



Lindsey & Ashley at Splash



Apollo captains & new royalty couple



Nathan & Joel



Waiting for the food



James & Kyle at Hound Dogs



Sam, Richard, Mark & Jimmy



Scott & Eddy



Cute couple enjoying night out



John at George's



Dennis, Les & Joe



Kenny & Terry



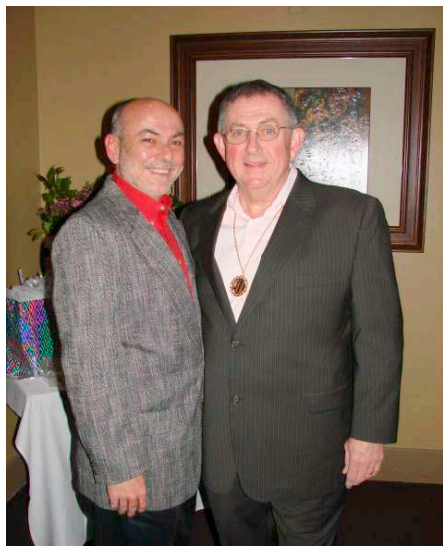
Julie & Joy with Chicago's Jonathan



Enjoying Krewe of Divas Bal Masque I



Gene, Kenny & DJ



Terry & Richard



Happy gathering at George's



Having fun at L



Larry, Hal & Damon



King XXV Alan welcomes new XXVI royalty



Danny & David at Splash

...PHOTOS: BRAD BENEDICT  
APOLLO, COCKTAILS, CLUBS ~ BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA





## HOT TAILS of RED STICK

by Brad Benedict  
E-mail: bradhottails@hotmail.com

### In Royal Company

Once each year and prior to its annual bal masque, the Baton Rouge Krewe of Apollo Royalty Club of former kings and queens gather to honor the new royalty-elect couple. This year, it took place on Saturday night, January 20th, at Juban's Creole Restaurant on Perkins Road and like previous years, the atmosphere was one of delightful camaraderie.

This was the night when Scott Blanchard and Eddy Vargas were invited into the royal circle as King and Queen Apollo XXVI. It was a night for them to know that they were chosen because of all their hard work and what they mean to this krewe. In the personal opinion of many, especially mine, this honor was long overdue, and their enthusiastic promise of living up to all the things expected of them was accepted in the same manner as it



Scott Blanchard and Eddy Vargas, King and Queen Apollo XXVI

### capitol comments ...from EX-4

drink. And if speed is your thing, buzz on into the Cockpit on Tuesdays for twice the fun with Josephine and "2 for Tuesdays" featuring \$2 domestic beers, well drinks and schnapps from 10pm to 11pm. You will be amazed how much can be accomplished in an hour. Just another way owner Warren and all the crew at the Cockpit are making sure a good time is had by all.

Looking for a special way to spend Valentine's Day? Well grab your sweetheart and head over to the Trois Estate for The Wright House Wellness Center's annual Healing Hearts Gala. This A-list event is a way to support the great work provided by The Wright House Wellness Center while treating that special someone to an evening of elegance. More information about the Healing Hearts Gala can be had by contacting the Wright House Wellness Center at 512.467.0088.

If you know of anything going on in the Austin area or if you would like something mentioned in Capitol Comments, email Bob at [capitolcomments@yahoo.com](mailto:capitolcomments@yahoo.com).

was given. They definitely do represent all that is expected of Apollo royalty, and there is no doubt that they will do an excellent job. One thing is for certain, they are the handsomest couple to ever represent the krewe. That is not only a personal opinion but an absolute fact. Congratulations go out to them in this time of celebration. May your reign be everything you always dreamed it would be. The Krewe of Apollo Royalty Club salutes you and wish you the very best during the coming year.

Regardless of what happens during the year, things always seem to come together on this magical night as tales of past adventures and surprise happenings dominate the conversations. And it is also a time for a few to strut their stuff in their outstanding rooster style to let everyone know how things came to be leading up to this night. It is always great to see these individuals more or less sprout wings and soar above the rest of us. Needless to say it is usually the captains of the upcoming bal masque, and no two roosters do it better than Nathan Wright and Terry Adams.

