



Photos by Tony Leggio, Darwin Reed

THE 52ND ANNUAL

Original

BOURBON STREET AWARDS

PRESENTED BY



THE WORLD FAMOUS COSTUME CONTEST!



**HOSTED BY THE WINNER OF RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE
BIANCA DEL RIO & BLANCHE DEBRIS**



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under the gaydar

by Tony Leggio
Email: ledgemgp@gmail.com
Photo by: Larry Graham

Bartender of the Month

The pool table is one of the quintessential draws to the The Balcony Bar upstairs at Café Lafitte in Exile. Now on Friday evenings from 7 – 10pm they are having a pool tournament where the winner can get a \$50 bar tab. In addition to that, they are running an amazing drink special of \$10 all you can drink Bud Light. So even if you do not play pool you can watch all the action while enjoying unlimited suds for three hours.

But the tournament is not the only reason why The Balcony Bar is so exciting. My bartender of the month for January can be found working there in all his sexy glory. I am talking about Justin Hauser who is brand new to the Lafitte's family (and New Orleans) but a very welcome addition. He hails from a little town in Southwest Iowa called Exira. I swear they grow those boys hot in the corn belt of the United States.



Bartender of the Month Justin Hauser @ The Balcony Bar

Justin's sparkling personality matches perfectly with his professional demeanor behind the bar. He makes awesome cocktail quickly and handles large crowds with ease. His past work experience was at the oldest comedy club in Virginia seemed to

have rubbed off on him because of his playful wit and humor. Add to this his farm boy next door good looks, killer smile, bedroom eyes (okay I was a little smitten) and you have a reason to learn how to play pool.

He has also created his own special cocktail that can be done as a drink or a shot called Justin's Happy Trail. It is Southern Comfort, Disaronno and pineapple (but another juice can be substituted). His favorite cocktail to consume is a double gin and tonic (a bad boy after my own heart). Gin makes you sin! So get on upstairs to Café Lafitte in Exile and check out Justin's Happy Trail, you will not regret it. Café Lafitte in Exile is located at 901 Bourbon Street.

Book of the Month

I love a good apocalyptic thriller. I mean who doesn't think about what will happen if everything just falls apart; where you will be, who you will be with and what the hell will you do to survive. That is answered in Nate Kenyon's newest novel "Day One," a "what if" doomsday thriller about a computer program that has run amok. The main character, journalist John Hawke, takes the train into New York City to interview James Weller, the former CEO of a giant technology firm and founder of a new start-up company. It is not long after he gets to the offices that things go crazy and soon John along with a group of strangers are fighting to survive getting out of New York as literally everything with a computer chip turns deadly from coffee machines to subways. Things that you take for granted everyday now the ultimate killing machines.

Kenyon amps up the action from the beginning and never lets up. This was a standout page turner as the characters deal with zoo animals on the loose, religious zealots and bad cops, just to name a few of the obstacles. "Day One" is a must read that borrows little bits from other stories such as "Maximum Overdrive" and "2001 A Space Odyssey" but still delivers a fresh and unique approach. I highly recommend this book for all those disaster, sci-fi and action thriller fans. For more information on Nate Kenyon, go to www.natekenyon.com.

Hot Happenings

Mardi Gras in New Orleans is one over-the-top, wild and over-stimulated ride filled with parades, parties and balls (the ones you where tuxedos to). But there are so many things to do in our city from theatre to dance parties and everything in between. Here are just a few events you may want to consider checking out.

Tuesday, January 19 – Sunday, January 24, 2016
"Motown The Musical" is coming to the Saenger Theatre (1111

Canal St.) for a limited engagement from Jan. 19–24, 2016. Tickets for "Motown The Musical" start at \$30 and will be available at the Saenger Theatre Box Office, BroadwayInNewOrleans.com, all Ticketmaster outlets and by calling (800) 982-2787.

