Pride events draws 500

by JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

Lesbian and gay Nashvillians — some 500 strong — last week celebrated the 20th anniversary of the infamous Stonewall riots with Pride Week '89 events which included a parade, rally and concert in Centennial Park.

Members of the Pride '89 Committee declared this year's celebration a success and vowed to begin work on the 1990 celebration as soon as the smoke clears from this year's events.

Proclaiming their pride, more than 260 people took part in the parade, which attracted counter-protesters ranging from skinheads to members of the religious right and the ubiquitous Mel Perry, a Madison preacher.

Led by a banner proclaiming, "The Volunteer State Marches," and a pink, white and black balloon arch, marchers responded to the counter-demonstrators by shouting "What do we want? Gay rights! When do we want them? Now!"

Brandishing a confederate flag and signs proclaiming "Hetero Power," the skinheads provided the most vocal opposition to parade revelers' cries of "We are everywhere! We will be free!" No altercations between the two contingents developed during the parade, which followed a route down Blakemore Avenue to Natchez Trace and on to Centennial Park.

Members of the skinhead group, which numbered eight people, followed the parade along its route and taunted marchers with Nazi-style one-armed salutes and shouts of "Die, faggot, die!" Metro Police kept the protestors away throughout the parade and rally.

Two men, dressed in robes styled after those worn by disciples of Christ in ancient times, carried a banner reading, "God will forgive you if you turn from sin." The two men became incensed when Paul Tucker, pastor of Metropolitan Community Church/Nashville (MCC), arrived carrying a banner from his church.

"False prophet! You're a false prophet!" the two charged. Later, at the entrance to Centennial Park, they displayed signs provided by Perry which read "AIDS is God's judgement against practicing homosexuals!" and "Remember why God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah." Saturday's festive atmosphere appeared to overshadow any threat of gloom from counter-demonstrators. The mood at the festival site in Centennial Park was light-hearted, with booths and tables representing a variety of groups and organizations set up for browsers.

During the rally, speakers representing various groups likened the struggle for lesbian and gay civil rights to other such movements for social change.

Renee McCoy, executive director of the National Coalition for Black Lesbians and Gays, reiterated that "Just as we support the struggle for gay and lesbian rights, we must..."

NAMES Project Quilt panels displayed

from STAFF REPORTS

A portion of the NAMES Project National AIDS Quilt went on display at Vanderbilt University's Benton Chapel Monday following opening ceremonies. The panels were hung from the walls of the chapel as the last official Nashville Pride Week '89 event.

Debra Alberts, one of the organizers, said that the display had already had some effect.

"I was surprised that the workers hanging the quilt were really very tender and reverent about it," she said.

Although closing ceremonies are slated for Friday, July 7, at 7:30 p.m., the sections will be on display through Sunday, July 9.

Alberts said that Metro Nashville Health Commissioner Fredia Wadley will keynote the closing ceremonies. Community members and dignitaries will read the names of some of those who have died from AIDS, and Metropolitan Community Church/Nashville pastor Paul Tucker will make closing remarks.

Vaid new Task Force director

by JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

Meeting in Washington, members of the board of directors of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) last week named Urvashi Vaid as the group's new executive director.

Vaid, presently NGLTF's public information director, succeeds Jeffrey Levi, who leaves the post after three years to work in public policy development. Vaid's selection culminates an intensive three-month search that attracted some 86 candidates for the job.

"I feel that my background and my love for this movement — everything that my life has been about for the past 12 years — have prepared me to accept the challenge of directing the nation's leading lesbian and gay civil rights organization," Vaid said.

Vaid will assume the duties of executive director on July 28.

"Urvashi will make an effective and exciting executive director of NGLTF. She is qualified, she is prepared, and, most importantly, she is enthusiastic," Levi said. "I have no doubt that Urvashi will do a remarkable job and it is a relief to know I am leaving the organization in her very capable hands."

Thanks.

