

under the gaydar ...from 10



Heidi Nagele Chapman with *Mad Men's* Bryan Batt at her going away party at Louisiana Pizza Kitchen

be a part of this event next year, as well as any of the other events, go to www.noaidstaskforce.com or call 504.821.2601.

Founder's Day Awards Gala

On December 12, the LGBT Community Center of New Orleans held its Founder's Day Awards Gala at JohnPaul's Victorian Galleries. For the 3rd annual event, things were done slightly different then in past years. Instead of recognizing one individual, the Board of Directors chose six people to receive awards in various categories for their service in the community.

I have to say that I am very honored to know three of the award recipients personally. First off, Steven Forster who helms the *Times Picayune Big Easy* page received the Media Award. This award is given to a person or organization that covers LGBT issues and events in an honest light and consistently works with and exudes a genuine respect for the LGBT community. Steven has been a friend of mine for years and there is no one more deserving of this award than he is. He is the first photographer to use his real name in a gay publication in New Orleans. He also has the distinct honor of being the last person to photograph Ethel Merman alive. Adding to this accolade, Steven has also won eight Alpha Awards for fashion. And on a special note, he is truly a great friend and someone I respect immensely.

Next, my fellow *Ambush* columnist, Toni Pizanie received the Lifetime Achievement Award. Another person well deserving of this award, Toni has been a fixture in the LGBT community. Through her volunteer work, she has helped further many causes. She sits on the board for the Gay Appreciation Awards and PFLAG and was a past Pride Grand Marshal in 1998. Known for her volunteerism, anyone who knows Toni, can count on her to be there and give them 100% of herself. She is truly a remarkable woman and her acceptance speech was so moving that there was nary a dry eye in the house.

Larry Bagneris received the Politician Activist Award. This award is presented to an individual for outstanding achievement in promoting the rights of the LGBT community through political channels. Larry is the Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission and is responsible for receiving and mediating complaints of discrimination in Housing, Public Accommodations and Employment. He also serves on the Mayor's Advisory Council for LGBT Issues as well as Mayor Nagin's liaison to the City Council. Whether working with him on a committee or hanging out with him at a show at Big Daddy's, Larry's effervescence for the city and the LGBT community shines brightly.

Also receiving awards was American

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The 700 Club logo is a circular emblem featuring a stylized number '700' with a club icon integrated into the zero. To the right of the logo, a muscular man is shown from the chest up, flexing his right arm. He is wearing sunglasses and a watch. In the foreground, there are several party items including a 'Happy New Year' shot glass, a 'Frito Pie' container, and other festive decorations.

Aquatic Gardens for Business of the Year and Dr. Coleman Pratt M.D. for Health and Wellness. Rounding out the group, Larry Best got the Founder's Award which is awarded to a member of the LGBT Community Center who continues to work within the community to ensure the rights of all LGBT persons.

Congratulations to all those who received awards this year. To find out more about the awards or how to support the LGBT Community Center go to www.lgbtccno.org or call 504.945.1103. The Center is located at 2114 Decatur Street, stop in and checkout the services they provide.

Gay Mardi Gras Celebrates the Holidays

Holiday events are all around and the gay carnival krewes were busy this holiday season. The Mystic Krewe of Satyricon held three events in December. First they did the opening night of *White Christmas* at

Le Petit. Brandt Blocker and his team did an amazing job bringing this timeless classic to life. That same week, they also hosted *The Silent Night of the Lambs* opening night at Le Chat Noir. As always, Running with Scissors did a zany parody on two classics. Brian Peterson was a stand out as a deranged Santa Claus.

Also on December 12, Satyricon held its annual Christmas Bazaar, buffet and holiday auction at The Friendly Bar Annex. Becky Allen and Mickey Gil were the lively and funny auctioneers for this event. Whatever holiday shopping I did not have done, I completed at this event. For more information on Satyricon events, go to www.mystickreweofsatyricon.com or call 504.525.4498.

