

# Prime Times



PRIME TIMERS WORLD WIDE

APRIL 2009

SINCE 1987

# Toronto Here We Come

Prime Timers Toronto is hosting the Worldwide Convention October 9 -11, 2009. The cost for the Prime Timers Worldwide Convention (excluding hotel and side trip) is \$185.00 CDN. Early registration – before July 1st is \$175.00 CDN. If you are travelling from the United States, with the current US-Canada exchange rate (when we went to press) the amount in US dollars would be about \$145 US. The current exchange rate is very good so you might want to take advantage of registering now. The convention will get under way with Registration beginning Thursday evening at 5 PM and continuing thru Friday evening.

**Prime Timers Toronto** has selected as the host Hotel the Courtyard Marriott Hotel Downtown, a full service hotel in the Gay Village. Pool, Sauna, Hot Tub and Gym are all available. As long as rooms are available, the hotel will provide the conference room rate of \$129.00 cdn. for three days preceding the conference and for 3 days following. All rooms are equipped with two queen sized beds. Reserve early and make Toronto **your** vacation destination in 2009. The booking code is **Prime Timers Convention Inc**



## Bus Trip to Niagara Falls

We are arranging a fantastic bus trip to Niagara Falls. We will depart Toronto around 9 a.m. and traveling around Lake Ontario passing through historic Niagara-on-the-lake. We will pass by the Gorge with its Spanish Cable Car and proceed on past the Floral Clock to Niagara Falls. We will be arriving at the Falls around

11:00 a.m. You will have about 4 hours to visit those attractions you would like. Included in the price of the trip is the use of their People Mover which runs between all the scenic points in Niagara. For those more inclined there are 2 Casinos where your donations will be happily accepted. We will be departing the Falls around 3:00 p.m. so that you will have time to change for the cocktail hour preceding the main dinner that night. Check out the Niagara Falls website.

If you've never seen Niagara Falls this is your chance!



[www.niagarafallstourism.com/](http://www.niagarafallstourism.com/) The charge for the optional tour is \$50 CAD (currently \$42 USD).

## Toronto - Fabulous!

From a small outpost on the shores of Lake Ontario, founded 250 years ago by strapping British Soldiers, Toronto has been growing at a steady pace and today the Greater Toronto Area is home to over 5 million people. It is the financial, cultural and communications centre of Canada and considered the most ethnically diverse city in the world, with 150 nationalities represented and dozens of distinct neighborhoods, such as Corso Italia, Greek Town, Chinatown, Little India, to name just a few. And in the centre of all is the Gay Village.

Torontonians are a friendly, courteous and tolerant lot, making you feel welcome wherever you go. Canada

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Everyone thinks when you get old that your troubles cease; all you have to do is sit home all day, watch television, complain about your aches and pains (who listens?), worry why the kids don't call (these kids are 60 years old), become obsessed with the weather, take pills, etc.

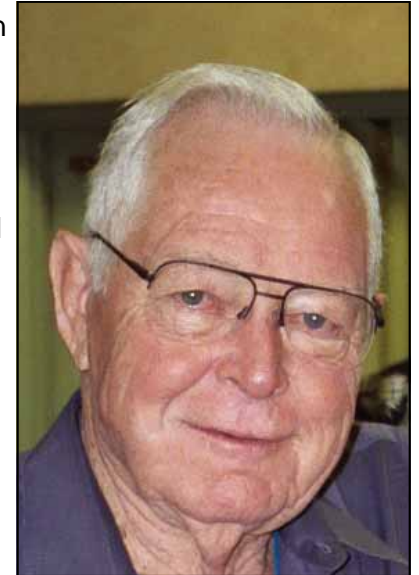
Things you miss -- no salary increases, no promotions, no holidays, no wild Friday and Saturday nights because you don't have to go to work tomorrow, no two-week vacations, no time away from your spouse, and the list goes on.

You're convinced you have no good friends, no sex, no fun, no persons to play games with, no travel companions, no one who is interested in the same things you are, no way to meet an LTR, no status; in summary, you're not worth anything to anyone.

Well, my dear brother; it doesn't have to be. There is now something you can do about all this. The readers of this newsletter are blessed to have an outlet where life can be worthwhile again, where your calendar can have few blank spaces, fun is available, a good possibility for sex of the kind most seniors don't have, and a good opportunity to meet Mr. Right. You can have friends to join you in eating out, traveling, playing games, and all those goodies you remember as fun when you were 37.

