I forgot his name – Chris maybe?) were putting up garlands around the bar. Well, since I failed

favours and champagne and anything else you can dream of. It'll be one last blowout to celebrate 2008 and welcome in 2009. So make sure you get their early. You definitely don't want to miss the last best party of the year.

Besides hosting the most fabulous parties and celebrations in town, the Sound Factory and Back Side always make sure that every night of the week is its own special party. They are open seven days a week and always have something incredible planned. Whether you're looking for a quick drink after work or a wild night on the town, there separate weekly lineups make even the most uneventful night fresh and new.

From Show nights on Sunday and Karaoke on Tuesdays to their unforgettable Dance Parties every Friday and

Saturday, when you plan a night out at Sound Factory and Back Side, you know it's going to be an adventure. And with ever changing drink specials, you're sure to get a great deal. What more can you ask for? It's two bars in one, and it won't break your pocket book. So this holiday season, make sure you remember your friends at the Sound Factory and Back Side. The holidays wouldn't be the same without them.

With so many celebrations going on, it's easy to forget to be responsible. Make sure you always have a designated driver, and if that doesn't work out, you can always take a cab. It's better to spend a few extra dollars than become another holiday statistic. Until next time, have fun and be safe. I'll see you around the Downtown.

to get that cutie's name, I guess I will have to go back and check him out. It's always nice to be able to add new names and faces to the hot tails family of great ones.

Things were lively at George's too. Marvelous Michael greeted me at the door, and that is always a treat, but I also enjoyed my chat with Tom. I'll have to get back over there soon to see Richard, Guy, Chansley, and that wonderful Luther. I haven't met the new bartender Andy, and that is reason enough for heading back over there. I need to check back in at Splash too and see all my wonderful guys and gals there – Danny, Ty, Stephen, Brad, Wes, Karen, Scott, Landon, Jeff, and, of course, Lance, the most gorgeous of all the Mr. Butt Beautiful winners. I think of them often, but I just don't care to keep late-night hours that much. I'm usually up at 4am having my first cup of coffee and planning my schedule for the day. Every now and then I surprise everyone with my late-night visits, but I'm an early bird and really enjoy the happy hour periods. I've spent many of those at George's and the old Mirror Lounge, and I have fond memories of all those I spent when in New Orleans at Lafitte's usually with Brian who now lives in Tampa.

I also made it over to Hound Dogs for my latest visit with Miss Jeanne. I didn't get to stay as long as I would have liked, but I had lots of other errands to run before getting home. Johnny was outstandingly friendly as usual, and the bar was rather crowded for so early in the evening. I'm sure some of the guys were downtown workers who just stopped in for a drink before heading home. I know this is Miss Jeanne's regular routine. We are still planning to hit New Orleans one of these days. I look forward to that. I have to also get back to Hound Dogs to see Joy and give her my best wishes for a great holiday, and perhaps I'll run into James and Kyle too.

The lights are on in the downtown area, and it is really a festive sight.

North Boulevard is always covered in lights from the Old State Capitol all the way to the interstate. One block breaks the theme this year with the new governmental building still in the process of going up, but it will be nice when it is completed. The skyline has changed so much in recent years. Actually, Baton Rouge had finally realized that progress is the only way to fly, and the city has taken wings. Now if the proper funding can be found, the riverfront will be completed all the way up to the Capitol, with a park being planned across from the Pentagon Barracks.

The Capitol grounds look different after Gustav spread his wrath across the city. The historic Boyd Oak is gone, and so many of the trees were heavily damaged. It will take a while for them to recover, but things just don't look the same without that beautiful old oak. I'm so happy I have lots of pictures of it. I have enjoyed walking under its spreading branches so many times, and now there is just an open space where it once stood so gracefully. Hopefully, it can be replaced with an offspring like the other one that was destroyed several years ago. A young tree started from one of her acorns is growing there now. That tree was a part of the elaborate decorations the year all the Copeland lights were at the State Capitol. I forget why it was removed, but I believe it split in half and couldn't be saved.

Trees and lights are all over the city. That time of the year is here again, so quickly it seems, but that happens as you grow older. The days slip away, but the changes keep coming. It's about time for me to get back to the Shaw Center and dine at Tsunami and watch the sun set over the Atchafalaya Basin. It's such a beautiful view from there. As this year comes to an end, let me wish you all the very best of the season and a very special wish goes out to Splash's David for a speedy recovery. We all love you, my friend.