Nashville Pride '89 would like to thank all the following who helped make the celebration possible:

- Sam Adams
- Debra Alberts
- Jason Anderson
- Kay Armstrong
- the Rev. Beverly Asbury
- Mike Blevins
- Barbara Boyson
- Deborah Burks
- The Cabaret
- Penny Campbell
- Chez Colette
- The Chute
- Carole Cunningham
- Dare
- Jeff Ellis
- Edgehill United Methodist Church
- Gas Lite Lounge
- Gay Cable Network/Nashville
- Jim Grooms
- Alan Herbers
- Charles Jones
- Juanita's Bar
- LaCASA Central America Solidarity Association
- League for the Hearing Impaired
- Penny Campbell
- Chez Colette
- The Chute
- Carole Cunningham
- Dare
- Jeff Ellis
- Edgehill United Methodist Church
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- LaCASA Central America Solidarity Association
- League for the Hearing Impaired
- Penny Campbell
- Chez Colette
- The Chute
- Carole Cunningham
- Dare
- Jeff Ellis

and the hundreds of others who participated. See you next year!
...Pride celebration

*continued from page 1*

...support the struggles of people anywhere — whether it's people in Central America or the students in China," McCoy said.

McCoy stressed the importance of participating in the coming out process and told her audience that only through honest, forthright action can equal rights be achieved.

McCoy, an ordained pastor in the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, is organizing a ministry to address the spiritual and survival needs of Detroit's black lesbian and gay community. She is the founder of the Detroit Coalition of Black Gays and Lesbians and the national Gay Coalition of Third World Lesbians and Gays.

June Drury, representing LaCASA (the Nashville-based Central America Solidarity Association), said her group's support of the lesbian and gay movement was indicative of LaCASA's efforts to "secure basic human rights for all people."

Other speakers included Lynne Cushing, president of the Nashville chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW), Jason Anderson, of the Nashville Youth Network; Sandee Potter, executive director of Nashville CARES, an AIDS services organization; Abby Rubenfeld, board member of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force; and Greg Fisher, of the Tennessee Gay and Lesbian Alliance (T-GALA).

Local singer/musician Gerrit Wilson opened the festivities with a performance of "Come Out and Play," the Pride anthem written for last year's celebration.

Jim Grooms, a Nashvillian who was present during the 1969 rioting at New York's Stonewall Inn, spoke of his impressions of that time and of the burgeoning gay rights movement which resulted from the riots. Grooms' lover, Ray Ankrom, who moved to New York a year after the riots, spoke of the beginnings of openly gay society in New York.

Pride Week celebrations throughout the country commemorated the June, 1969, riots which are viewed by many as the beginning of the modern lesbian and gay civil rights movement in this country.

Steve Smith, co-owner of Warehouse 28, and Metropolitan Community Church-Nashville were honored with special awards presented by the Pride Week Committee. Penny Campbell and Carole Cunningham, coordinators of this year's events, cited Smith and MCC for their support of the local lesbian/gay movement.

"Warehouse 28 and Steve Smith have always offered their support to our community. The Warehouse is not only a place to dance and to have a good time, but also a place to become involved," Cunningham said.

Campbell cited MCC's years of community service and for providing "a safe space" for lesbians and gay men throughout middle Tennessee.

Saturday's events were capped off by a free concert featuring Olivia Records recording artist Desi e McCalla. Local singer/musician Judy Eron opened the concert with a performance of three of her most-requested songs.

Sunday's annual Pride Picnic, held at Edwin Warner Park, drew more than 100 people for the potluck lunch and festivities.

...Vaid new NGLTF executive director

*continued from page 1*

"The entire board of directors has been involved across the nation in the selection process and we feel confident that Urvashi is the best choice to lead our organization and the movement into the 1990s," said Jim Holm, co-chair of the board. "Her familiarity with the organization and her reputation nationwide as a leader in lesbian and gay civil rights activism and organizing, as well as her proven management, fundraising and media skills make her the obvious successor to Jeffrey Levi."

