



PRIDE PRESS

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Have you joined or donated to the Indy Pride AIDS Walk Team?

Indianapolis – Members of Indy Pride, Talbott Street management & staff, The Pride of Indy Band and the Pride Bag Ladies have formed a team in the 2006 AIDS Walk & Ride. The 2006 AIDS Walk & Ride will be held on Sunday, October 15, 2006 with registration at University Park in downtown Indianapolis. To make a donation or to join our Indy Pride/Talbott Street Team, go to the website listed below:

<http://indianaaidswalk.kintera.org/indypride>

As of October 9, the Indy Pride/Talbott Street Team has raised \$4,020. That puts our team in 2nd place! We currently have 20 members on our team. Won't you join us and help raise money for this important cause? Let's raise at least \$5,000!



TALBOTT
STREET



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Indy Pride Members Elect New Board

Indianapolis – The annual General Membership Meeting of Indy Pride, Inc. was held on Wednesday, September 13 in the Legends bar at Talbott Street. Approximately 50 members attended the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to provide members with an overview of the association and to elect new Board members.

Nine individuals were nominated for five Board positions. The membership of Indy Pride elected Julie Anderton, Andy Gilliland, Jason Grisell, Doug Mellinger and Anne-Marie Predovich. Current Board members who are beginning the second year of their terms are: Gary Brackett, Tiffany Dow, Vivian Farris, Stephen McCoy, Eric Munsch, Brad Plunkett, Scott Van Kirk and Chad Walker.

Julie Anderton has been involved primarily with the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) for the past three years. She is currently serving as Governor for HRC for the State of Indiana. Julie believes that the education and community events resources at HRC National will make “a wonderful pairing between the organizations.

Andy Gilliland has been an advocate and supporter of Indy Pride since he moved to Indianapolis in 2001. He has actively participated in the organization through membership and corporate sponsorships. As Director of Marketing/Membership for Sam's Club, Andy has raised in excess of \$10,000 for local GLBT organizations such as Indy Pride, Indiana Youth Group, the Damien Center and AIDS Walk.

Jason Grisell has been an active volunteer with Indy Pride for many years. For the past two years, he has Co-Chaired the Operations/Logistics Committee for

GLBT HISTORY

Part of the mission and purpose of Indy Pride, Inc. is "to educate the GLBT Community about GLBT history, of the issues which affect it, both social and political and of the resources which are available to its members within the community."



Bessie Smith

Born in Chattanooga, Tennessee in July 1892, Bessie Smith became the "undisputed favorite blues singer" of ticket and record buyers alike throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Known as the "Empress of the Blues," Bessie Smith's history has been filled with persistent and colorful legends. Gifted with a powerful voice and sophisticated musical artistry, she conducted her life by her own set of rules and had affairs with both men and women.

Smith was one of seven surviving children (of ten) of William and Laura Smith. According to Smith's biographer Chris Albertson, William Smith was a laborer who also worked as a part-time Baptist preacher, but he died before Bessie could remember him. By the time Bessie was nine, she had lost her mother as well, and her older sister Viola was left in charge of caring for the younger sisters and brothers. As a way of earning money for her impoverished household, Bessie and her younger brother Andrew began performing on the streets of Chattanooga as a singer/guitarist duo; their preferred location was in front of the White Elephant Saloon at Thirteenth and Elm streets in the heart of the city's African American community.

In 1904, her oldest brother Clarence left home to tour with a small traveling theatre company, and it was this decisive act of her brother's that convinced Bessie that she could make a living as an entertainer. When Clarence returned to Chattanooga in 1912 with the Moses Stokes Theatre Company, he arranged for

the troupe's managers to give his sister an audition. Bessie was initially hired as a dancer with the Moses Stokes Company where she met veteran blues singer Gertrude "Ma" Rainey." In 1923, when blues had become popular enough to begin selling records, Smith was signed by Columbia Records, and quickly rose to stardom as a headliner on the Theater Owners' Booking Association theater circuit. Her biggest recorded hit was "Down Hearted Blues", which sold 780,000 copies in less than six months.

Smith's career was cut short by a combination of The Great Depression (which all but put the recording industry out of business) and the advent of "talkies", which spelled the end for vaudeville. Smith, however, never stopped performing. While the days of elaborate shows were over, she continued touring and occasionally singing in clubs. In 1929, she appeared in a Broadway musical flop called *Pansy*. That same year, she made her only film appearance, starring in a film based on W. C. Handy's "St. Louis Blues."

Although she was born an African-American woman in the "Jim Crow South," Smith managed to conduct her life on her own terms. By all accounts, she was violent, foul-mouthed, a heavy drinker, and sexually promiscuous. Like several notable women blues singers, Smith often preferred the company of women. Her relationships included a volatile, near-fatal affair in 1926 with chorus girl Lillian Simpson. In June 1923, Smith married Jack Gee and they adopted a son three years later.