Directed by Charles Randolph-Wright, "Motown The Musical" is the true American dream story of Motown founder Berry Gordy's journey from featherweight boxer to the heavy-weight music mogul who launched the careers of Diana Ross, Michael Jackson, Stevie Wonder, Smokey Robinson, Marvin Gaye and so many more. Featuring more than 40 classic hits such as "My Girl" and "Ain't No Mountain High Enough," it tells the story behind the hits as Diana, Smokey, Berry and the whole Motown family fight against the odds to create the soundtrack of change in America. Motown shattered barriers; shaped our lives and made us all move to the same beat. For more information, visit www.MotownTheMusical.com.

Friday, January 22, 2016

The Mystic Krewe of Satyricon's presents its 14th Bal Masque entitled "Le Bal des Beaux Arts: A Night at the Museum" at the Frederick J. Sigur Civic Center (8245 West Judge Perez Drive) in Chalmette. Doors open at 7pm, Tableaux starts at 8pm. Dancing will follow. Formal attire/costumes and masking desired. Tables and single tickets are available, go to mystickreweofsatyricon.com.

Friday, January 22, 2016

Get your Mardi Gras on in Baton Rouge with the Krewe of Apollo's Bal Masque XXV entitled "It All Began With This." Celebrating 35 years, this amazing gay Carnival Krewe holds its ball at the Baton Rouge River Center Arena (275 S. River Road). Doors open at 6:30pm with the tableau starting at 8pm. Tickets/Tables available at www.apollobatonrouge.com.

Saturday, January 23, 2016

Forget sharks, its bearracudas in the Mississippi you have to worry about. Bearracuda welcomes hundreds of furry guys to dance the night away in the middle of the French Quarter at the Carnival Dance Party at One Eyed Jacks (615 Toulouse Street). After the Krewe du Vieux and Krewe Delusion parades, come down and enjoy a night of hot men! Doors open at 9pm. Tickets are \$8 in advance and are available at <http://berracuda.com/new-orleans/>. Bearracuda is the largest attended bear dance party and most prolific gay dance event in the U.S.

Saturday, January 23, 2016

Happy Carnival! GrrlSpot's is excited to present their 4th Annual Krewe du Vieux Masquerade, its second biggest event of the year at Bamboula's (514 Frenchman Street) starting at 6pm. And the really great part, the parade rolls right in front of Bamboula's! Parade starts at 6:30pm with a dance party following to the beats by Jener[8]. Wear a mask and bring some mystery to the party! Masks are suggested, but not required, but studies have shown, wearing a Mardi Gras mask to this party greatly decreases the chance you'll go home alone.

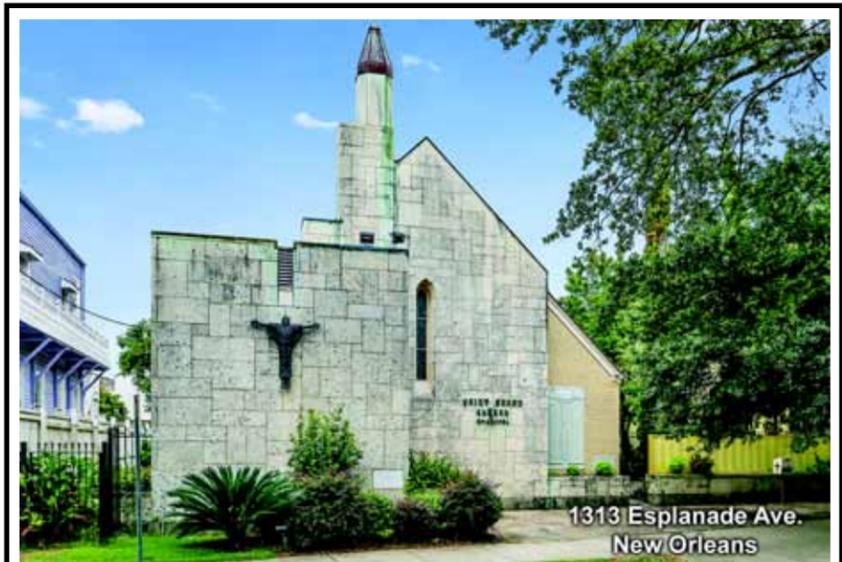
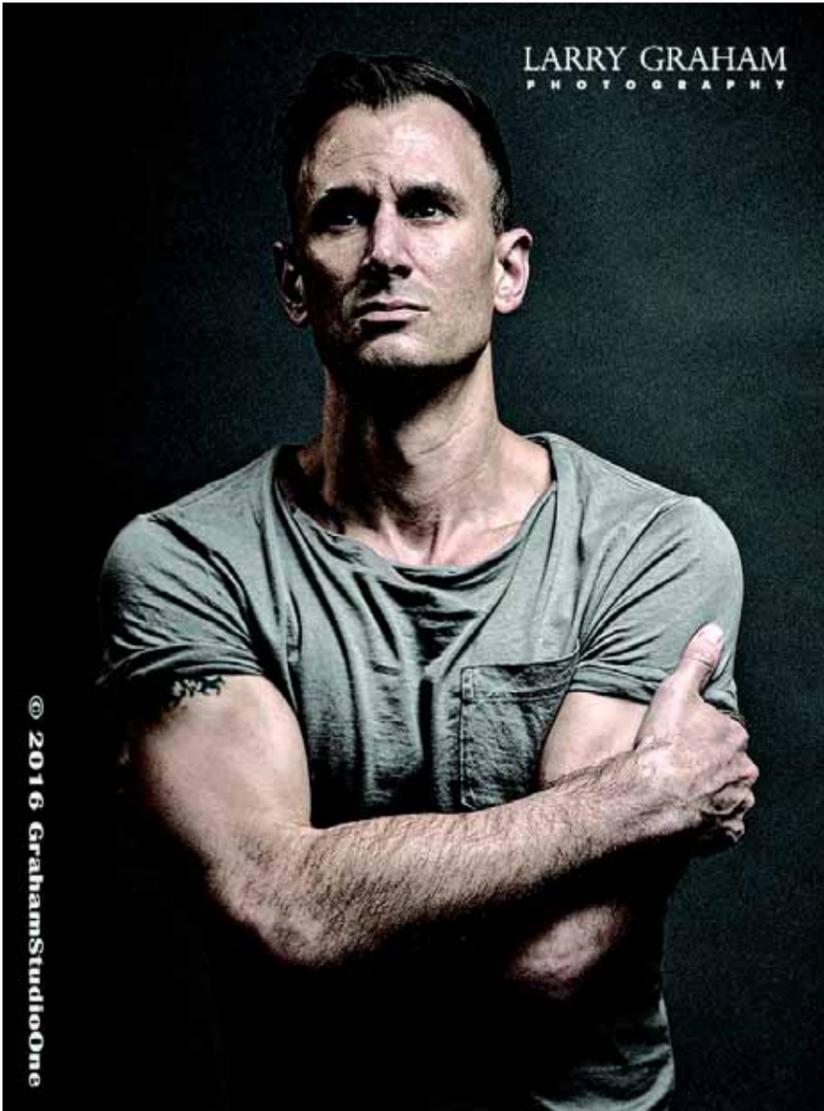
Thursday, January 28, 2016

Join Forum for Equality for their annual Mardi Gras Masquerade and boogie the night away at Propeller (4035 Washington Ave) from 6 – 9pm. Enjoy delicious food from Louisiana Pizza Kitchen as well as scrumptious sweet and savory king cakes like chocolate chip mascarpone and crawfish with goat cheese as well as an open bar. Carnival and/or Disco attire suggested, but not required. There is a suggested Membership Donation of \$40.

Friday, January 29, 2016

OMG, I love this entertainer so much! Barry Manilow is coming to the Smoothie King Center (1501 Dave Dixon Dr) with his new concert show ONE LAST TIME! The show starts at 7:30pm. The GRAMMY®, TONY®, and EMMY® Award-winning musician's career skyrocketed to superstardom when his mega hit song, "Mandy," topped the charts in 1975. In the spirit of that special year, tickets will be priced to tie into that year and will start at \$19.75 (fees included). Manilow insisted that the average ticket price remain low and that a greater range of ticket prices be available. General information about the ONE LAST TIME! Tour is available at www.manilow.com. Tickets may be purchased via Ticketmaster at <http://www.ticketmaster.com>.

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On Behalf of the Children of the Treme, St. Anna's Episcopal Church wants to thank the following community partners for Christmas gifting support for the kids that may not have had a Christmas were it not for you:

- Ambush**
- Bourbon Pub**
- Cutter's**
- Friendly Bar**
- Mags 940**
- Phoenix**
- Bears**
- Bear Trappers**
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trodding the boards

by Brian Sands
Email: bsnola2@hotmail.com

Ditzylant at Café Istanbul

When Sean Patterson, Varla Jean Merman, and Ricky Graham appeared at the start of *Ditzylant* dressed as Mouseketeers for their tribute to the world of Walt, they paused with a few moments of concern that Disney's legal team might swoop down like some pterodactyl in *Fantasia* and bust'em.

But once they realized that, with a minimum of changes here and there, they would be protected by parody (or as Varla said "parasite") fair use statutes, it was time for a "titty titty gang bang" where "Disney can suck my Donald Duck." Never mind Cubby, Doreen and Annette, this might've been too racy for Justin, Christina and Britney. Well, once upon a time.

From there, this mad-hatted trio took on all things Disney and used the Mouse's iconic canon of stories and characters to satirize a large swath of New Orleans' culture, from "1,001 Chalmatians" to "Just a tub full of butter/Makes your arteries shut down", a *Mary Poppins*-inspired tribute to

Emeril and all our other chefs who abhor lite cooking.

But this dream team of writer/performers aimed not only at NOLA's easy targets, but the whole Princess mystique. Snow White became Po' White with curlers in her hair and an attitude as trashy as can be. Varlarella may be "built just like a fella", but don't ask her to wear that cindery shmata when she can enjoy one of Cecile Casey's many gorgeous gowns from the get-go.

Terrible puns abound; Aladdin's Jasmine is covered by a Delta burqa that Prince Ben Ghazi gets her to remove piece

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under the gaydar ...from 18

Saturday, January 30, 2016

"All That Glitters Isn't Gold" is the year of Amon-Ra's 51st annual ball. Voted best ball by *Ambush Magazine* readers three years in a row, Amon-Ra is one of the city's finest balls. The charity number will be held for Saint Anna's. For more information, go to www.kreweofamonra.com.

Saturday, January 30, 2016

The Krewe of Petronius celebrates its 55th year, and presents "Gay, Glitz, & Glamour" for its bal masque at Historic Carver Theatre (2101 Orleans Ave). Doors open at 7pm with the ball starting promptly at 8pm. Please arrive early to take advantage of the complimentary valet. Attire is strictly formal. Photography encouraged. For more information, go to <http://www.kreweofpetronius.net>.

Sunday, January 31, 2016

The King Cake Festival, a celebration benefitting babies and children at Ochsner Hospital for Children, celebrates its third year at Champion Square (1 LaSalle St). Spend the day strolling Champions Square and sampling Louisiana's finest King Cakes from the state's greatest bakers. The event is from 11am - 5pm and is free and open to the public. For more information regarding tasting tickets, the Gladiator Games, or all things King Cake Festival, please visit www.kingcakefestival.org.