The Lords of Leather also had several events during December that was noteworthy. Both of them were at JohnPaul's and huge successes. The first was their wine and cheese art auction which spotlighted several local artists. I bought a great painting there that I now have proudly displayed in my entrance hall. And on

December 13, they held the fabulous *Divas Among Us*, hosted by Miss Louisiana Leatherette Cathy Fox. Proceeds of this event, over \$1,500, went to help St. Anna's Food Bank. This was a wonderful night of great entertainment with Cathy Fox, King Cake Queen XVII-Elect Opal Masters, King Cake Queen XIV Princesse Stephaney, Easter Grand Marshal X Marcy Marcelle, Zsa Zsa d'LaHor, Queen Amon Ra XLIV Rhonda Roget, Mr. Louisiana Leather Toby Lefort, Lord King XXVI Gary Vanderventer and Britney O'Brian. They had another fabulous silent auction and ornament sale. For more information on Lords of Leather future events, go to www.lordsofleather.com.

Gay Easter Parade Sponsors Thank You Party

I would like to thank all of the sponsors of the Gay Easter Parade. In case you did not know, I was very

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honored to be named Easter Grand Marshal X along with Marcy Marcell this year. Together with our generous sponsors we raised \$15,528.75 to benefit Food for Friends. And because of this, Food for Friends was able to buy enough supplies to add 50 more people to their clientele bringing their total now to 300.

On Friday, December 11, **Ambush Magazine** hosted the thank you party for the Easter Grand Marshals and the sponsors. It was a lively night and the food was excellent. Rip and Marsha really outdid themselves. But look for more exciting news about the Gay Easter Parade next year. There will be lots more fun and surprises in store for everyone. For more information on the Gay Easter Parade, go to www.GayEasterParade.COM.

Holidays in New Orleans

This city is filled with the holiday spirit that it is infectious. Most of that is due to the wonderful job of the hospitality community. At the beginning of the month, the hospitality community threw a Naughty or Nice Celebration at the Republic. The event was hosted by the Hospitality Education Networking Association (HENA), The National Association of Catering Executives (NACE), The Meeting Professionals Organization (MPI) and The International Society of Event Specialists (ISES). The evening was filled with great entertainment including carolers at the door in costume. But these were no ordinary carolers, they were none other than Becky Allen, Chris Wecklein and Harry Mayronne. A DJ spun for the entire night with special guest numbers throughout the evening. The first was the wonderful singing sensation of Anais St. John who did a very nice number followed up by a very naughty number.

Next up was a very special holiday show by Fleur de Tease which was very nice, and just a little on the right side of naughty. Republic was a wonderful place

to hold this event, and if you have not been there yet, check it out, they truly have the hottest staff around. The cuisine was prepared by Pigeon Catering with a special candy bar donated by NOLA Candy. You know it is going to be a good party when you are greeted at the door by a very hunky Santa and sexy Mrs. Claus as you enter.

Another fun event this holiday season was the Tales of the Toddy held at the W Hotel. This event is presented by the Tales of the Cocktail and is one of the best holiday events of the season. This event mixes some of the best bartenders from around the city making holiday specialty drinks while you shop the local artists and vendors who have tables selling their wares. I purchased even more Christmas gifts there. I do not even have this many people on my holiday list, I think I am stocking up for next year.

This year the event was sold out, so you know it is good, so get your tickets early for next year, or better yet, get them as a Christmas gift to someone special (or not so special, but you have to get them a gift anyway) on your lists that drinks. Hint, that would be me. For more information on Tales of the Cocktail, go to www.talesofthecocktail.com.

From seeing the lights on Fulton Street to caroling in Jackson Square, enjoy the holiday season in our great city.

New Kid on the Block

There is a new gay bar in town and what a welcome addition to the city. The Bywater Patio Bar out back of Bywater BBQ is one of the newest hot spots. The owner Mike has made this comfy little area a special place. Decorated for the holiday and encompassing there lovely courtyard, it is quickly becoming a local favorite. It also has a Wii game which I played recently by the way and kicked some butt at bowling. Who knew I was good at it.

It also has karaoke on Monday nights with Rikki Gee who is just as fun and entertaining as she can be. Also, the



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incomparable Rusty LeRoux has returned behind the bar and she is better than ever. Somewhere in the background, Elton John is playing **The Bitch is Back**. She is one of the best bartenders in the city mixing drinks and giving her insightful points of view on every subject from politics to entertainment. It is definitely worth the price of a beer.