It is called Prime Timers. If your attitude is right, blessings are many. You can be worthwhile again by doing your part in bringing happiness to older gay and bisexual men; you can have as much fun as you are willing to put into the activities. You've taken the first step--you have joined. Now make the good things happen by being active in your chapter (Independents are a chapter).

Let the good times roll.



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allows same sex marriage and Toronto was one of the first cities to perform gay weddings and in the process spawning a new industry. Gay tourism is an important part, and as proof, the city fathers have adopted the slogan 'Toronto – as gay as it gets'. A wedding can be arranged during your stay – bring your partner.



## The Gay Village

With Canada's largest Gay and Lesbian population residing in Toronto, a gay neighborhood in the downtown area has evolved over the years, centered at Church and Wellesley Street. There you will find numerous restaurants, bars, dance clubs, strip clubs, bath houses and

shops, catering to any and all tastes. In the middle of all is the 519 Community Centre, located in a historic building at 519 Church Street, that now has been enlarged to twice its size and presenting countless programs geared to the LGBT community. The "519" is also the home base of Prime Timers Toronto, where we meet at regular intervals and for special occasions. We welcome guests at our meetings and social functions. If you are in town call 416-925-9872 Ext. 2970 for information or online at: [primetimerstoronto.ca](http://primetimerstoronto.ca)

### Friday

- 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. President's Meeting (Election of new World Wide board, President's Meeting, questions and answers and sharing time).
- 11:30 – Noon Independent's Meeting with Vice President of Independents.  
Noon – 1:00 p.m. New board meeting with presentations from 2011 Chapter Convention Candidates.

### Friday Afternoon Workshops

- 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Strategies for Increasing and Maintaining Chapter Membership (and New Chapter Start-Ups). Michael Stone, President, Prime Timers Worldwide
- 2:30 – 4:00 p.m. Challenges facing Canadian and American Seniors: Dick Moore Co-ordinator Senior LGBT Program at The 519 Community Centre and Rob Howard, Vice-President of Chapters and Newsletter Editor, Prime Timers Worldwide

### Friday evening

- **Buffet dinner with entertainment preceded by a Cash Bar**

### Saturday

- Bus Trip to Niagara Falls (Optional Tour—\$50 CAD)
- **Sit down dinner** (including a glass of wine or a domestic beer) with entertainment, preceded by a Cash bar. Introduction of the new Executive, announcement of the site for the 2011 Convention and further entertainment. Dress for this dinner will be Smart Casual



## GET YOUR PASSPORT NOW

Practically all cruises, and this year's Prime Timers Convention in Toronto will require a passport. The convention promises to be one of the best that we have had in the twenty-one years Prime Timers has been around. BUT, if you are going to fly to Canada, or take a cruise you WILL need a passport. New rules have gone into effect that might make the lead time longer, but right now people are getting passports in a reasonable time. BUT DON'T WAIT! Get yours now. See how: Go to [TRAVEL.STATE.GOV](http://TRAVEL.STATE.GOV), and select "Apply for a Passport."

**For More Information about the Toronto Convention and Registration Forms:**

**[www.primetimerstoronto.ca](http://www.primetimerstoronto.ca)**

**PRIME TIMES** is the Newsletter of Prime Timers Worldwide, Inc., a social organization for mature gay and bisexual men. It is published six times a year in the even numbered months. Subscription rates are \$15 for a year. To subscribe, write your check to PTWW, and mail to Prime Times, c/o Rob Howard, Editor, 4436 NW 59th St., Oklahoma City OK 73112.

To submit a story, tell other Prime Timers about your chapter events, write a letter to the editor, or to reprint a story from Prime Times, contact Rob Howard at the address above, or at [robhowar@aol.com](mailto:robhowar@aol.com). Prime Timer chapters are welcome to copy editorial content from Prime Times without further permission. Please give credit to Prime Times, and to the original author and chapter if it is noted. Articles can be sent to you electronically to clip into your newsletter by emailing Rob Howard at [robhowar@aol.com](mailto:robhowar@aol.com).

**[www.PrimeTimersWW.org](http://www.PrimeTimersWW.org)**

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Las Vegas, May 3 thru 7

The Las Vegas Regional Gathering, May 3 thru 7, is shaping up to be a great event. The event is held at the Imperial Palace Hotel on the strip. Rooms are also reserved at Harrahs. You can pay by PayPal, credit card, or personal check, and you can now make your room reservations directly with the hotels.