It's always nice chatting with you. Let's do it some more in 2009.





Darius prowling around Sound Factory

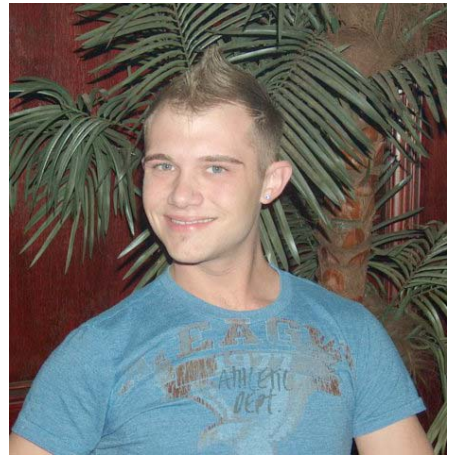


Robin & Jessica having drinks at Sound Factory

ACADIANA  
PAPARAZZI



Brett visiting Sound Factory



Chris taking a quick break at Back Side



Jared & Macky at Sound Factory



Steve working the door at Sound Factory



Matt & Amanda at Sound Factory



Reggie relaxing at Back Side



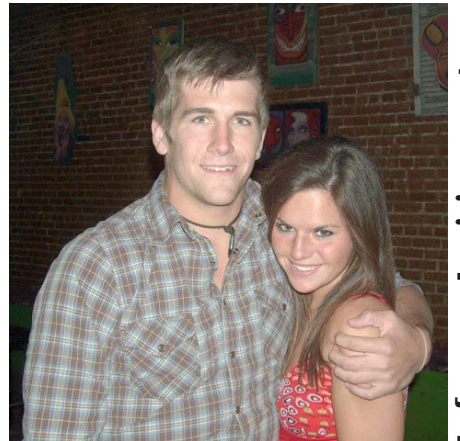
Blake & Jeffrey partying at Sound Factory



Whitney is all smiles at Sound Factory



Travis out & about at Sound Factory



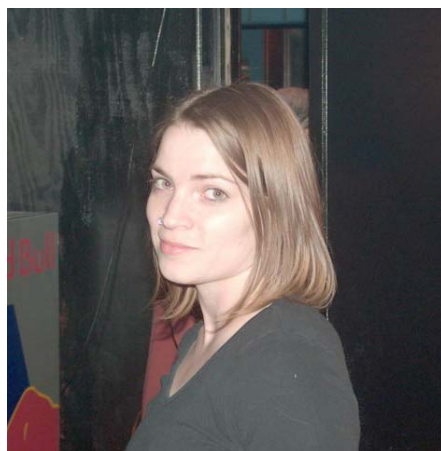
Trey & Kennedy at Sound Factory



Mallory & Amy enjoying a night at Sound Factory



Whitney relaxing at Sound Factory



Erin bartending at Sound Factory



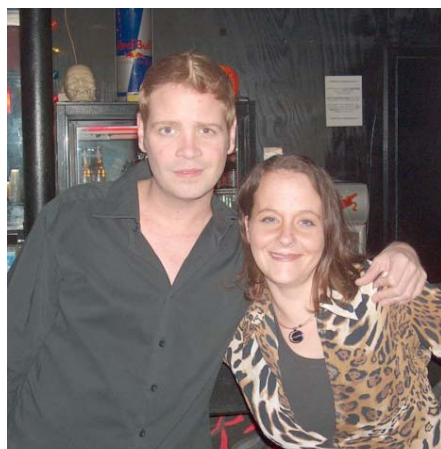
Stephanie looking fabulous at Sound Factory



Thomas cutting up at Sound Factory



Felix is all smiles at Sound Factory



Patrick & Lisa at Sound Factory



Christian partying at Sound Factory

Looking Fabulous ~ LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA ~ Photos by Patrick Clinton



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**cw6**

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## Saints, Trash Disco & Grape Leaves

Following the moving dedication of the New Orleans AIDS Memorial in Washington Square Park, it was over to JohnPaul's to catch the end of the Saints game. By the time we got there, it was over, and our boys, the Saints, had lost once again. Oh well, there's always next week for a win! Paul and John were in as was John's sister. Eva was there along with Elizabeth and Stephen, Cathy and Barry, and several others. They were in a jolly mood enjoying the Tailgate eats and left overs of Marcy birthday cake from the show from the night before. Red popped in from the Phoenix for a few snacks. She mentioned the Corner Pocket. Thank goodness! We almost forgot about Micheal's Post-Thanksgiving Feast at 5pm. After another cocktail or two, we headed back to Bourbon Street.