Get Over It

2010 is right around the corner and what is your New Year's resolution. Here are three words that will help you on your way to a great new year. **Get Over It or Let It Go**, whichever you prefer. I found out that life is too short to sweat the small stuff so to speak. If someone does you wrong, just let it go, do not harbor ill will or hatred, that takes too much of your precious energy which is deserving of better things. Bitterness is not an attractive look on anyone. Besides, when you really get down to it, is he or she really worth it. It also does not have to mean you need to be a doormat, stand up for yourself whenever necessary. If you feel wronged speak your piece then move on. Remember there is a one night stand around the corner with your name on him.

Do not worry about what others think of you or what they say. Honey I found out a long time ago if they are talking about you, then you obviously mean something to them. Any publicity is good publicity. I mean really has anyone talked about Tiger Woods in the last year until we all found out he slept with all those women. I am waiting for Princesse Stepaney to come forward. Can you imagine that **Enquirer** story.

Now turning the other cheek, also does not mean you have to be someone's friend. Choose the people around you

wisely, remembering that negativity breeds, so try and surround yourself with positive influences. I find that indifference is a much more powerful weapon than hatred. But a tazer seems to put them in their place quicker. Just kidding. Now keep in mind, it has taken me many moons to heed my own advice, but it has worked out well.

Also, try to do three things this year you have never done before. It can be as small as going to a new festival or joining a book club, or bigger, like taking a trip to somewhere exotic, or going to the Westbank for those queens who never venture out of the Quarter. If you are a slut, give monogamy a try in 2010. If that does not work, then call me.

Recently an article written in this magazine stirred up some emotion in the drag community. Controversy is good if it motivates you into a positive action. Always strive to be a better you. But some words written in a magazine should never hurt someone's feelings. Keep in mind, it is always easy for people to critique others and they do not define you as a person. Everybody's a critic, but not everybody is qualified to make judgments. And besides, how much talent does it take for a boy to come out and lip sync boy songs dressed as a boy. Hell, I do that in front of the mirror every morning as I get ready. Have his ass put on high heels, now that is talent.

Also as we say goodbye to 2009, lets take a moment to remember those who have passed this year. Remember them in your heart as you move on to an exciting and prosperous 2010. Happy New Year Everyone!

Have an event or have something of interest to the LGBT community, feel free to send press releases or information to tonymgp@hotmail.com.



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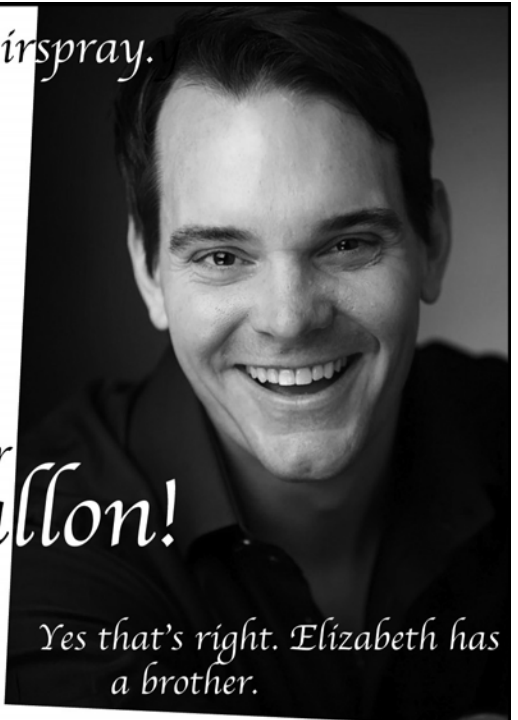
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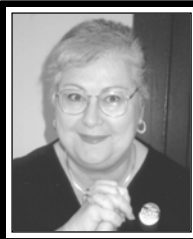
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by Toni J.P. Pizanie
Email: psalmwrite@att.net

Stormy, Stormy Night

This is said to be the wettest December on record, and I believe it. My roof is leaking in three places suddenly, and the garage keeps flooding with water rushing under the door from the force of the rain. But that's not the bad news. I almost didn't make it to the LGBTCCNO Founders' Day Party at JohnPaul's. Ray and I got as far as Airline Highway and the storage road when we came upon bumper to bumper traffic that was moving at a snail's pace. Looking ahead, we could see that cars and trucks were u-turning across the neutral ground and heading back into Metairie. We can make it, I insisted. NO, I am not going to take that chance, Ray shouted back at me.