These two great hotels are right in the center of the famous Las Vegas STRIP and are directly connected to each other for your convenience via the skywalk at the Monorail Station. For more information and the registration form go to : [www.events.lasvegasprimetimers.com](http://www.events.lasvegasprimetimers.com)



## Denver July 17-19

The Colorado Prime Timers are pleased to invite you to "Connecting COLORADO", July 17, 18, 19, 2009. The three day event begins with a Welcome Cocktail Party at Charlie's Western Bar, with cocktail hour prices and plenty of appetizers to munch on. You able to opt for an all day bus trip on Saturday south to the Colorado Springs area, and on Sunday, an all day trip to the glorious Rocky Mountain National Park area. For you gamblers, there will also be available, trips to Central City casinos on both days. A dinner is planned on Saturday evening.

Go to the Colorado Prime Timer website: [www.primetimersww.org](http://www.primetimersww.org) and click on "Connecting Colorado" for a full description and reservation form for the fabulous weekend in "The Queen City of the Plains."

## Oklahoma City Labor Day Weekend September 3—7

The Central Oklahoma Prime Timers are pleased to invite you to the Prime Timers 2008 Labor Day Get-A-Way Weekend. The five day event held at the Southwest's premier gay resort – the Habana Inn in Oklahoma City – begins Thursday, September 3, and continues through Monday, September 7, 2009.



Every year nearly 250 Prime Timers and their friends converge on the Habana Inn for a weekend of fun in the sun. The Habana features two swimming pools, three bars, a restaurant and an adult gift shop, plus shows on Thursday and Sunday nights. It is located in the heart of Oklahoma City's gay bar district.

For a registration form and more information, email [PTLaborday@aol.com](mailto:PTLaborday@aol.com), or download a form from [www.primetimersww.org](http://www.primetimersww.org) (Click on Oklahoma City Labor Day Weekend)

# A Personal Story

*Learning to live and love, all over again*  
by Kim Johnson, President, Indianapolis Primetimers

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**Editors Note:** Kim Johnson, the new President of the Indianapolis Chapter, originally wrote this story for his chapter's newsletter. Prime Times offers it as the compelling personal story of one of our brothers. Each of us knows at least one person who is HIV+ or a person living with AIDS. Kim's story gives hope that you can live a normal life, and that love is a possibility, if you are diligent about caring for yourself.

It was May 1, 1974. Joe and I meet at an Indianapolis bar called the Déjà Vu. We spent the next seven days together not knowing our lives would become as one for the next 29 years. There was a book title then, Seven Days in May, that we often referenced somewhat jokingly when we

told people how and when we met and about our first week together. Those were the early days, the happy, carefree days. Joe and I dated by telephone and long distance for several months before moving in together in Washington, D.C. After two years, we relocated to Joe's home city, Indianapolis. That was 1977.

Our relationship was a whirlwind of activities, building lives and careers. We had fifth, seventh and tenth anniversary parties. But on Thanksgiving morning 1987, Joe's 16 year-old son, an only child, was killed in an automobile accident. My, how our lives changed. Talk about searching for answers, a raison d'être, well, there wasn't one. Joe's life, and therefore, my life, was turned upside down. Yes, there was grief therapy; there was this church and that church, counseling, every conceivable effort to put things back the way they were, but like Humpty Dumpty, the pieces just never seemed to go back together again. In 1992, Joe's best friend died of AIDS; and, my best friend from my years in Washington died of AIDS the same year: our parents, his and mine, died, but our lives continued and our relationship seemed strong. I thought that we had survived all of those

David Cooper, editor of our chapter newsletter, asked me to write my biography for our Prime Timers Indianapolis newsletter. I chose instead to write or reveal a portion of my life because this is where I am now today. I have updated that **original** article for publication in the Prime Times Worldwide Newsletter. I can tell you about my work history, my politics, my beliefs, and many other things, but this is what I felt was most relevant and most important. **A Personal Story** has been published in **Positively Aware** (Article from Test Positive Aware Network or TPAN) [positivelyaware.com/2008/08\\_05/personal\\_story.html](http://positivelyaware.com/2008/08_05/personal_story.html) and at **The Body** <http://www.thebody.com/content/art48993.html>, both international HIV/AIDS publications.

tragedies and I thought to myself that we had become great role models for the Gay Community. I was probably a bit self-deluded or maybe just not totally in touch with reality.