Nathan is a former king and Miss Adams was a queen to be reckoned with as she was lifted up on that fork lift so she could come down those steps from a second level entrance at Bal Masque XVI. Her king of the night Damon had the same problem of crossing that gap from fork lift to stage, but both made it with the dignity that was expected of them. Their costumes of the night were perhaps the best and most beautiful ever for the Krewe of Apollo. I'm sure there will those royalty members to think otherwise, but they have a year to think on the subject and consider a rebuttal - if they dare do so in 2008.

Conversations of the evening also centered on problems (in a somewhat comical way) of the things that happened leading up to this and any other ball or party presentations, but the overall conclusion was that it all would come together on the night of the big event, which this year is scheduled for the new RiverCenter complex on January 27th. Apollo is noted for presenting the best of all the balls, and it is a tribute to all the hard work that goes into the final product. Only the best is expected, and with Nathan and Terry at the helm, it has to be top-notch in all respects. It will be a night to remember always.

And now - on to the next twenty-five years.

### Royal Conflicts

It is unfortunate that so many balls are taking place on the same nights. Take the first week in February, for instance. Balls will be taking place in Lafayette, Birmingham, and Dallas, leaving the new royalty with having to make a choice on which to attend. With the Apollo group in Dallas just getting started, it was difficult to do but the Baton Rouge king and queen will journey to Dallas for their Bal Masque I, with other members representing the local krewe in Lafayette

[continued on Expose-8]

# BATON ROUGE



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## ALLONS ACADIANA

by Patrick Clinton  
E-mail: [BlondAtULL@aol.com](mailto:BlondAtULL@aol.com)

January is coming to a close this week, and that can only mean one thing. The Festival Season has officially begun. This Mardi Gras is going to be one like no other. Not only is it going to be filled with decadence and celebration, but every one of us has had to answer one of the most difficult questions I've come across in the past few years. Apollo or R.O.U.? Yes that's right; this weekend is going to be one that we have all looked forward too. However, many of us in the gay community had to make the astoundingly difficult choice of which Ball we will be attending this 2007 Carnival Season. In years past I have always had a fabulous time at both of these most auspicious of occasions. However, due to forces beyond my control, I have had to make a difficult decision, just like everyone else. But we won't get into that. Needless to say, If you don't see me at the Ball, I'm probably at the other one.

I know that the Mystic Krewe of Apollo is going to put on a show full of glamour and glitter that all in attendance will find hard to forget. And the Royal Order of Unicorn will no doubt give everyone attending a performance filled with fashion and fame that will be very memorable. No matter which one of these epicurean occasions you have chosen to attend, I know that both will be truly outrageous.

Just a reminder to those of you who are attending R.O.U., Sound Factory will be hosting the official Before and After Ball Party. As always the before party will have plenty of food, and it's nice to see what everyone wearing in the off chance you have to do an emergency frock change before the Ball. And there is no better way to bring this fabulous evening to a close than to get together at Sound Factory for cocktails and gossip about the events of the evening.

Mardi Gras 2007 falls on Tuesday, February 20th, and I can't wait for the parades to begin. Don't forget that Sound Factory and its Back Side will be open all day long on Mardi Gras day. So be sure you get up bright and early Tuesday morning for breakfast and mimosas at the best gay bar in town. Mardi Gras and its balls are not the only thing happening in this town.

The bars are open seven days a week and have a fabulous line up to boot. Sound Factory and its Back Side have always managed to keep every night of the week filled with fun and excitement. Tuesdays have welcomed back Karaoke once again. I know many of you felt lost and confused, with no where to sing besides your cars and in the shower. But never fear, Karaoke is here. So feel free to come on out and serenade the city of Lafayette once again with your unique musical styles and talent. Between the Karaoke on Tuesday nights and Show Night on Sundays, they pack seven days with everything from kickass contests to drag shows and pool tournaments. And scattered throughout are drink specials and some of the best dance music around.

And unlike many other dance clubs,

Sound Factory has a quieter more relaxed side, a Back Side where you can take a break from the loud music and socialize with your friends, or make some new ones. And when the conversations wear thin, all you have to do is walk around the corner to dance the night away. What more could anybody ask for? It's two bars for the price of one, and it's right in the heart of downtown. It's no wonder so many people travel from all over to come out in Lafayette. It offers a unique culture and an unbeatable nightlife. And Sound Factory plays no small part in the overall success of the area. Unlike many of the other bars that have come and gone in the area, John and the rest of the crew at Sound Factory and Back Side really care about the gay community, and that makes all the difference. So next time you're trying to figure out something to do, come by Sound Factory and its Back Side. You're sure to have an unforgettable night.

