



Bear Briefs

The Newsletter of the Heart Of Texas Bears

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July 2002

From The President's Desk

The greatest gift one can give another is friendship, the greatest gift we give ourselves are our memories. I have been blessed.

As I write this farewell letter and prepare to hand the reins over to Bud and the new Board, many of your smiles come to mind. I hear your laughter and I know the best is yet to come. There will be new friendships to form and a strengthening of those bonds that already exists.

I often say the Club is what you make of it, I know over one hundred and fifty men by their first name and have seen over half of them buck nakkid (and you didn't

think I noticed). We have shared opinions, many meals and many good times. We have also shared a few tears and found council at our darkest hours. I cannot imagine this world without most of you in it.

I did my best and wish I could have done more. I know Bud will do a great job leading us and I look forward to being just a member. In closing, a line form an Auden poem: Live beyond your income, Travel for enjoyment, Follow your nose.

Hugs,
Ed Burleson

As incoming President of the Heart of Texas Bears, it is indeed an honor to be able to serve in this capacity. Under Ed Burleson's leadership, the previous Board of Jack Landers, James Patterson and Garreth Hunter has done a remarkable job of bringing the standards of the Club up to the point that ours is the envy of other Clubs throughout the state.

With almost 130 members, the Club has nearly doubled under Ed's administration and there is no question that the friendships and camaraderie enjoyed by Club members has grown proportionately. Bravo to Ed,

Jack, James and Garreth. My hope is the same as Ed's — to leave the Club in a little better shape than when I found it.

I know the new Board — John Cowart, V.P.; Kirk Lammert, Treasurer; and Scott Coleman, Secretary — agree that "those are big shoes to fill" with Ed's departure, but we are dedicated and willing to try. Please feel free to express any concerns and suggestions to me as I want to make this Club as inclusive as possible.

Bud McMullen

Heart of Texas Bear Quarterly Business Meeting

When: Sunday,
July 14th,
1:00 pm
Where: ASA Austin
7215 Cameron Rd

The new Board of Directors takes over at this meeting which begins promptly at 1:00 p.m. at the AIDS Services of Austin

building, 7215 Cameron Rd. Ideas and suggestions to improve the Club are always welcome. See you there!



Bear Bust

When: Sunday,
July 14th,
4 – 8pm
Where: Chain Drive
504 Willow Rd.

As always, a Bear Bust at the Chain Drive follows the Quarterly Meeting at 4:00 p.m. The bar's usual \$2.00 well drinks will be in effect all day

and draft beer will be provided for \$1.00 by a Bear bartender.



Steve's Mid Summer Splash Pool Party

When: Saturday,
July 13th,
2pm – ?
Where: Steve Rison's House

Steve Rison has again agreed to graciously open up his annual Splash party to Bear Members and we are indeed grateful.

The fun begins at 2:00 pm and lasts until the last "fish" is caught, or drowned!

Bring a towel, a dish or dessert, your favorite drink if

it's not soft and enjoy the pool and friends.

Bears Day Out — Breakfast: It Does A Bear Good

When: Saturday,
July 6th,
10:00 am
Where: Austin Diner
5408 Burnet Road

Come join other hungry Bears at the Austin Diner. Their breakfasts seem to satisfy most appetites and the selection is varied. Try those pancakes or those Mexican migas and you'll find the conversation stimulating--we hope!



Bears Night Out — The Bears Do It Italian

When: Thursday,
July 25th,
7:30 pm
Where: Buca di Beppo
3600 Tudor Blvd.
(MoPac and 183)

Yes, you read that right. Our reservations at Buca di Beppo's restaurant is at 7:30pm and you are in for a treat. One of their platters can serve two hungry Bears so be prepared for **large** portions. We were lucky enough, if that's the word, to obtain the **Pope Room** and the first 20 Bears will get to sit there. And if you have been there before you know about the campy decor — anything and everything Italian — even a room dedicated to the Pope!

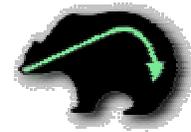
Because the food is served "family style" we'll just divide the bill by the number of bears!

Oh, and don't forget to visit the men's room while you're there.

Bear Movie Night

When: Saturday,
July 20th,
7:00pm
Where: Scott Coleman's
House

Scott Coleman will host movie night for the Bears at his home beginning at 7:00 pm. Bring a snack and drinks and get ready for some action — on the screen that is!



A Day For Pride — by John Kilman

On Saturday, June the 1st, I had the honor of marching in Austin's first ever Gay Pride parade. It was an evening I will not soon forget. Scott and I arrived on the parade site at 7:00 pm and were treated to the sight of hundreds of men and women from all walks of life coming together to celebrate their community spirit.