## Denial

Fast forward to 2002. We were not really role models at all. We were like everyone else, gay or straight. We were just wrapped up in our lives and somewhat oblivious to so many things. I went along with Joe who did not want to be tested for HIV because he did not want to know. He didn't want me to be tested either because he did not want to know that either. We had not kept up on the advances of treatment and only believed that, if diagnosed, we would die horrible, stigmatized deaths like so many of our friends. Even though we both suspected we had AIDS (we never considered being HIV-positive as that was just a synonym for AIDS). We convinced ourselves we were better off not knowing for sure. Why? Because, in our deepest fears, we knew the answer. We came out in a sexually charged era and we were sexually active and not monogamous. We believed AIDS was a death sentence and there was nothing one could do about it.

My story is not unique. I became very sick with one problem after another. I secretly sought an anonymous HIV test that came back inconclusive. Shingles, panic attacks, electrolytes severely depleted, thrush, coughing, shortness of breath, no sense of taste, exaggerated sense of smell, can't eat, can't drink, a "type" of pneumonia, weight loss, other problems and ailments with long names, trips to the emergency room, then hospitalization and another HIV test, and finally, reality on September 21, 2002. The test results are confirmed. Mr. Johnson, you have AIDS. My God, I almost felt relief at that point since I had already "known" the answer and I felt prepared. Little did I know that Joe also knew the answer and that he, too, was prepared. I asked my new and very brilliant infectious disease specialist to

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I asked, did you hear what I said? I am HIV-positive, in fact, I have AIDS. John said ...it is a non-issue.



Kim and John

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talk to Joe. He talked with him for at least an hour. I was in the hospital bed listening as The doctor explained to Joe how I would live a normal life span, if only I would strictly and faithfully adhere to the drug regimen he was going to put me on. As he talked to Joe and explained things in such a compassionate way, I cried for the first time. I sensed such emotional relief. I truly believed that Joe and I would get help together.

## **Facing Death**

Honestly, I never thought about dying. Everyone else subsequently told me they did not expect me to leave the hospital, but I did. I had to leave not because I was well, but because I had to attend Joe's funeral. The next morning, September 22, 2002, Joe took his own life. I can only rationalize he did not want to be left alone as I was his only relative and his "glue" that held his life together. He was so wrong in his assumption. Joe arranged for my brother, Bill, and his wife, Patti, to be in my hospital room when I learned Joe was dead. Yes, Joe had been well prepared for the diagnosis and he orchestrated quite a lengthy list of extraordinary events just hours before he died. These events will have to wait for another day (maybe a book).

Many, many things have happened to me since that Sunday morning in September. I buried a partner. I grieved. I began to see doctors. I have seen most of them, infectious disease specialists, otolaryngologists, internists, gastroenterologists, dermatologists, oncology/hematologists, orthopedic oncologists, neurologists. I have learned everything I possibly can about HIV/AIDS. Bill and Patti, my friends who know and my friends who do not have all been supportive.

But, none of this meant nearly as much to me as what happened January 1, 2004. Thanks to my Rio Rancho, New Mexico friends, Bill and Tony, I was persuaded to cut short my Christmas visit with Bill and Patti in Tulsa, Oklahoma. They convinced me that I needed to come to New Mexico for a New Year's Day brunch. I said I couldn't. They said I could. They said we'll pay your way to fly from Tulsa to Albuquerque and back to Tulsa to resume your Christmas visit in a few days. I thought, no one ever made such a generous offer to me, and so I went.

## **A New Love**

As fate would have it, at that brunch on January 1st, I met John, an extraordinary man. We clicked, but I had a secret. We spent all of that day and the next day together. There was a sad goodbye on the second. I went back to Tulsa. I called John a few days later from the airport in Chicago and we talked. We talked every day for the next month or so. I invited John out to Indianapolis for a visit. He agreed he would come. I was excited, but then I started to worry about whether to disclose or not disclose my HIV/AIDS status. I worried myself sick. I was not prepared for disappointment or rejection. I talked to Bill and Tony. I finally decided that I must disclose so I sent John an e-mail saying don't book your flight to Indianapolis until we can talk. John went to a conference room where he worked and we talked on the phone. I reluctantly told John that I was HIV-positive. John said, but what do we need to talk about that is so important. I asked, did you hear what I said? I am HIV-positive, in fact, I have AIDS. John simply said he assumed everyone in the gay community probably was and that he was well-educated about the virus and how it is and is not spread. He said it is a non-issue. He was in no way judgmental. I

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When John came into my life, my life changed. John gave me a new inner strength, courage, honesty, and openness to face life's adversities.

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was flabbergasted, but relieved that he was totally understanding. We talked every day since that fearful day. After many trips back and forth between Albuquerque and Indianapolis, John and I decided it was time to go to the next step.