With more than a decade of involvement in the lesbian and gay civil rights movement, Vaid is a 1979 graduate of Vassar College and earned her law degree from Northeastern University School of Law in 1983.

She has held staff positions with Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAAD), Boston's Gay Community Services and the National Prison Project of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

With more than 15,000 members nationwide, NGLTF is active in grassroots organizing, legislative lobbying both on the local and federal levels, and houses the Privacy Project, the Anti-Violence and Campus Projects, and the Lesbian and Gay Families Project.

...QUOTES

"I have been called a gold digger, a house wreck, a lesbian and now this. I guess it doesn't make good copy to write about me as an expectant mother in Scottsdale, Ariz., but maybe they'll have me giving birth to an alien."

— Bridgit Nielsen, on a story in the supermarket tabloid Star that said she was involved in the Rob Lowe sex tapes.

"Marilyn Monroe was a swinger who, in the course of her lifetime, may have engaged in one or two affairs with a person of her own sex. But she was overwhelmingly heterosexual, concentrating her time, ardor and favors on men. In all her 36 years, Marilyn was alleged to have had an affair with only one woman — a drama coach — and Hollywood put little stock in that rumor."

— Walter Scott, in his column "Personality Parade," appearing in Parade magazine.

"As The World Turns" has done a superb job of presenting a gay character on the show. Being gay myself, I can say that Hank (played by Brian Starcher) effectively represented many of us who do not behave in a stereotypically gay manner."

— An unidentified reader, in a letter to the editor of Soap Opera Digest.

"The main reason I left Oral Roberts University was because I just didn't feel comfortable in that atmosphere. They (ORU's administration) didn't allow one of my friends to come back to school because he had gained so much weight. I also knew a lot of guys that got kicked out because they were gay. You weren't accepted if you didn't fit the image."

— General Hospital star Scott Thompson Baker, telling a reporter for Soap Opera Digest why he left ORU as an undergraduate.
Celebrating

Two members of Nashville's Edgehill United Methodist Church arrive at the Parade stepoff site. — DARE STAFF PHOTO

Count-protestors, ranging from skinheads to the religious right, to Metropolitan Nashville police officers worked with official peacekeepers to manage the crowd. — DARE STAFF PHOTO

More than 260 people took part in Nashville's second annual Pride Parade which followed a route from Fannie Mae Dees Park on Blakemore to the Centennial Park bandshell. — DARE STAFF PHOTO

Olivia Records recording artist Deidre McCalla entertained her audience with selections from her latest album during the free concert which highlighted Saturday's rally. — DARE STAFF PHOTO

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- Olivia Records recording artist Deidre McCalla
  - Entertained her audience with selections from her latest album during the free concert which highlighted Saturday's rally. — DARE STAFF PHOTO
LAST SATURDAY afternoon, as people began to gather at Fannie Mae Dees Park for the beginning of the Pride '89 parade, we were greeted by skinheads and religious kooks, exhorting us to "turn from sins." It was, at first, a daunting sight. Last year, only three protestors showed up, and they were pretty quiet. When plans for that first parade were announced, there were a lot of detractors - "It just won't fly in Nashville, the KKK will be there, all the religious fanatics will be there, blood will be shed." - but they were proven wrong.

And so, on Saturday, we were still reveling in the glories of last year's celebration, still riding high on a self-congratulatory plateau of complacency. The demonstrators helped to jolt us out of our reverie and confronted us with the cold realities of homophobia.

Altercations between the two groups - lesbians, gay men and their supporters vs. everybody else - were, thankfully, short-lived and relatively mild.

Any nervousness was overcome by a very real sense of pride and a feeling of community that was exciting and invigorating. The camaraderie and esprit de corps exhibited by all the folks awaiting the parade's start completely overshadowed any threat of trouble.

Parading through the streets of Nashville - exhibiting our pride in who we are, where we've been and where we're going - was a courageous attempt to let our detractors know that no longer will we settle for less. We proved to them Saturday that we are, as the song goes, "a gentle, angry people." "We are everywhere! We will be free!" the marchers chanted.

And someday we will be free. Saturday's public acknowledgement sent a message to the people of Nashville, the people of Tennessee and the world, that we are here and we aren't going to hide in the shadows any longer.

On a personal level, perhaps the most moving sight during the day's events was a family from Chattanooga: two lesbian mothers and their children. They had traveled the hundred or so miles to the state's capital city to proclaim their pride in being gay and being a family.

"The kids go to an inner-city school," one of the women explained. "But most of the other kids' parents are professional so they haven't had to endure as much as you might expect. But they've had to put up with a lot."

The woman's face glowed with pride as she looked at her sons, who carried banners reading: "No one is free until all are free," and chanting "Hey, hey, ho, ho! Homophobia's got to go!"

THOSE CHILDREN know, first-hand, the dangers of homophobia, yet they remain steadfast and proud of their mothers' lives and their own. They provided a touching reminder, a hopeful prediction of what a world free from homophobia could be like.

They gave purpose to our marches, meaning to our chants. They gave a new perspective to our movement and we are glad they were there.
**VIEWS**

Report card time

NASHVILLE'S NEWS MEDIA have, in the
main, vastly improved their performance in
coverage of Pride Week activities this year. The
Tennessean gave prominent front-page space
to photos of the parade Sunday morning, and
fairly matter-of-fact reportage that didn't fall
for the temptation to focus too heavily on the
religious nuts and skinhead Howdlum.

Good position. and fair (through shallow) coverage earns The Tennessean a B.
The Nashville Banner certainly earned
The Tennessean's restraint Monday afternoon
(the Banner does not publish on Sundays)
with its photography—a large photo of
marchers including a diverse sample of parti­
cipants — but neglected to devote any copy to
the story, instead using a sidebar on the display
of a portion of the NAMES Project National
AIDS Memorial Quilt. (See the story on page 1.)

However, Banner editors had no qualms
about showing coverage of our community's
most public event under the rug, dumping it on
page 2 of section B. That drops them to a truly aver­
age C.

Television stations were a mixed bag.
WKRN Channel 2, and WSMV, Channel 4,
both reported the day's events: Channel 2 did
a fine job, with anchor Lauren Thierry discuss­
ing the tape fairly and evenly for a B+, while
the usually-smoking John Siegenthaler, Jr.,
managed this time to keep a straight (apron)
face while talking about lesbians and gay men
to improve Channel 4's grade to a solid B this
year. WTVF, Channel 5, gets a big fat F for its
use of sensational network tape of the New
York parade while completely ignoring les­
bian and gay Tennesseans.

Gay Cable Network coverage had not been
cablecast at press time.

OVERALL, LOCAL MEDIA performed
markedly better this year. Acknowledgment of
our existence and fairness seemed to be the
rules. Except for the dunce cap Channel 5
grabbled, the media did a good job all around.
Now about those politicians.

**BOX 40422**

Were you there?

Dear Dare,

After all the excitement from Gay Pride
weekend had passed, I felt I couldn't rest
without making my feelings known.

I am very proud of my sexuality, so it wasn't
hard to be part of the 300 or so who took part
in the March on Saturday, but where are the
hundreds who were out on Saturday night
at the bars? Why weren't you marching? Where
my friends and I do best. Sometimes
blending in — almost always standing out —
we can be seen wearing the latest street fashions
and "getting mental" to the hippest Acid
House sounds from London. (I have yet to find
that scene here in Nashville, but that's not
the point of this story.)

I've been reading a lot lately about Stone
wall and the Lesbian and Gay Pride celebra­
tions around the country, but until last Satur­
day I really didn't understand what it all meant.

When my uncle, [Dare Managing Editor] Jeff
Ellis, asked me to ride in the parade on Satu­
day I said I would, partly because I had not
seen him in almost two months, but mostly be­
cause it would give me an opportunity to be
seen by a lot of people. (We all want to be
stars) I would be riding in the front of the
parade — in a black convertible — leading
chairs and cheers.