On September 26, 1937, Smith was severely injured in a car accident while traveling from a concert in Memphis to Mississippi with her companion, Richard Morgan. She was taken to a hospital in Clarksville, Mississippi where her arm was amputated, but she never regained consciousness and died that morning.

Mystery and legend surround Smith's death. The often-repeated story, based on an article by John Hammond in *Downbeat* magazine and perpetuated in Edward Albee's play *The Death of Bessie Smith* (1960) is that she was denied care because she was an African-American whose body was taken to an "all-white" hospital in the South. This account is untrue and was almost immediately corrected. Yet, it persists "because the aura of racial injustice surrounding the accident is entirely believable and the story is as suitably tragic as Smith's premature death."

UPCOMING EVENTS

Listed below are upcoming Indy Pride Events. Mark your calendars to come out and join the fun!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11

PRIDE BOARD MEETING

PLACE: CONFERENCE ROOM – GREGS

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13

PRIDE BAG LADY SHOW

PLACE: TALBOTT STREET

SHOWTIME: 8:00 P.M.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14

INDY PAGAN PRIDE

PLACE: BROAD RIPPLE PARK

TIME: 10:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15

2006 AIDS WALK & RIDE

UNIVERSITY PARK

SEE ARTICLE ON PAGE 1!

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19

INDY PRIDE MEMBERSHIP MIXER

PLACE: AGIO RESTAURANT

TIME: 6:00 – 8:00 P.M.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8

PRIDE BOARD MEETING

PLACE: CONFERENCE ROOM – GREGS

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

Quote of the Month:

"When my bed is empty, makes me feel awful mean and blue. My springs are getting rusty, living single like I do."

Blues singer, Bessie Smith

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the IN Pride Festivals. Jason also serves on the Development & Community Relations Committee for the Damien Center. He is a member of Steering Committee for the Indiana AIDS Walk and has served and continues to serve as the Operations/Logistics Committee Co-Chair for the AIDS Walk.

Doug Mellinger is probably best known by his production name of "Asia LaBouche." Doug has been an active member of the Indianapolis GLBT community for 15 years. He donates his time and talents to helping with fundraising shows hosted by the Pride Bag Ladies. In addition, he is actively involved in fundraising for the Indiana AIDS Fund by participating in the SPOTLIGHT production for the past years. Doug has raised additional funds for the AIDS Walk and Indiana Youth Group by selling "Asia LaBouche" t-shirts and magnets.

Anne-Marie Predovich currently serves as the Executive Director of the INRC, an organization which seeks to strengthen, develop, and empower Indianapolis neighborhoods. She is Co-Chair of the 2007 Homeward Bound Walk (homelessness prevention) and is Chair of the Indiana NAMES Project Committee (AIDS quilt). In addition, Anne-Marie is Treasurer of the Chrysalis Academy, a residential facility for at-risk youth, and is the Secretary of the Metropolitan Board of Zoning Appeals.

"Indy Pride is pleased to have such qualified individuals who are willing to volunteer to lead this organization," stated Gary Brackett, President of Indy Pride.

A Board meeting was held immediately following the Annual General Membership Meeting. At the Board meeting, the following officers were elected: President – Gary Brackett; Vice President – Scott Van Kirk; Secretary – Tiffany Dow; Treasurer – Chad Walker.

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This year you can register for the Pride Bag Lady Bus Tour online at:

www.indyprideinc.com - Click on the new Pride Bag Lady Page and see the ad that was printed in The Word, download the Bus registration form and/or register for the bus with PayPal! Please join us for this annual Halloween fundraising tradition!

Pride Bag Ladies Plan Fall Events!

The Pride Bag Ladies have planned a busy schedule. Listed below are the dates of upcoming shows/events. Be sure and come out and support the “ladies” and their causes!

Friday, October 13

Show at Talbott Street – 8:00 p.m.

Cover charge & performer tips donated to Indy AIDS Walk. Cover: \$5.00

Saturday, October 28

26th Annual Bag Lady Bus Tour

Theme: Martinis & Diamonds!

All individuals who wish to be considered for the honor of Queen will need to participate in the Pride Bag Lady Show on Friday, October 13 at Talbott Street. Individuals who wish to be Queen will need to:

- 1) Be introduced in some type of evening wear during the show
- 2) Be asked an interview question during the show
- 3) Raise as money as possible for the Pride Bag Lady Bus Tour

A point system will be used to award points towards becoming Queen. The FINAL Queen selection will be determined by the Former Bag Lady Queens on the Bus Tour. Good luck! We hope everyone will consider being Queen!

The Tradition Continues . . .

26th Annual Pride Bag Lady Bus Tour!

Saturday, October 28

Theme: Martinis & Diamonds!

Sponsored by:



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