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Peavine Mountain Media

The local GLBT news and information source for northern Nevada and the eastern Sierra

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# Huge Temps, Huge Crowd celebrate Pride



Parade participants head under the iconic Reno Arch in the parade



The Nevada Marching Northern Nevada Pride Band performs at Pride

The temperature reached 105 on Saturday July 22 as Northern Nevada celebrated the rainbow at the Northern Nevada Pride Festival and community Pride Parade in downtown Reno. But that didn't keep nearly 15,000 people from the festivities.

"This is such a great event. Marty Nichols said, "Even though its hot I am having a blast! It is great to see the diversity here and everyone enjoying themselves. I moved here last fall and I can't believe how welcoming to the gay community this city is."

The Northern Nevada Pride celebration marked a milestone Saturday as it produced



Stephanie Nicole LaDream hosts a pop-up Drag Queen Story Time on stage at Pride

the tenth annual version of celebrating diversity. The first pride event in the area was in 1987 and has seen several festivals under different names come and go.

Northern Nevada Pride is an all volunteer organization from its steering committee to the nearly 400 volunteers it takes to make it happen.

"This is amazing as it is every year," Jeremy Manke, president of OUR Center and chairman of the Northern Nevada Pride,



Along the parade route on Virginia Street (Reno's Main Street) there were rainbows everywhere spreading Joy and community spirit

told therenogaypage. "This just gets bigger and better every year. This year we are in the Wingfield Park, at West Street Plaza and along First Street. This is amazing to see how this event has grown over the past decade."

Northern Nevada Pride's purpose is to raise funding for the local LGBTQ Community Center, OUR Center, which opened its doors in 2016. Besides sponsorships, a requested \$5 gate fee is charged to off-set the increasing costs to produce the event. Funds raised annually help cover the cost of the event and go to community center's operational expenses.

Rainbows filled the downtown area of the Biggest Little City in celebration of local



As the temperature climbed during Pride celebration in Wingfield Park, surrounded by the Truckee River, festival goers found relief

community celebrates everyday, not just on a single day. With today's political climate in the nation, the LGBTQ community is under attack, even here locally. Nevada has some



Parade co-director and this year's Grand Marshal Paco Lachoy get ready for the Parade

of the strongest LGBTQ protections in the United States that have been legislated and not judicially mandated.

Comments on facebook said things like *why are we still celebrating this when Pride month was in June?* Another said *why is this being pushed on us?* and *why is this being thrown into our faces constantly?* This just shows how uneducated many people are about LGBTQ issues.

Reno has celebrated Pride previously in August and now in July as part of Artown.

The community Pride Parade started in 2012 as a two block parade with 27 entries, marching from Lundsford Park to Arlington Avenue, less than 1/4 mile,

"We needed to move this parade to Virginia Street. It needed to be seen," Reno's Mayor Hillary Schieve said in addressing the crowd at Wingfield Park during opening ceremonies of the festival. "And look now the parade marches down Virginia Street in the heart of downtown."

This year's parade had over 100 entries from organizations, businesses, the University, religious groups, Native Americans, health providers and more.

"We had so many ally businesses reach out this year to be in the Parade," Meredith Tanzer told therenogaypage. "It is just amazing how the parade has grown!"

Ms. Tanzer is co-director of the parade with her counter part

for the past decade, Jillian Helget. Together they organize, facilitate and make the "magic happen".

The parade is one of three parades held in Reno and is the largest parade in the city.

The editor and publisher of therenogaypage and quiet community activist Paco Lachoy was selected as Grand Marshal for this year.

"We could not be more thrilled to honor and highlight someone (Paco Lachoy) so special to the fabric of the LGBTQ Community. He inspires many to show up and get involved," Northern Nevada Pride said about Lachoy in a facebook post announcing him as the Grand Marshal.

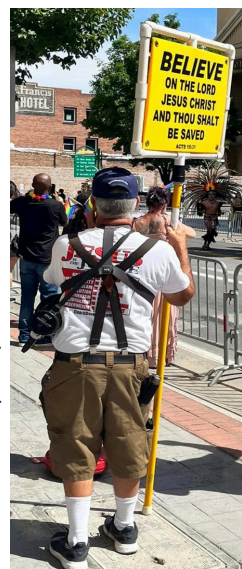
Lachoy said he was greatly honored by being selected and in shock.

A facebook post said "Paco Lachoy. I cannot think of anyone in Northern Nevada more deserving of this honor. Thank you for everything you've done for this community. You're truly a role model for serving your community and giving back."

This was a sentiment expressed over and over again about the 2023 Grand Marshal.

As people entered the festival grounds this year, the University of Nevada Northern Nevada Pride Band welcomed festival attendees.

Lachoy was also given the honor, as



Reno's lone protestor on the parade route



The freshly painted infamous Reno Rainbow crosswalk under the Reno Arch celebrating Pride

Grand Marshal, to introduce the main stage MC, his friend Stephanie Nicole LaDream.

LaDream called Lachoy an exceptional caring and kind man who she befriended ten years ago at the Patio Bar during the Reno Biggest Little Sisters Pride Recovery Brunch. Entertainment took to the stage for the

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One of the floats an organization entered into the community Pride Parade celebrating the community's diversity



## Ra'Jah O'Hara at the Glow

A member of the cast of RuPaul's Drag Race, season six, performed to the crowd at the Glow Plaza on Friday July 21, bringing the house down.

Once Ra'Jah took to the stage, there was a crush of people in front of the stage taking in the performance. There were plenty of cheers. Of course, cell phones were snapping pictures right and left.

"Obviously she practiced what she was going to do," someone in the crowd was overheard saying. "She put on a show." Reno seems to have a keen interest in the Ru'Paul drag queens for some reason.

Ra'Jah performed two-sets at Drag Wars and held a Meet and Greet with those that had purchased special VIP tickets for the night.

Ra'Jah spoke to the crowd about how the po-

litical climate in the United States is attacking Drag Queens in many parts of the country.

Drag is simply a man in a dress who performs and entertains.

The Glow Plaza is part of the expansion of the new J Resort (formerly the Sands) in Reno.



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rest of the afternoon after the National Anthem performed by the Nevada Gay Men's Chorus and the reading of the City of Reno's Proclamation proclaiming July 22 as Northern Nevada Pride Day.

There was also a special blessing of the land by the Washoe Paiute Tribe.

Drag Queen Story Time has become controversial in Washoe County with the County Commission rejecting the reappointment of the Washoe County Library Board Chairman over Drag Queen Story time following heavy negative public comment. Stephanie Nicole LaDream, host of the main stage, did pop-up version Drag Queen Story Time on stage first reading *The Night before Pride*.

"It's okay to be gay," Ms. LaDream told the crowd. "We aren't here to recruit anybody, especially kids, This is about living life. You need to show kindness and be who you are."

Having hosted the main

## Northern Nevada Pride

stage since Northern Nevada Pride's inception in 2014, LaDream brings children to the stage to celebrate diversity each year.

"Having the kids on stage celebrating is one of my favorite parts of what I do in Reno," Ms. LaDream said. "Reno is my second home. I couldn't miss this event. Everyone here has always made me more than welcome and feel like part of the community."

The special guests, as Northern Nevada Pride team calls them, featured entertainment by Mo Heart, WreckNo and Jordi. Local DJ's spun dance tunes in the West Wingfield Dance tent, with featured guest Wreckno doing a set.

The First Street Stage featured Khalilah Smith Cage, Mel and Gia, Whitney Myer, Jazzy Jane, and Gary Lynn Floyd. Hostess for the stage was Empress XLVI of the Silver Dollar Court Shania Taint.

The City of Reno again painted a rainbow cross walk under the City's iconic Arch at the intersection of Commercial Row and Virginia Street.

The cross walk has drawn controversy along with a statement posted on facebook that said "Looks like a great place to spill lots and lots of paint!" In previous years tire tracks were laid down across the crosswalk to try and destroy it. Last year a motorcycle tried to do the same thing by simply spinning brodie after brodie on it.

This year, the rainbow cross walk was painted on Friday and Virginia Street closed from Third to Second street. The rainbow crosswalk was removed the following Monday. A permanent series of rainbow cross walks have been installed along the crooked mile in Idlewild Park.

Protestors seem to voice their objections to the LG-BTQ community mainly via social media. There are still a few protestors who show up at the Pride celebration, like the lone member of the Nevada Light and Salt Brigade, a known hate group, with his sign, amplified sound and video camera.

Pride 2024 will be the fourth Saturday in July, the 27th.

## Drag Wars has super spectacular return To open NoNevada Pride Weekend 2023

Drag Wars had not been a part of Northern Nevada Pride for four years, but returned triumphantly for the 2023 edition of Pride through the efforts of co-chairman Meredith Tanzer and Jillian Helget.

"I don't know why I haven't been here before," Terry Markinton said, "I decided to come and support today and this event is absolutely fabulous and so much fun!"

The event is a competition between teams of two composed of a Drag Queen and a Drag King or audience volunteer.



The Bungee Race was changed due to Covid to a basketball throw. Each contestant is in bungee harness trying to hit the basket

against each other and the overall winners were Athena and TJ Leather once all the points were tallied.

The event was hosted by Stephanie Nicole LaDream.

During the jousting, some of the elevated pillars had to be held down by organizer Jillian and one of her friends Christy.

"I thought we were gonna die," the friend told the- enogaypage she said to Julian.



Empress XLVII Shania Taint of the Silver Dollar Court takes on the bear in Bear Wrestling one of the events at Drag Wars

This year seven drag queens: Sharpay, Shania, Athena, Maria Twapson, Belatrix the Alien Queen, Donna Sux Does Moore and V Valentina participated.

On the Drag King side were TJ Leather, The Captain, Todd and Victor Victoria and three volunteer audience members: Jasper, Robbie and Karina, to even teams out.

Then the competition began in events like: Bungee Race, Luggage Cart Luge, Happy Hippo, Musical chairs, Jousting and Bear Wrestling.



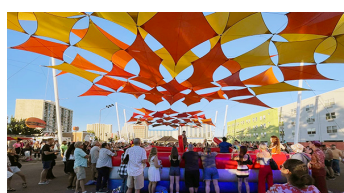
Two of the drag queen contestants take to the jousting event.



The Bellcart Luge pits two teams against each other as they travel a path through several obstacles to the finish line



Co-Organizer Meredith Tanzer and some of the Drag Wars contestants



The J Resort Glow Plaza



Members of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe perform a Blessing of the Land ritual as part of the opening ceremonies



Washoe County Library staff decked out for Pride as a marching float



Reno PD and Washoe Co. Sheriff displayed the rainbow



The area in front of the Glenn Little Amphitheater stage, presented this year by Anthem.



The Northern Nevada Hopes float in the parade