No matter what your answer to the big question of 2007, I know that the Mystic Krewe of Apollo and the Royal Order of Unicorn will successfully impress and awe all the who's who of the evening. Have a happy Carnival Season. Until next time, have fun and be safe. I'll see you around the downtown.

### hot tails of red stick ...from EX-6

and Birmingham.

This is a problem that comes up every year, and when the season is so short, it is not possible to eliminate the conflicts. Of course, the number of balls also plays into the situation, but it still would be nice if a board could come up with a solution. I know Saturday nights are favored, but perhaps some could be held on Friday nights to help alleviate the conflicts. Whatever could be done would definitely solve a major problem that crops up every year on ball nights. It ends up being a time of favoritism when it should be a time of complete cooperation and understanding.

It is important that all the bal masques be supported equally, and although it doesn't ever seem to work out that way, there has to be a solution. Some community individuals enjoy attending all balls, while it isn't important to others, but spreading things around more has to be the solution. Regardless of what happens, it is extremely important for everyone to do their part in supporting these krewes. A lot of work goes into ball productions, and unless you have participated in this process, you really have no idea of all the time and money spent to please the masses for such a short period of time.

Something else would be nice if it could be accomplished. As soon as all the ball dates are decided, it would be nice to see a central source for compiling the information. I don't mind doing that, and I'm sure Rip and Marsha at Ambush would welcome a complete listing early in the season, perhaps by the end of each year. It would make advance planning much

## cold case homicide

**Victim: John Perry Meche  
12/2/1994**

**Lafayette, Louisiana**

Victim Meche was a 47 year old openly gay white male who was cut, stabbed and beaten to death on the night of 12/2/94 in his residence. Investigation has revealed that Meche was probably killed by a male whom he had invited to his residence for an initial encounter and that the killer was previously unknown to Meche.

Meche was a house painter and maintenance man by trade and a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Anyone with information concerning this matter is requested to contact the Lafayette Parish Louisiana Sheriff Department, Detective J.B. St. Pierre. Identities of persons furnishing information will be kept confidential.

Detective St. Pierre can be contacted



via the following: Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Office, 316 W. Main St., Lafayette, LA 70502, 337.236.3982 (direct), or 337.232.9211 (general).

easier and give all royalty members time to plan out their course of action. They could even name representatives to go to other balls in case of a conflict. After all, balls are for the new reigning members, and all should have the best representation possible. Think on this, and see if this could possibly ease the burden placed on the new royalty members at the last minute. They have enough to consider just getting those costumes ready. After that, they deserve the much-deserved rest and the ability to represent their krewes with dignity and respect at all other functions.

### Royalty Remembrances

Whether alive or deceased, all krewes are faced with remembering, a time for recollections of all the great functions from the past. These are moments and memories that last a lifetime, and what better way to pay respects to these members than to discuss the good times.

I have a lot of memories to share, and I can't speak for others because I don't have an insight to how they feel, but let me tell you about a few, some known, some really unknown. At the royalty dinner for Apollo last week, Dr. B.J. Schooley's name came up, and Damon spoke up to say that he had remained in contact with this Jackson, Mississippi former king. In fact, things seem to be going well for him although he hasn't returned to Baton Rouge in several years. When he lost the love of his life, he changed forever. I for one understand the reasons, and I know how much this partnership meant to him.

Sometimes we hold within us the memories that we don't readily share, and that is what is so nice about being able to write about them. As a former royalty member myself, I have to say that my good friend and former king Danny Fontenot had a lot to do with my joining Apollo, but had it not been for Tom Pierce, it probably wouldn't have happened. We were all out celebrating at Mac's Bar one night, and I was covering the evening's festivities for Ambush. Tom walked up to me and asked if I would like to attend the ball and sit at Gene Ransom's table. That was the start of a wonderful journey as I ventured down

to Plaquemine to take in my first bal masque. The other part of that night was not that nice. I had a date (and I can't recall the name), but he could hardly wait to get back to Baton Rouge, and I was equally anxious to get him back and away from me. Hmmm. I wonder who that was. Needless to say, I wasn't impressed.