As we made our way to the area where our club was gathering, I was greeted with the familiar faces of new friends, as well as many I had not seen before. It was one of the highest turnouts our club had had for any event in its history. As we made our preparations, other groups around us did the same—Out Youth Austin; Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG); the Human Rights Project; Capital City Men's Chorus; local gay-owned and gay-friendly businesses; and many others. Some wore outlandish

costumes, but many dressed simply in everyday garb. As starting-time approached the excitement grew—we knew this would be a special event and a great opportunity to show our community who we are. We also knew there was some risk involved: this had never been done in Austin before—how would people react? The possibility of negative repercussions was small but it was there all the same.

Finally, it was time for everyone to take their places, and Scott and I unexpectedly found ourselves at the front of our group, carrying the club banner! We took our places and waited—and waited.

At 8:30 (thirty minutes late), the parade was under way. After the delay, my feet and bladder were killing me, but as we passed the first group of spectators and the cheering began, I forgot all about such things. At first we passed small groups, but as we

progressed further into downtown, the crowds became progressively larger, and I was so touched by the warm display of support that came not just from others in the gay community but from the community at large. I saw families with children, I saw people my own age, young adults, seniors, black, white, Hispanic, a true rainbow of humanity. Some of them were handing out bottles of water to the marchers, some were holding signs, and nearly all (except for one tiny group of protestors) were there to show their support and appreciation. And as I marched past the crowd and heard them cheering us on, with my partner beside me and friends behind me, I began to think about the last five years—all the events that had to occur and all the obstacles I had to overcome to bring me to this place--and I was filled with a sense of pride and belonging that I have seldom, if ever, felt

before. I thought of all the hundreds of people marching that night, and how every one of them had their own story to tell, their own mountains they've had to conquer—and it was then that I realized that Gay Pride isn't really about sexual orientation: it's about overcoming, it's about all the personal victories, both small and large, that have allowed us to respect ourselves for who we are and claim our place in the larger community.

When you really think about it, you can either be proud of who you are, or you can be ashamed—there is no in-between. For me, Saturday, the first of June was a day for pride and community. I was privileged to be a part of it, and it is a moment I will carry with me for the rest of my days.

Love to all,
John

Sponsors

The HOT Bears are grateful for the continuing support of the following people and companies. In consideration of their long-time contributions, please support those who support us.

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Chain Drive

504 Willow Street

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Lobo

3204A Guadalupe

Austin, TX 78705

Big Beefy Bear Bits

Flesh Gordon

Friday & Saturday,

July 5 - 7

Dobie Theater

The X-rated classic movie will have all those famous scenes you have come to love. Starting **midnight** at the Dobie Theatre.

"Grease" Sing-a-long

aGLIFF Fundraiser

Paramount Theatre

Saturday, July 27th; 8pm

This campy spoof of life in high school in the 50's begins at 8 pm at the Paramount Theatre, Congress and 7th. You'll see some attendees dressing in their

favorite 50's garb and you can too--if you dare!!

Bear Bar Crawl

Friday, July 26th

Dick's Deja Disco

2nd and San Jacinto

7pm

Everyone seems to have fun at Dick's Bar and hopefully this time will be no exception. The fun begins at 7:00 pm during their Happy Hour.

July 4th Family Picnic

July 4th

Pease Park; Noon — 6pm

The famous annual "Family Picnic" is scheduled

at Pease Park in Austin from noon to 6 pm. This is a community event and open to the public. Fun and games and bring a basket of goodies.

July 4th TCC "UNRUN"

July 4th weekend

Buzzards Peak

The Fourth of July UNRUN "Let the Fireworks Begin" will be the weekend of July 4, 5, 6, and 7 at Buzzards Peak hosted by the Chain of Command and Lone Star Leathermen. For more information, call Chuck Dunn at 303-5009 or email cddunn@texas.net.

Cowbear Steak Night at Rainbow Cattle Company

When: Thursday,

July 18th,

7:00pm

Where: Rainbow Cattle Co.

5th and Lavaca

Get your appetite ready.

For only \$5 you'll enjoy a delicious steak dinner with potato, veggies and salad--the best buy in the city. Get your

cowboy boots and jeans on and come on down!

Bear time is 7:00 p.m.

July 4th Pool Party at Jamie and Glenn's

Jamie and Glenn will be hosting their annual July 4th Pool Party. Starting at 4:00 pm until whenever.

Be sure to bring pot luck and a bottle if you drink anything other than soft drinks.