### A New Life

As fate would have it again, everything just fell into place. In May 2006, John completed a degree he was working toward and gave notice at his employer he was resigning. Concurrently, he started to get his Albuquerque home ready for sale, but it never made it to market. While building an entrance garden arbor for his home, an acquaintance stopped by and said I heard you might be selling your house. John said I haven't listed it because it will take two or three months to get the house ready to sell. Bob, the acquaintance, said I want to buy the house **now**. Paul and I will come by on the weekend to finalize an agreement, if that's okay. John thought he might be kidding, but the deal closed 10 days later and, as a bonus, John got to stay in the house, at no cost, through June.

I flew out in June; we finished an irrigation system and some landscaping, packed a Budget Truck and drove the 1,300 or so miles from Albuquerque to Indianapolis. After driving for four days, we pulled into our home in Indianapolis to balloons on the mailbox compliments of our friends and neighbors, Chuck and Ken. A group of friends unpacked the truck, returned the truck to Budget, and all of us sat down for dinner at a new Italian restaurant.

John and I are a "magnetic couple" or "discordant couple," meaning that I am HIV-positive and he is HIV-negative. The disease is a fact, but it does not define me or our relationship; yet I am now a very serious activist in the HIV/AIDS community. I am on the Client Service Committee at the **Damien Center**; I have visited many other AIDS service organizations (ASOs) and I serve on the Board of Advisors for **Positive Choices** (established with a grant by Indiana Comprehensive Health Insurance Association). The goal of Positive Choices is to help people dependent on ICHIA insurance coverage live better lives. John joins me at a dinner function twice a month where HIV infected and affected people socialize with absolutely no stigma, but with a strong mutual understanding and respect for what brought us together and where we've been in the history and process of this disease.

### Awareness

HIV/AIDS is still incurable. It is sometimes manageable through a combination of toxic and near-toxic medications that are lifesaving. Sometimes one wonders whether the side effects from the drugs are worse than the disease;

however, being realistic, we know the drugs were fast-tracked by the FDA to save lives. For me, so far, so good.

Now, at 63 years old, I feel good most of the time. I am an advocate for prevention, testing, and medical treatment. Unfortunately, I was diagnosed late in the course of HIV disease so I struggle to get my CD4 (T-cells) into a normal range, but while immunologically compromised, I am doing exceptionally well virologically. My viral load has been mostly undetectable since February 2003. I know much more than I ever thought I would about HIV/AIDS and HIV meds. I share my experiences with anyone who may be struggling with concerns about HIV/AIDS. It took me a long time and a lot of money and heartache to understand that there is help regardless of your situation, station in life, or your financial means. When John came into my life, my life changed. John gave me a new inner strength, courage, honesty, and openness to face life's adversities. His love has been empowering and refreshing.

My mission now is to be more open (yes, there is some risk to that), and to get the message about HIV/AIDS out so that people know everything they possibly can about the disease so that they can obtain services. I serve on the Executive Committee of the **Ryan White Part A Planning Council**. The Council is one of only five new Transitional Grant Areas (TGAs) with the responsibility for determining how our TGA consisting of ten counties allocates its Part A funding to each service category. We set priorities and allocate funds for services based on the size and demographics of the HIV population and the needs of the population. Particular attention is given to those who know their HIV status but are not in care. Planning Councils are also required to develop a comprehensive plan for the provision of services that includes strategies for identifying HIV-positive persons not in care, and strategies for coordinating services to be funded with existing prevention and substance abuse treatment services.

*Kim Johnson and his brother grew up in a small town in southwest Alabama. Kim graduated from Auburn University, attended law school and from the age of nine has been involved in politics of some kind. Kim's career included working in Washington, D.C. as a Congressional Press Secretary and Senate Legislative Assistant and in Congressional Relations for the Executive Branch; then Kim moved to Indianapolis and worked in Human Resources for a medical devices and a publishing company; and, for the past 18 years, Kim has been in executive recruiting and still dabbles in his executive recruiting firm in Indianapolis. Kim was recently elected **President of Prime Timers Indianapolis** and began his term of office on March 1, 2009. Hobbies continue to include politics, pets, and travel. Kim and his partner John live in a 150-year old remodeled barn house in Indianapolis. E-mail Kim at [jkjohnson7420@comcast.net](mailto:jkjohnson7420@comcast.net)*

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# HERE AND THERE

BY ZACH MULLANEY, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR, CENTRAL OKLAHOMA PRIME TIMERS

**MIAMI VALLEY/DAYTON, OHIO:** Their Pride Festival will be June 3-6 this year. The Executive Director of Equality Philadelphia will be a featured speaker, and famous comedienne Poppy Champlin will entertain. If you'll be in the area, and have questions, go on line to [www.pridayton.com](http://www.pridayton.com). The P/T chapter is in the process of securing a tent for the Saturday event.