We popped into Lafitte's for a couple of Trash Disco tunes and a couple more vodkas. Both Aletha and Jeff were slingin' cocktails and the festive crowd was moving into high gear. DJ Johnny Love was showcasing the club's traditional Sunday videos which fans come back for more and more each week.

A short cab ride brought us to The Corner Pocket. As we opened the door to enter, the smells of holiday cooking drifted right to us. Heading to the bar, we got a couple of drinks, before taking a seat. Michael and Tommy were putting out the finishing touches on the the Pocket's Post-Thanksgiving buffet along with the help of Jerry. Bruce came in about that time. Let's see ...the last time we ran into him was when he was trying to sneak out of the digs of Miss Ashlee early one morning on St. Ann Street. Can y'all imagine, an early morning tryst between Bruce and Ashlee. Husband hunting must really be bad these days. But enough thinking about that. We certainly didn't want to ruin our appetites. After all, the Elias brothers had whipped up a batch of their famous stuffed grape leaves. These were the biggest, longest ones they've ever done. And did we say delicious?!? Yes, and of course there was turkey, Miss Ashlee's holiday dressing, potatoes, desserts and so much more. But those grape leaves were our favorites and we had to go back for a few more. It was time to head home for a good nights rest after a delightful action packed day in old N'awlins.

## Visits, Cocktails, Red Beans & Butter

It's now World AIDS Day, December 1st. After getting all of our pre-delivery day chores done, it was off to the bank. We love to do a little window shopping on the way to and returning from there. The jewelry and antiques are always stunning. But we are on a budget and can't afford any big ticket items. So it was off to the Double Play to take advantage of Happy Hour. John was slingin' cocktails and had a bevy of colorful locals. This is one stop that is always a scream! And John's sense of humor gives us the giggles!

A short walk down Dauphine taking a left on St. Peter landed us at 700 Club on the corner of Burgundy. Proprietor Mike was behind the bar, and we had to thank him once again for the marvelous culinary treats we took advantage of on Thanksgiving. His mom and godmother were such a pleasure chatting with. We had a little excitement when this young straight couple who had crossed over came in. Mike wouldn't serve them so they threw a fit, and broke his sidewalk board sign on the way out of the door. They went down the street a couple of doors and banged on the shutters of the home there. The police were called and arrived just as the couple walked right

into their arms. There was some more hollering and finally, they were taken away. These youngsters learned a lesson the hard way.

Two more blocks down Burgundy we went stopping in at Rawhide. Denny Sommers was serving cocktails here. He's one of the candidates for the upcoming Mr. LSGRA (Louisiana State Gay Rodeo Association) competition set for Saturday, March 7, 2009. Larry and his baby, Barnebus were in the house. Catch their pics in this edition.

A short cab ride to Cutter's brought us in for Monday's Bean Night with bartender Chris. After a couple of cocktails we tried the red beans, sausage and rice. As usual, Mac had whipped up a good batch. Here the guys serve a big restaurant size block of butter for the French bread accompanying the beans. When you put the bread on top of the hot beans, the butter just melts. It's definitely a Paula Dean moment!

## Delivery, Construction & LSGRA

After last delivery day came to a close, it was definitely time for a cocktail or two since we start around 5am and don't get done till 4:30 or 5pm. That is definitely a long day. The lovely Donnie Jay was slingin' cocktails at Tubby's Golden

Lantern. Miss Petit was there along with Chester and several other locals. We ran into Matt from *The Guide* out of Boston and bar baron Rick. Things are really shaping up at the Lantern. The two old bathrooms have been torn out in the reorganization of the space. There's even a new gas fire place to keep us warm in this bout of cold weather. We couldn't drink to much since we were off to a meeting.

