Bridges To Pride

Southwest Washington keeps the pride ride rolling

BY RYAN J. PRADO

While the memories of Portland Pride 2011 continue to be logged and filed, Facebook photos tagged, rainbow flags still happy in their staffs, a community takes a breather, the biggest party of the year over and done with. Well, some in the community, that is. An arguably larger contingent has yet to store the neon short shorts, the face paint, the smiles that come along with representing the LGBTQ community in a very public setting. For those in the Portland metro area, another opportunity for pride isn't far away.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Ms. Vancouver Gay Pride VII, KiKi LaFever, and Mr. Vancouver Gay Pride VII, Dick B. Licious

Saturday in the Park is back Saturday, July 9 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Esther Short Park (301 W. Eighth St., Vancouver, Wash.). Under the theme "Bigger! Better! Brighter!" the 17th annual SITP pride event hopes to capitalize on the town's buzz as a queer mecca—Advocate.com named the locale the sixth most gay-friendly city in America earlier this year. But the real focus in 2011 is on the Vancouver community's LGBTQ youth population, according to the SITP planning committee.

"The theme 'Bigger! Better! Brighter!' was chosen to describe the way we saw the future of today's LGBTQ youth and the LGBTQ community as a whole," explains Victoria Pauley, SITP planning committee vice chair. "With the help of the community and our allies, we hope to show the LGBTQ youth and all youth that may be struggling that things do get better, that they are worth celebrating and that their futures are worth fighting for."

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> **-VICTORIA PAULEY,** SITP PLANNING COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR

Steven Gibson, SITP board treasurer and planning committee chair, reiterates this year's youthful mind-set.

"This is the first year that I've seen since I began that I'm getting requests from members of the youth community to speak at Saturday in the Park and be involved," Gibson says.

Highlights for 2011 include the family-friendly picnic-style fun, with live entertainment from Kiss Kill, The Shannon Tower Band and more, on into the later afternoon Community Pride Awards and raffle.

A particularly noteworthy aside in the

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