

PROFILE

Band does more than just come out and play

by Eve Sicular

Several years ago, the cry arose for a loud, proud, joyous expression by Portland's lesbian and gay community, and a group of musical individuals organized to give the annual June march its own Lesbian and Gay Pride Marching Band. Today the group lives on, and this year's band is making music all year round. The band is serious (but never too serious) about performing much more than once a year, and the tunes played are not your average marching music. For recent gigs at Judy's and the Lesbian Forum, the hits were "Midnight Soul Patrol," "The William Tell Overture" (a.k.a. the Lone Ranger theme song) and, still to be perfected for MTV, "Beat It." And while this year the 20-member band is the largest yet, new members are being sought.

This year's band organizers are currently arranging for a spring and late winter performance schedule to include various types of appearances. The band's purpose is to entertain both players and listeners, and in the process, to educate both. Besides giving audiences a positive view of lesbians and gays in light of their talents, the band is a way

for members to improve or revive their musicianship in a relaxed atmosphere. People with skills other than music are also involved, and their help is encouraged (for information on becoming a "band aide," read on).

A frequent story heard among musicians in the band is that when they came out of the closet, a xylophone, saxophone or sousaphone was left behind gathering dust. Through this group, they have been able to reclaim a part of their past they had thought lost forever; rusty skills were polished up for several members for the first time since grade school. And while the band is not able to train beginners from scratch, several classical musicians have joined the brass and percussion sections and learned to play instruments helped by their previous keyboard and guitar experience. The band can use players of all sorts: besides the instruments previously mentioned, people are sought for trumpet, cornet, trombone, French horn, clarinet, oboe, flute, baritone, drums and percussion. And if the only thing you need to make your talents heard in the band is the instrument itself, get in touch with an organizer at the numbers listed below. What you need may be located through our musical grapevine (it worked for me and my snare drum; call soon for prompt action).

Besides musicians, the band is looking for people to form banner and uniform committees, and to work with us in promotion, organization and fund-raising. A drill team may be getting together and for added excitement, any ex- or would-be cheerleaders are invited to do their stuff. Finally, anyone who's



Members of P.L.G. Community Band with mascot.

interested in being on hand for the thousand and one things that need to be done at a gig, is most welcome to be an official Band-Aide supporter.

For information on any and all aspects of joining the Portland Lesbian & Gay Pride Marching Band, call 287-3260 (one of our fearless leaders cannot be as out as to put a name in print, but emphasizes that commitment to the band is a way of being heard and seen, possibly masked, at the march and

certain other gigs) or 233-1206 (Kristan). For musicians, rehearsals are most Thursday nights from 7 til 9 p.m. at Mt. Tabor Middle School, located at S.E. 58th and Oak. Phone for details, and to check whether we're practicing on any given Thursday. (Post-rehearsal socializing after nine o'clock can be counted on since the band that plays together stays together.) For further news of upcoming gigs and rehearsals, check the calendar of this newspaper.

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