And as I recall, this was the night Mark and Steve were on the stage as Apollo's royalty. In fact, I believe Tom was the returning royalty member in that blue gown and just as happy as ever. He glowed with a beautiful radiance that only Oil of Olay could give him. (If you don't believe it, try it!) Then there were other parties and other nights with Tom that I recall too. I was never treated any better than when I was in his presence. He truly personified what a member of the royal team should be like - kind, gentle, and honorable. I miss him. Larry Fremin is another who can make you feel so needed and so much a part of the krewe. I respect him for this.

There were a number of ex-royalty members who couldn't attend for a number of reasons. Truman was one of these. Who could ever forget a former king/queen slithering down the runway in what has to be one of the best of all presentations. Perhaps next year, he will slither back into our presence and honor us with his delightful smile and totally charming personality.

I also missed Kent Roby, that most beautiful of all Apollo queens from the past. I haven't seen Kent since we enjoyed that wonderful nude play at the Marigny Theater last fall. Every Mardi Gras that I attend, I see Kent with a different costume walking the streets in all his/her beauty. That beauty is not only seen but is felt by each person as they feel this radiating from him. He is one of those rare individuals that has always managed to exude confidence and sincerity while maintaining a masterful form of dignity. He has really been a great representative of the Apollo team of royalty members.

Another happening that was both sad and funny, and this happened after one of the balls when we were all leaving for home. One of Apollo's queens was ap-

[continued on Expose-16]





**Krewe of Divas • Sat., Feb. 3rd • 11pm**

## Spanish Town Parade

Sat., Feb. 17th • Open 12noon • Free Jambalaya After Parade

## Bayou Grizzlies Bal Masque

Sat., Feb. 17th • 9pm til



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WEDNESDAYS & THURSDAYS

Cat's Ass Karaoke w/ Cody King • 11pm

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Valentine's Day  
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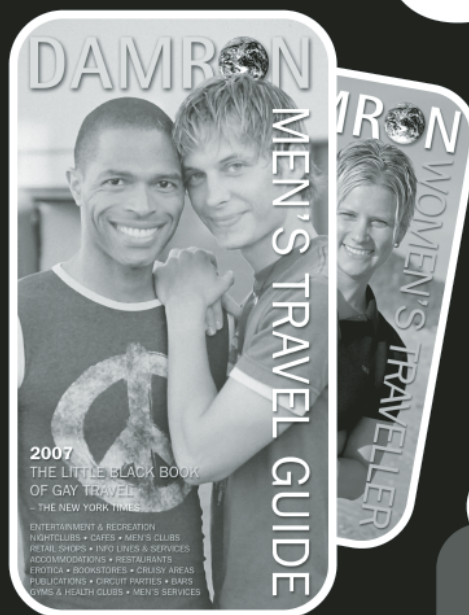
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Jason, Jena & Corey working karaoke at Sound Factory



Mark the manager & John the owner of Sound Factory



Clay working the bar at Back Side



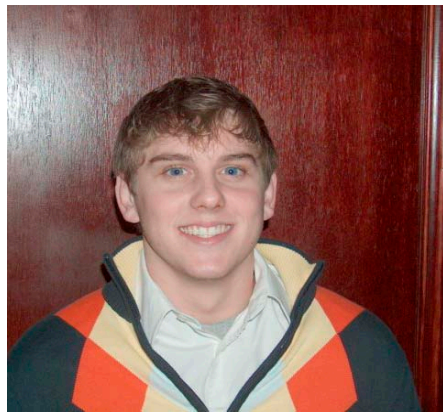
Darius waiting for his cocktail at Back Side