Friday, February 5, 2016

Wave your magic wand! The 2016 Friday Night Before Mardi Gras Ball is almost here. With the theme "Once Upon A Twisted Time," this year's event is bringing you a wild and wicked world of fairy tales, fiends and fantasies. The event is from 9pm - midnight at The Cannery (3803 Toulouse St). Wear your best take on a "twisted" fairy tale character for the costume contest ... Be dazzled by a magical evening of music, dancing, great food and a fabulous open bar ... Bid on fantastic items in the outstanding auction ... And

experience special pampering for VIP guests! Shuttle service from the French Quarter is available, plus plenty of secure parking onsite. This event benefits LGBTQ causes and HIV services right here in New Orleans. For tickets and more information, go to www.fridaynightbeforemardigras.com.

Saturday, February 6, 2016

Come see the fabulous Krewe of Armeinius put on the 2016 Armeinius Bal Masque XLVIII- "Beauty and the Beast" at the Frederick Sigur Center (8245 W. Judge Perez) in Chalmette. Come see New Orleans' largest gay krewe put on the greatest spectacle of the year. An Armeinius Bal Masque is the stuff of dreams are made of and this year see the beastly side to Mardi Gras. Shuttles from the French Quarter and Marigny will be available to the ball. Get your tickets early to this incredible once in a lifetime event. Come see celebrity personalities such as Varla Jean Mermen, Michael Sullivan, and the RuPaul Drag Race and hilarious singing sensation Willam Belli. Doors open at 7pm and the ball starts at 8pm. For more information or tickets, go to www.armeinius.org.

Sunday, February 7, 2016

The Mystic Krewe of the Lords of Leather is proud to present, "There's No Cure Like Travel" Ball Masque XXXIII at the Alario Center. Tables are now on sale at Lordsofleather.org. Don't miss one of the greatest balls of the gay carnival season. Hosting again this year is the incredible talent of Bianca Del Rio.

Doors open at 7pm and the ball starts at 8pm. Come out and don't forget your passports.

Party Down

2016 has officially arrived and we have already jumped directly into the Carnival season. My two weeks consisted of New Year's Eve celebrations, disco divas, king cakes, tiaras and Joan of Arc. There was a lot happening at the end and start of the old and new year, so let's get started.

New Year's Eve Eve (Wednesday)

social darling Cheryl Lemoine hosted a post-holiday/pre-New Year's soiree at her home in Mid-City. Cheryl who is a huge wine fanatic had copious amounts of wines and champagnes to pair with an assortment of exotic cheeses and snacks. House parties are always great when they do a unique twist to them, and this one fit that bill. Guests were able to try wines and cheeses that they probably never would buy on their own (most I had not even heard of). I like an educational factor in my parties.

New Year's Eve was found me going from downtown to the suburbs for parties. I started my night at the delightful home of Albert Carey, Captain of Armeinius. He always has a gathering of friends who come together for cocktails, food and watching the fireworks from the rooftop of his condo in the Warehouse District. Next, I traversed across town to the burbs and the home of Jeff Mallon (aka Elizabeth Bouvier) for her party at the Chalmers. Now unlike New Orleans that has one central place for fireworks on the river, it seems in Chalmette everyone shoots them off. There were firework shows around us everywhere. I swear it felt like the Battle of New Orleans recreated all over again, with literally bombs bursting in air all around us. It was a lovely night with great friends and then after the stroke of midnight, the few remaining played the game Cards Against Humanity, which if you have not played this game before do it. It is truly one of the most hysterical, politically incorrect things I have ever done, and no surprise I won. So that made me the most horrible person at the table that night. It's good to have a title.

New Year's Day was spent with family and friends at the Racetrack watching the horses run. Holidays at the track were a tradition in my family, we have gone before for Thanksgiving and Mardi Gras Day, but as I got older those days became reserved for different activities so thought this seemed like a good new holiday tradition to start. Dining in the clubhouse gives you an excellent vantage point to see all the races as well as enjoy good food and libations. The event had the traditional black eyed peas and cabbage for luck and money. Even though I did not win, it still was a great way to usher in the new year.

On Saturday, Decadence arrived early in the form of Frankie Fierce who hosted a progressive birthday party that started with a scrumptious Italian dinner at Ristorante Filippo. After we hopped on the party bus that whisked us off to a whirlwind evening of drunken debauchery starting at the Four Seasons where we caught the very beginning of the Appletini Review. Next up we were at GrandPre's where we caught the tail end of the Southern Barbitchuates show. This was the stop where we were joined by none other than RuPaul's Drag Race contestant Joslyn Foxx who joined us for the remainder of the evening. Our next stop on this rolling train was the Golden Lantern where more people joined us after their Saturday night show. The bus was like a revolving door with people jumping on and off all night at each stop. We then went to the 700 Club before we ended the evening at the Corner Pocket. All I have to say is damn you Fireball; your hangovers suck the next day.

After a few days of recovery it was 12th Night already and that was quite the Wednesday Hump Day. I started the night off with a cocktail reception at the Court of Two Sisters who had their first annual 12th Night party to show off their new renova-

tions and they look amazing. The historic restaurant has got a wonderful facelift. The food was delicious and the flowing champagne made for a great way to start off the night. Next we caught the Joan of Arc Parade that made its way through the Quarter. Their Grand Marshal this year was the delightful Sandra Dartus who looked divine atop her mighty steed as she made her way through the Quarter. The parade was exceptional this year with clever costumes and unique throws.

My friends and I made it over to the Frank Perez's 12th Night gathering at his home on Royal Street. Everyone was there as they chose the Grand Reveler II Will Antil. Wine, beer, nibbles and half naked boys, made for a great Mardi Gras party. Our final stop of the night was the Mystic Krewe of Satyricon 12th Night Party at Café Istanbul. It had a great silent auction, good food and the talented New Leviathan Oriental Fox-Trot Orchestra. Parades and parties made the perfect start to a wonderful season.

On Friday, my friend Laura and I went to see Anais St, John channel the disco diva herself in the show "Last Dance: A Tribute to Donna Summer" at the Joy Theatre. It was probably one of the most memorable shows I have been too in a long time. The audience was dressed in seventies attire and the floor was reserved for dancing. Everyone's spirits were raised high and Anais brought the house down with this part concert/ part theatrical experience. I saw so many people there; it was definitely the place to be that night.

Saturday was a full day of event hopping starting with the Twisted Tiara party hosted by the Friday Night Before Mardi Gras at a private home in the French Quarter. It was the last of the lead up parties to their big event on the Friday Night Before Mardi Gras which will be held February 5, 2016 at the Cannery. It was a fun afternoon and I was lucky enough to win a jewel encrusted Mardi Gras mask. Then the guests paraded down to GrandPre's for the after party. After numerous liquid libations, we went to the Marigny for two events. The first was an art show at CJ Nero's new space. If you have not seen Crag Nero's (owner of Who Dat Café) newest shop and art gallery, you need to check it out. That night was the opening reception for the very talented artist Josh Wingerter's whose renderings of famous singers are stunning. Next we went to see another artist perform at LA 46, an eclectic antique shop on St. Claude. Steven Forster, the society photographer and writer for the *Advocate* held an informal concert at the shop. There was quite the crowd and many singers showed up and sat in with him for a number or two. Photographer, musician, Steven proves he is quite the Renaissance man.

I ended my two weeks on Sunday night with the Royalty Party at the breathtaking home of John Groth on Carondelet. This intimate affair was in honor of their royalty Nick and Kitty D' Litter. The food and drink flowed as the krewe unveiled their poster done by artist Freddie Guess. The painting was pretty cool and featured all the members; it was the best poster I have ever seen done for a gay ball in many years. From the enthusiasm of the members, their ball this year is going to be a great one. Congrats to the royalty and the krewe on hosting a lovely and memorable event.

So until next issue, get your Mardi Gras on!