**MYRTLE BEACH, S. CAROLINA:** Boy, this chapter is one that goes gallivanting. They scheduled a dining out night at Fatz Café in neighboring Conway, and then to Charlotte for a concert with the association of gay choruses (chorusi as in cacti?) If you will be visiting their fun resort area, contact Ed at 843/347-6885 for more info on their social goings-on.

**CHARLOTTE, N. CAROLINA:** Here's another chapter always on the go. Every couple of months they pack their bags and head out of town somewhere. In April it is the local GLBT film festival. Then in May, they are heading out to Latta Plantation. July is Pride Month, and September will be to Maggie Valley. October you'll see many of them in Toronto. Good for y'all.

**TUCSON, ARIZONA:** For the guys that are interested, the chapter is becoming involved with a companionship program for seniors, both gay and straight, to assist them in living independently. The aide must be 60 years old, for 20 hours a week, pay is 2.65 an hour (tax free, plus mileage), and working as a companion for men only. Women will be working with any woman that may need assistance. It's a way to help those that may need to have human contact on a regular basis.

**BOSTON, MASS:** Our Mother Chapter has an interesting way of introducing their candidates for their board of directors. Each writes a short biography of himself, of his life prior to P/T, and then his life since becoming a member. One candidate, Dick Barbeau, is one of the original 42 that met at Woody Baldwin's first ever meeting. What a story!

**INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA:** Enjoyed reading the closing sentence regarding their February dine-out night: "Our dining event for January 22 was at Ralph's Great Divide. While not officially a gay establishment, the folks were friendly and sure looked a lot like us." How many times in life have we been to "straight" places and thought the same thing?

**EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA:** The chapter's May 10 general meeting is one to look forward towards. Jeff B. is working on getting Mike Boyd, the city's Chief of Police, to be the speaker. The closing phrase stated for inviting him is "with good reason". That sounds like

a meeting not to miss. Stay tuned! If you want to touch base with them, mail to [edmontonpt@yahoo.ca](mailto:edmontonpt@yahoo.ca).

**VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA:** The chapter has monthly meetings the second Sunday of the month at 2PM in the meeting room of St. John's United Church on the corner of Broughton and Comox Streets in the West End. If you find yourself in their beautiful city that particular weekend, stop by. It will be an interesting meeting followed by coffee (it's a church, remember) cookies, and gossip. Also, their city will be hosting the next winter Olympics, so if you enjoy the best of sporting youth and may plan to go, remember the Prime Timers. They're an active bunch.

**LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA:** Reid Rasmussen has a timely tip for the New Year. Don't forget to go through and get rid of old receipts and paperwork. Ask your accountant how long you should keep documents. Get rid of any paper work clutter you wont want a relative or stranger to have to go through, should something happen to pass.

**CLEVELAND, OHIO:** Our thoughts go out to the chapter prez regarding his own health and his caring for the health of his long-time partner. We certainly hope someone will step up and assist with the presidential duties. Life can be rough sometimes as we age. I'm much more understanding now of our school secretary's license plate frame: "Screw the Golden Years".

**PERTH, W. AUSTRALIA:** For their February meeting, the Police were the guest speakers. They gave an insight into the community policing policies. The guys were allowed to ask any questions they wished, and the sergeant gave the practical answers. There were no arrests at the meeting, so those in attendance were free to go afterwards. All felt the meeting was a success. One of the cops was a total hunk, and a couple of the members commented "they wouldn't mind going down to headquarters with that one". (We hope Edmonton will have such good luck, too.)

**WASHINGTON, D.C.:** The Elder Think Tank of the DC Gay Center, has been busy lately. The group held it's first fundraiser on March 8<sup>th</sup> at Halo. On March 16th, Alan Dinsmore, co-chair of the Elder Think Tank and Prime Timers Board of Directors member, testified at the DC government's Department of Aging Oversight Hearing. Currently the group is partnering with PEN to conduct a series of financial planning seminars for members of the GLBT community.

# Just About Everywhere!

Michael Stone, President

# CHAPTER DOINGS

# 9



Michael Stone

Well, it seems the pattern of my travels continue and my calendar is quickly filling up. That's the way I like it. So, if you'd like to invite me to one of our chapter events please get in touch with me soon! I'll try my best to be there.

In late April I'll be headed out to Southern California for six days. While the purpose of this visit is family I hope to mix that with visits to some of our chapters out there. I know I plan on seeing

Wayne Patterson, from Palm Springs, and dine with the men of our San Gabriel Valley Chapter. If possible I'd also like to drop in at an event or two in our San Fernando Valley Chapter and even, perhaps, San Diego. I'll continue on from there to Las Vegas where I'm thrilled to again be spending the 3 – 7 at our Western Regional Events in Sin City!

On June 6 I'm flying to China, for a 20 day visit there. While the purpose is to relive a trip I had there in 1986 (it's going to look a whole different than it did back then), I'll have a chapter 'start-up kit' tucked into my luggage just in the hope that we can find someone to work with us there. I'm already in touch with a gentleman in Hong Kong that might just fit the bill.

In July I'm headed, first, to Albuquerque and am looking forward to speaking with members at their July 12 monthly meeting. From there I'm headed to Denver for a week. I'm exciting about attending their first Regional Event, "Connecting Colorado", on July 17, 18 & 19. Our Worldwide Board will join in the fun there and also get some business done at a Worldwide Board Meeting. If you haven't been to the Mile High City in a while this is the time to do it! After living there for 33 years I can tell you the July weather is beautiful and the Regional is offering so many great ways of seeing the city and the Rockies.

It appears that my August calendar is empty as of this moment; maybe I can bowl with our local summer league. I'll kick off September by being at our annual Labor Day Event in Oklahoma City, from September 3 – 8. In October I return to Toronto for what promises to be this year's most exciting event, the Toronto Convention. I plan to stay from October 7 to 13, so I can see a whole lot more of the city than I did in February. Then just one short week after returning from Toronto it's back to Las Vegas, again.

In another article in this issue I spoke about the word "Pride". I can't tell you how much pride I feel by our first participation in the annual AARP Convention in Las Vegas. We are going to be visible as an organization to the senior community in a way that's never happened before. We will have a manned booth on Thursday, October 22 through Saturday, October 24.

It's actually too early to plan November or December, right now. Somewhere in there I'm looking forward to meeting and getting to know many more of you. If you see a spot in there for us to get together, just be me a 'holler'. If I can make it I'll be there!



Tucson Prime Timers share a moment of fun during a day trip to the Arizona Renaissance Festival in March (Photo by Scott and Richard, TPT)



CHARLOTTE: Our January White Elephant Bingo meeting was an incredible success. An amazing array of prizes, a couple of multiple winners, and a great deal of fun was a nice way to start off the new year. There were a great many games because of the amount of prizes and he worked virtually non-stop.



Showing their Pride!

## ELECTIONS IN OCTOBER

With the Toronto Convention on October 9, 10 and 11 we also will be holding elections. We welcome you to consider joining your board and being part of the energy and force that moves us into the future. At this time we know there will be a vacancy for the position of Treasurer and one for Member-at-Large. However, although some of us may choose to run for one more term, that should not stop anyone from seeking to also run. As with the recent election in the United States, we could have a lively race.

In the upcoming months we'll be furnishing specific information about how to enter the nomination process. We want to also remind our chapters that Toronto will be where we'll be receiving bids from chapters who wish to host the 2011 convention. To date we've only heard from one chapter. We have set aside a special time during the convention (noon on Friday, October 9) for presentations from chapters wishing to host. For more information on the, contact

For those of you wanting to enter into the election, the following information may seem premature but it should help:

"The process of sponsoring a member from the local Chapter is simple. The Nominee should approach his Chapter Board and ask for approval to serve on the Worldwide Board. The Chapter Board should check the Nominee's status in the Chapter (paid dues and other compliance with local Chapter By-Laws.) The President shall then draft a letter to the Worldwide Nominating Committee (not yet formed) naming the Nominee, the Board position he is running for, that he is in good standing with the Chapter, and that the Chapter wishes to place his name on the slate. The Nominee should also send a letter to the Nominating Committee stating why he wishes to serve and why his experiences have prepared him to be a good candidate for the position. If there are two candidates nominated for any one position, the qualification letters from each candidate shall be distributed along with the Nominating Committee's list of nominations to all local Chapters on August 15, 2009".