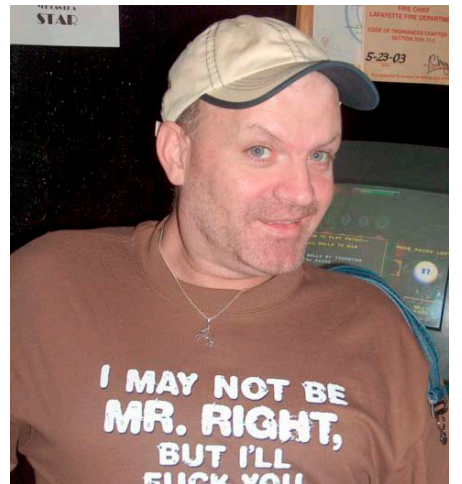
Erika hanging out at Sound Factory



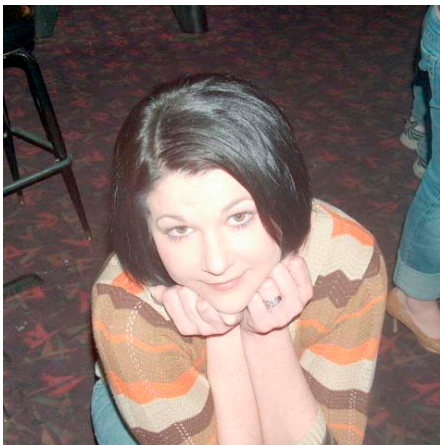
Nick visiting Sound Factory from outta town



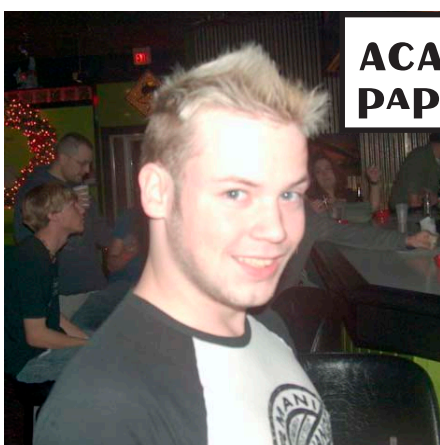
Ryan having a blast at Back Side



Stephanie workin' it at the door of Sound Factory



Rochelle looking adorable at Sound Factory



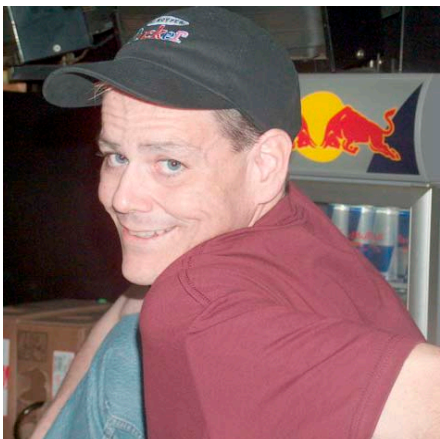
Steven being himself at Sound Factory



Kathryn, all dressed up at Back Side



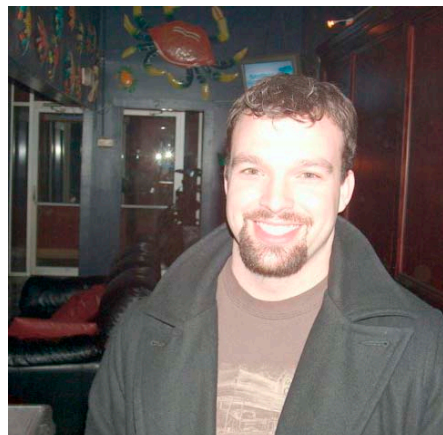
Chris hanging out at Sound Factory



Chelsea, bartender at Sound Factory



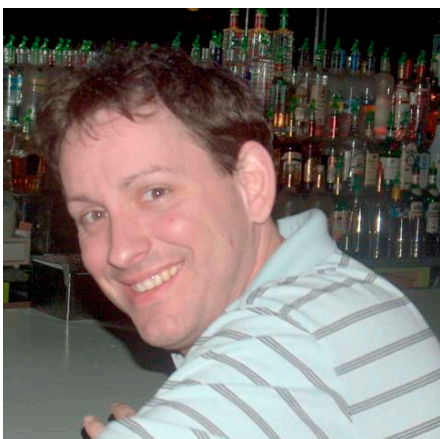
John working the bar at Sound Factory



John having a cocktail at Back Side



Michelle & Dallas having a drink at Sound Factory



Troy, a regular at Sound Factory



Josh bartending on the Back Side



Jason popping in to Sound Factory



Hal, Scott & Kenny having fun at Sound Factory

ACADIANA  
PAPARAZZI

...PHOTOS: PATRICK CLINTON  
~ LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA