

Did You Bring It?

A look back on Portland Pride 2008

by Stephen Marc Beaudoin
Photos by Marty Davis

here's at least one aspect of Portland Pride 2008 that's earning unqualified raves for being brought this year: the weather.

Sunny and mild in the mid to upper 70s, the weekend weather June 14 and 15 provided a spectacular setting for Portland's annual Gay Pride festival and parade, as an estimated 45,000 sexual minorities and allies turned out in full plumage for what Portland Area Business Association president Michael Long characterized as "a really nice showing of community across the board," replete with informational booths at Waterfront Park, a sedate parade by most Gay Pride standards and a nebulous mass of queers crowding downtown who Long said were "generally well-behaved."

"It was pretty chill," said 28-year-old Jessie Haungs, who toured the waterfront booths and sampled the mainstage entertainment with her girlfriend. "It was very mixed, which is cool," she added, commenting that it was "nice to see the range that we have in the queer community."

Many people interviewed noted the "range" of queers and allies present for this year's Pride festivities, themed "Pride. Bring It." Andy McQueery, 33, attending his first-ever Portland Pride, marched with a group of 18 queer and allied members of his Southwest Portland Episcopal church, St. John the Baptist.

"There is a movement at work in all denominations to work toward the full inclusion of everybody in the religious community," he noted. Does he feel it's important for the Portland-area sexual minorities community to see faith-based groups at Pride? "Absolutely," he says. "It

is so important for them to see that there are mainline, mainstream religious traditions who are saying that the James Dobsons of the world do not speak for us."

While enthusiasm ran high on the street, the festival and its organizers—the nonprofit Pride Northwest—did not escape criticism concerning this year's Pride. Some attendees, like PABA's Long, sounded long-familiar criticisms of the fest, like wanting to move the parade back to Saturday after several years of falling on Father's Day. "Who wants to choose between Father's Day and Pride?" he asked, noting he himself had elected, with regret, to skip Dad's Day activities this year for the eighth straight year to attend Pride.

Still other Pride attendees were less flattering in their assessment of the event.

"Lame" is how 27-year-old arts advocate Brian T. Wilson dismissed the waterfront festival this year. After hosting a pre-parade brunch at his Old Town loft with partner Eric D. Olson (himself a former Pride Northwest board member), he led a large group of friends to the parade, which he derided for "a lack of drag queens and entertainers and shirtless men." He also cast a critical eye on the Pride Northwest board of directors.

"Portland is full of smart and interesting creative people, and the board doesn't reflect that," Wilson said. He went on to suggest Stumptown queers outside Pride Northwest organize an ad hoc meeting "to discuss the direction of where Pride should go" and even offered a preliminary recommendation in advance of such a meeting: "Portland should take a year off Pride—and let's see how people respond to that." 10

Located in the heart
of Sellwood

**THE
DOG PARK**

1717 SE Umatilla • (503) 230-1109

Day Care &
Boarding for
Dogs and
Boarding
for Cats

25% OFF
EXCLUDES TOWNS & PACKAGES
EXPIRES 6/30/08

Mon-Fri 7AM-6PM • Sat 9AM-5PM



**DOWNTOWN
women's
CENTER**

WOMAN-OWNED CLINIC
RUN BY WOMEN FOR WOMEN
WITH KINDNESS, SENSITIVITY AND RESPECT

Visit us on the web:
www.downtownwomenscenter.com

Call (503) 224-3435 or
(800) 742-9292

511 SW 10th Ave., Suite 905
Portland, OR

**Improvement
Remodeling LLC**

We do all handyman services

Demolition to Finish Carpentry
— WE DO IT ALL —

 

FREE ESTIMATES

If you can dream it, we can build it
Licensed • Bonded • Insured
ccb#172574

WE OFFER DESIGN CONSULTATIONS
Edward Andrew • 503-515-3171
imrconst@aol.com

— JULY SPECIAL —
FREE HEARING TEST
Call today!


Allison Bradley

- Hearing Tests
- Hearing Aids
- Custom Ear Plugs and more!


pacificaudiologyclinic

5010 NE 33rd Avenue
Portland, OR 97211
503-284-1906
www.pacoregon.com

where the **queers** go to hear!