"Just like Jackie Kennedy," I thought.
I'll be the first to admit I wasn't really that
serious about this activism thing. That's the
kind of thing other people do. And that's great
for them.

At least that's how I felt as I climbed into the
back of that car last Saturday afternoon. I was
ready to have fun, to become Jackie Kennedy
for a little while and then get some lunch and
plan what I was going to wear out later that
day.

I certainly wasn't ready for what I met along
that Parade route. I guess I'm just not accus­
tomed to the anger and bigotry I encountered
from the skinheads who continued to pelt us
with insults and threats throughout the march.

And the strangest thing is that they look like
any number of people you might see me hang­
out with any night of the week. I was so often
to feel that way about us, because I
continued on page 7

**WAVES**

**SOAPBOX**

**Learning a new chant**

by SCOTT MCMAHAN

Special to Dare

WHEN I CAME TO Nashville last Thursday,
I had plans to live it up in the clubs here.
In Fort Lauderdale and Miami I have a reputa­
tion as a serious "club kid." I'm a social butterfly
there practically every night of the week doing
what my friends and I do best. Sometimes
bleeding in — almost always standing out —
In the bad reviews of his book.
Mike Stratton is straight, but his much better
advantages associates try to convince him it's not impos­
sible to be a good doctor and make a good living,
but Stratton prefers making house calls and
using an old-fashioned bedside manner.
He also is a medical advisor on a local TV
morning show called Wake Up, Providence!
(the show's locale is Providence, R.I.) and has
just recently published a novel, Panacaea.
Mike Stratton is straight, but his much better
looking older brother Dick (played by Tony
Carriere) is gay.

Dick is tall, dark, handsome, healthy and
lisp-free. He is also a writer and book editor,
a profession not necessarily gay-male-identi­
fied, an attempt by producers to break the
stereotypical hairdresser/decorator mold.
This is a noble attempt, but I wish the same
had been done for the characters who play his
parents. The producers are guilty of using the
same old parents-of-gays stereotypes — the
mother who "will always love him no matter
what" and the father who says "Dick who?" at
the mention of his name. This act is tired!

Gay men and lesbians have other types of
mothers and fathers besides the ones who only
either unconditionally love or thoroughly
hate. It's about time the producers realize that.

In spite of this, the producers have made
sincere strides. Mike and Dick have been given
a very close and affectionate relationship
which ignores their different sexual orienta­
tions. It was Dick who Mike came to for sup­
port, advice and consolation when he received
the bad reviews of his book.

A programming executive at CBS's Nashville
affiliate (WTVF-channel 5), who asked to
remain anonymous, said that "by putting gay
characters in limited parts and series, it's a
clever way to introduce gay characters and yet
avoid having to give any kind of an explana­
tion for it because when the critics finally get
around to discovering a gay character, the
show will have run its course and be over
before any real action can or has to be taken by
either side. Keeping it temporary seems to be
the way gay and lesbian characters will be
portrayed on television at least for a while."
ATHOL FUGARD'S _The Blood Knot_ is a disturbing play, a frugally discomfiting look at the squaller and despair that is South Africa. Although first produced in 1964, the drama—being presented through Sunday, July 2, as a part of Tennessee Repertory Theatre's (_TRT_) Second Stage endeavor—remains startlingly contemporary in its focus. It is not an easily understood work, but rather it is a vaguely mysterious yet darkly lyrical piece about two brothers—one dark-skinned, one light-skinned—in a "colored" settlement near Port Elizabeth.

Fugard's script, although enlightening in its portrayal of the two brothers' struggle to eke out a meager existence, is nonetheless riddled with unanswered questions. Fugard offers little, if any, explanation of the brothers' lives and the audience is left to figure out what is meant by much of the action onstage. Perhaps the drama was written and is performed for a truly enlightened audience who know all about the ills of South Africa. But, unfortunately few audience members are well-enough read to completely understand what's going on. Most people have a passing interest in South African politics, some people even have an impossibly shallow interest, but a brief explanation in the program would have helped both the neophyte and the expert. The average Nashville theater-goer doesn't understand the differences in South Africa's caste system.