Austin Pride Parade
July 1, 2002



HOT Bears
Marching

Pride — by Garreth Hunter

I was two in 1969. I know, I know, you have all heard me say I was two or five or some young age in the 1960's, 1970's, and 1980's. But, really, I was two in 1969. I had just turned two right before June 1969. I was in Abilene, Texas. Meanwhile, at the Stonewall Inn, a lowly bar in New York City, where gay men and women showed unity, assertion, and struggled against police brutality as they sparked the start of a militant and liberative gay movement around the world. Gay Pride had been born, echoing through the night a shout that has sounded around the world.

My parents did not want me. They had my older brother and did not want a second child, so I was given to my uncle to raise as his own. They proceeded to have three more children after they gave me away. My uncle Phil had two children and a wife. In August of 1969, while in New York City at the first commemoration of the Stonewall Uprising, my uncle decided he was coming out. He came back to Texas, told his wife, and she left him and took their two children. I stayed with my uncle. A year later, in Los Angeles, my uncle and I marched on the anniversary of the uprising. I was in a stroller, but it was important to Phil that he be there for the march.

By 1972 my uncle had

opened a gay bar and had the hottest gay spot in all of West Texas. People came from Dallas, Austin, El Paso, and every village in between to boogie the night away at his club. It was legendary, and, now, probably only in my heart, a mythical land where gay dreams came true.

I remember going to Boston in 1988 pushing my uncle in a wheelchair because he could not walk in the pride march. He, like so many of the community we were from, was dying from AIDS. After we got back from Boston, I found out Phil and a couple of others who went to Boston had stopped buying medicine so they could afford to attend the marches and pride festivals that were popping up across the country. I was so angry with him, that he would sacrifice his health, his life, for a silly pride parade in Boston, and that there were several of our close friends who had done the same. Pride was important to them. Making a difference was important to them. They had to be there and be a part of it to make a difference. Making the gay community safer for everyone was important to them. It was so important, they chose Pride over medicines that would have extended their lives.

I guess it should not matter now that they are all dead and gone. But, it does matter to me. It matters

because they would have given everything that they had to have seen one of the pride parades and festivals in Austin. A few lived to see some Pride events in Houston, and a couple lived to see Pride events in Dallas.

There was only one witness from Los Angeles 1970 and Boston 1988 and Chicago 1994 (and many stops in between) to see the first Pride in Austin. The same witness marched in Austin's first Pride Parade. I marched with mixed emotions. Full of Joy to be marching, full of sadness to be witnessing for those who had already passed on, and angry for the email that came in from the members who were too scared, afraid, and worried of being gunned down in the streets to show up for the parade and march. My family won't have anything to do with me because I am gay. I marched anyway. I not only marched for me, but I marched for the memory of those who are gone, and I marched in unity for a safer community for us all.

My anger has now passed into pity for people who live in the fear and shame of being gay. I think of the sacrifices people made, of the people who stood up in June 1969 and said you can scare us, you can beat us, you can even throw us in jail, but we are not going quietly. We won't go in shame. You can

even kill some of us, like Matthew Shepherd, and it only makes us stronger.

Pride can mean different things to different people. We all have to decide what Pride means to us and how we are going to go about living our lives in that Pride. Pride is here today because of the sacrifices others made for it to be here, and I believe that part of life is in the giving back of things for others. I am still surprised the amount of people who are out but contacted me that they were afraid, embarrassed or shamed into staying home.

Be proud of who you are and what you are. Pride is often defined by using phrases like self-esteem and self-respect. Other people's opinions should not rob you of those things. Don't let their harsh words, deeds or thoughts keep you from enjoying life to the fullest by forcing you to stay away, stay hidden from the world and keeping your life a secret. People just like you were responsible for the progress towards equality that we've made, and we have a long way to go. Please, keep up the tradition, keep fighting for what is rightfully yours, and never forget those who have gone before you and blazed the trail that you now travel more easily for their efforts.



BEARS AT FIESTA TEXAS

July

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
	1	2	3	4 Noon: Family Picnic 4p: Jamie & Glenn's Pool Party TCC "UNRUN"	5 Midnight: "Flesh Gordon" at Dobie	6 10a: Bears Day Out
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 2p: Steve's Mid Summer Splash
14 1p: Quarterly Business Meeting 4-8p: Bear Bust	15	16	17	18 7p: CowBear Steak Night at Rainbow Cattle Company	19	20 7p: Bear Movie Night at Scott Coleman's House
21	22	23	24	25 7:30p: Bears Night Out at Buca di Beppo	26 7p: Bear Bar Crawl at Dick's Deja Disco	27 8p: "Grease" Sing-a-long at the Paramount 7p: C/W Dancing
28	29	30	31			

Family Picnic: Pease Park.

Quarterly Business Meeting: ASA Austin, 7215 Cameron Road.

Country Dancing: The Heart of Texas Hoedowners, www.hoedowners.org

2002