Yes, it was off to Cowpokes for the Royalty Committee meeting followed by the general monthly membership meeting for LSGRA (Louisiana State Gay Rodeo Association). Bill was behind the bar so cocktails were available to those who wanted them. The LSGRA Royalty competition will be held on Saturday, March 7, 2009 at Cowpokes. The group has decided to do the Royalty competition the second Saturday after Mardi Gras each year. Did y'all know that LSGRA did such a great job on the 24th International Gay Rodeo Association Convention that the group has been asked to consider doing the convention each year in New Orleans. It is a lot of hard work and those members who worked so hard on convention should be congratulated. The whole rodeo experience could turn into another mega GLBT weekend for New Orleans and all of Louisiana, ranking up there with Southern Decadence, Mardi Gras and Halloween.

## Marcy, Aletha/Jeff, Rubyfruit, Pitty Pat & Mac

Some days it turns into a roller coaster ride when stepping out our front door for cocktails. First up was to catch Marcy over at Starlight By The Park. Javier and CW were getting in holiday mold beginning their mega decorating endeavor. Marcy was working the bar and the machines. Y'all know Miss Marcy loves those machines. Kyle and Justin popped in and had a few cocktails with us before we had to move on.

It was off to Cafe Lafitte in Exile where both Aletha and Jeff were slingin' cocktails. And did they have a crowd of happy patrons. You just never know who you'll run into at the oldest gay bar in the country. Chris was in from Metairie and told us he was getting Pride Specialties under way once again. His first new creation is a Pride flag with a fleur de lis in the center. Well, y'all know we had to order one. After a little chit chat, we had Aletha phone us a cab for our next destination.

A short cab ride brought us to 1135 Decatur Street for the Grand Re-opening of Rubyfruit Jungle. It was 6:30pm and unfortunately the club was running a little behind and was not opening until 8pm. Being on a tight schedule, we'd have to catch up with the Jungle another time. However, later we heard from Aletha about the opening going into high gear with standing room only.

Big Daddy's was next up on our

agenda. Miss Pitty Pat was behind the bar and after getting us a couple of cocktails we had a chance to chat. Mac was in from next door so we snagged a pic of he and Pitty. Wayne came in a short time later. We wanted to make sure he thanked his mom, Ms. Bobbie, for her delicious chicken and dumplings recipe. We tried it and it came out just like her's. If y'all ever see chicken and dumplings at Big Daddy's, make sure and try it. It is sure to be Ms. Bobbie's!

A few steps down Franklin landed us a Cutter's. It was the first Friday of the month, so y'all know that means it was the night for the December Artist of the Month opening reception. The featured artist was Steve Kiipper. In addition to his talents on canvas, he can give a mean shoulder or back rub. One piece caught our attention. It was a big ole beefy boy showing off his back side in black and white with a pair of red high heels on. Make sure and check out his work at Cutter's through December.

It was back to the Quarter heading for the Land of Oz. We'd missed Dingo with Princesse and Sable, but were in time for those hot Men of Manwatch. DJ Jason Lanoux was spinnin' crowd favorites making this one of those festive nights for party central. It's easy to see why Oz keeps on winning Dance Club of the Year voted on by the Gulf South readership of *Ambush Mag* in the annual Gay Appreciation Awards.

## Art Against AIDS

The 22nd Art Against AIDS Gala was hosted this year at The Sugar Mill on Convention Center Boulevard kicking off the holiday season for us. Event Chair Tony Leggio transformed the space into a shopping, dining and dance venue. It was spread out with bars on two different sides, a center stage with live music (and live auction), two silent auction areas, a sales area and popular restaurants set up throughout.

Opal Masters and Darwin Reed, and David and Rhonda Roget joined us for the affair. We ran into Countess C. Alice and David Aranda, Princesse Stephaney and Sam, Athena Jewel, Amber Nicole Welch, St. Charles Chiropractic's Michael Lechleiter and Ken Marino, New Orleans AIDS Memorial Founder Susan Livingston, Jack Sullivan, Barbara Satterley, NO/AIDS Task Force Executive Director Noel Twilbeck and Food For Friends Program Director Glen Kahrman, NO/AIDS Director of Development Heidi Chapman and NO/AIDS PR/Media Coordinator TJ Rogers.

There was something here for everyone. And this year had to be one of the best Art Against AIDS ever held. We picked up a couple of ornaments and bid on several silent auction items. Since we left before the end times of the auction, we don't know if we ended up with anything or not. But, we're sure we will find out shortly if we did.