Even Metairie Road was flooded. It was the first time I've ever seen it that way. There was no way out of Metairie into New Orleans. Or so we thought.

So there I was back at home – all dressed up with someplace to go and no way to get there. Ray was refusing to go back out, and worse, he was refusing to let me drive myself. Just before the big fight where I growl, NO ONE tells me what to do, the phone rang. Randy Trahan was at JohnPaul's asking where we were. He told us how to get downtown without drowning, and we took off again.

What the heck was so important that I couldn't miss a party? The Community Center was giving me their Lifetime Achievement Award. The LGBTCCNO was the first New Orleans LGBT group that I joined after returning here from the Mississippi Gulf Coast. I'd been away for five years this time. I had old friends but no contacts with the Gay Community other than St. Mark's and Charlene's.

Thanks to LGBTCCNO, I was outed by WWL-TV to my family and their friends. The Center was responsible through me for turning my mom into a volunteer for Gay causes. They filled my life in the 1990's with hours of work, planning, social gatherings, political gatherings and an award for Volunteer of the Year more than once.

Since the move to Decatur Street, I haven't been as active due to other interests and organizations. I still support Center activities, write articles to bring awareness to the Center and most recently caused changes that have turned out to be good for the Center and the community. The new board is outstanding, so it seems, and is making the Center more active with other organizations and individuals.

The Center is and always has been important to me. Its success is important to the community, and necessary, I believe. I very humbly accepted this treasured award. I joyfully place it at the top of all the awards I've received throughout the years. A few of the most meaningful were 1994 LGCCNO Volunteer of the Year, 1995 GAA Lesbian of the Year, 1998 Pride Grand Marshal, and Petronius Queen 42nd. The cost to me was oodles of time, a few arguments, visits to politicians and a new

tux with matching jewelry. Of course, getting old helps – they figure you won't be around much longer. Ha.

I started the evening with two Lemon Drop shots that Russell had waiting for me at the door. Once upstairs, I ordered martinis, several martinis, and finally the hosts served me champagne which I like very much. By the time Ray got Julie in our car, I was pole dancing outside JohnPaul's. Steven Forster has the pictures to prove it, I'm sad now to say. Luckily, I am a happy drinker. I don't ever remember getting angry or mean when I have had a lot to drink so I wasn't worried about really offending anyone. I just usually make people laugh, and there was lots of laughter outside the bar that night.

On Thursday of this same wet weekend, PFLAG Board Members had a dinner meeting with National Director Jody Huckabee at Jacquimos. After a good meal and a few martinis, we all headed over to St. Matthews UCC to hear Jody speak to a group of about 40 people, and take part in the PFLAG Christmas/Holiday Party.

Wow! There were some yummy desserts. Charles made a pecan cream pie that would put a mild diabetic into a coma. The middle was a mix of powdered sugar, cool whip and something secret with piles of caramel soaked pecans on top. Jude and Jeffrey made rich brownies. There were dozens of cookies and sandwiches and crackers and cheese. I believe that everyone brought home treats. I'm still enjoying the sugar cookies.

Tucked between these two fun parties was the Gay Easter Parade Sponsors Thank You Party at Rip and Marsha's. Yes, it was another feast with their rare recipes and full bar. I drank champagne until I was ready to float away on the waves rolling down Bourbon Street. I made this annual visit to see people like Miss Billy, Princesse Stephaney, Zsa Zsa d' LaHor, Marcy Marcell, Jerry Scavo, Opal Masters and a ton of others.

It was worth braving the rain to see everyone and sit with Rip and Marsha to catch up on what's happening in their world. I love working for **Ambush** from home but miss all the activities of the office and the Quarter.

Everyone looked their best and the costumes were worthy of Steven Forster's photographic genius. Steven was also receiving an award from the LGBTCCNO the next evening with me. For Steven, this was one of a long list of awards for his outstanding talent. And I love that he is a jazz fan like me – jazz music. His FB picture is one of the great Miss Ella; my personal favorite.

But let's get back to all that drinking. I do it so seldom that when I do drink, I try to make up for long dry weekends at home. Ray doesn't drink and I don't drink alone. So some of you every weekend partiers need to bring me along with you so I'll get back into partying like I used to with Rip

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The Mystic Krewe of Satyricon presents

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Saturday, January 2, 2010

7 p.m. - 11 p.m.

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(chosen by a drawing)

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