Frankly, when I left the theater, I felt stupid. I couldn't really say what went on. Some things were clear: two brothers, living in a shack, struggle under the oppression of apartheid, dreaming of owning a small farm. Amid the squalid conditions of their lives, they recall the youth of which they were robbed, the mother they shared, the pain and deprivation.

_The Blood Knot_ remains an emotional, provocative work. Morris, the lighter-skinned of the two, attempted to pass for white and has returned home after experiencing unnamed horrors. Zach, the darker-skinned, rails at the inequities of life and the bigotry to which he is daily subjected in his menial job.

As Zach, TRT stalwart Barry Scott is finally given the opportunity to display his talents as an actor. Heretofore, Scott's talents have been squandered in roles that might best be considered throwaways. When given the chance at a truly demanding role, he excels, giving a performance that is at once extremely subtly appealing and strangely frightening.

Unfortunately, Scott's skillful portrayal cannot compensate for the pedestrian performance of Myke Mueller as Morris. Mueller's obvious miscasting is proven by a performance that is little more than a two-dimensional caricature, relying primarily on exaggerated facial expressions to affect a characterization. Mueller is a good actor, but his performance in _The Blood Knot_ does nothing to prove that.

Technically, _The Blood Knot_ is superb, with evocative sets and lighting. The intimate setting of West End United Methodist Church's fourth-floor performance space provides an ideal arena for such offerings. But, for the sake of the audience, new seating is desperately needed: the folding chairs currently in use are, without doubt, the most uncomfortable pieces of furniture ever encountered.

_The Blood Knot_ is designed, writes artistic director Mac Pirkle in the program, to allow the production of works considered "different" from those usually included in mainstream offerings and to examine various topics of interest to the community. In its initial offering, "Night Mother" (another two-character drama) the subject was suicide. Although both "Night Mother" and _The Blood Knot_ can hardly be called commercial vehicles for any theater group, they nonetheless offer theater-goers an alternative to the usual slate of warmed-over musical comedies and Neil Simon farces that so often make up the Nashville theater season.

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- **FOR LEASE: GWM seeking roommate. I'm young, prof., educated. You're too. $230+ utilities. No smokers/drugs. 615-360-5974.**
- **PERSONAL—And now, here's our nephew and his lovely friend Joe. Ready for the Barbara Mandrell Museum, boys?—love, youruncles.**
- **DIID you know? Tracy Tumbling was Miss Baltimore Auto Show 1983. Now you know.**

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**NEW CHANT**

*continued from page 6*

wanted to ask them where they go for good music.

They made me mad, so I said the very least.

Without thought I began to chant "Whadda we want? Gay rights! When do we want 'em? Now!"

Before I knew what was happening I heard myself chanting louder and louder. I wanted to drown out the idiotic ravings of those people who hated me so much.

At one point the counter-protesters were right beside our car shouting, "Out, out, out! Faggot, faggot, faggot!" with only (luckily) a few peacekeepers separating us. I couldn't understand how they could hate me when they didn't even know me.

And any one who knows me knows I would gladly have given them reason to hate me, whether they wanted it or not.

**BEFORE IT WAS OVER**

I had lost my voice (but my tan was deeper). I had learned a lot about myself and about the people of Nashville. I made some new friends and saw some people I wanted to get to know.

I'm going back to Fort Lauderdale next week with a sense of myself that I didn't have before I came here.

Now I know the importance of standing up for our rights. I understand the importance of refusing to be content, of just sitting back and letting someone else do the talking for me.

If our voice is going to be heard, and make a difference, it has to be heard every day and it has to be loud.

Listen closely and, from down around Fort Lauderdale, you'll hear my big mouth. And I'll be listening for yours."
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