RGV Group visits Pyramid of the Sun at Teotihuacan

What happens when you throw twenty-nine Prime Timers from seven different registered Prime Timer groups and six different countries in with a hunky Mexican tour guide who loves to flirt with his "Muchachos" and tell stories of his home country, and let them loose in Mexico for seven days and six nights???? Well, as the Rio Grande Valley Prime Timers (RGVPT) recently found out, you have all the ingredients for one heck of a good time. Departing President and founding member of the recently formed group, Bob Brixey and his partner Harvey Kirkes took it upon themselves to organize a trip that not only included visits to our Southern neighbor's famous ruins of Teotihuacan and Tajin and a tour of the country's capital city Mexico City, but topped it off with a two day visit to Mexico's oldest and biggest Carnival (Mexico's Mardi Gras) in sunny Veracruz.

From the pre-travel lasagna dinner, hosted by Joel Edwards, through the nightly cocktail parties, including a costume party in honor of carnival; Lunch and dinner hosted by Bob and Harvey, the on-bus party games organized by new board members Wayne Harley and Ruben Zavala and our guest Mexican Bingo caller, Eduardo De La O, the travelers were entertained with fun and excitement at every turn.

The beautiful ancient pyramids of the lost tribes were only outshined



Costume party in Veracruz

by the night lights of Mexico City. The dancing men in the spectacular Carnival parade on the water front streets of cobblestoned Veracruz were gorgeous.

This is one Prime Timer group to keep an eye on. As one traveler said in echo of Dorothy's famous line from her '63 comeback at Carnegie Hall "I never want to go home---I never!!!!"



Walking tour with our guide Juan in Veracruz

# Creating Pride Together 11

by Michael Stone, President

From reading newsletters from our wonderful chapters I see that many of them are preparing for their annual 'Pride' events. For some areas these are just small gatherings while, on the other hand, these events involve tens of thousands of Gay men and women in our large metro areas. There are many levels to 'Pride'.

Let's take a look at the word: the dictionary defines pride as a quality or state of being proud; proud behavior or treatment; ostentatious display, a showy or impressive group and delight or elation rising from some act or relationship. It is this last definition that, for me, connects directly to our organization.

Life is filled with pride for me; I talk with between one and five of you nearly every day (you, meaning men from our chapters). You work hard to bring pride to your chapter and, more importantly, your members. Can you possibly understand the pride I feel working with all of you?

I'm asking something important from each and every one of you. It is something that will fill you with pride and love. We are in a partnership; we belong to this organization together, doing the work we love to do. I'm asking each of you to go one step further. Work with me! Our chapters are slowly increasing in

numbers but I still find many men who have never heard of us. There's only one way to resolve this: join in a very personal relationship with me and together let's work to fulfill our goal: one hundred chapters by the year 2010.

We have only so many months to accomplish this goal. I'm working hard to 'talk' Prime Timers everywhere, to 'take' Pride Timers everywhere and to find men across this globe who will take a stand, and reach out to work in their community to produce new chapters. None of us does things without a reason. What better reason is there than to spread the support and camaraderie our organization is? How can we not step forward to help to make this happen?

I ask you to talk Prime Timers. Look around and ask people who are interested in having a chapter in their area to contact me or Rob Howard. Follow up with them to make sure they've talked or emailed one or both of us. I will make this promise: I will work with them and work with you and together we'll make these chapters a reality. There's nothing magic about starting a chapter and if each of us fills in a piece (of this puzzle) together we will know and experience and live the true meaning of Pride.



Melbourne Chapter members Paul and Gordon at the Pride March held in St. Kilda

San Antonio Prime Timers at their Chili Cook-Off. Looks like the chili got at least one of them dancing.



# 12 ANOTHER EXCITING PRIME TIMERS CRUISE

BY MICHAEL STONE



How much better does this get? It seems that with every cruise I say that this is the greatest group we've ever had. Well, the Southern Caribbean cruise in January definitely was! What a

wonderful group of folks and the 11 days just flew by. So many of us shared excursions together and the dinners were always fun; our games and get-togethers created the most friendship I've ever witnessed, on any of our cruises.

Our **most exciting news** (and this is 'hot off the press') is our **7-day WESTERN CARIBBEAN** cruise aboard **Norwegian Cruise Lines, Jewel** on January 10, 2010 **out of Miami!** We're always looking for something a little different and this cruise is the one.

Once more, Courtyard Travel has gotten us wonderful prices, starting at \$439 inside, \$609 outside and \$739 veranda, plus port charges and taxes. That's right: \$739 Veranda! This is a special price offered to our group. You can book

## FOR MORE INFORMATION on these cruises

**Michael Stone** 941 359-8212  
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[www.courtyardtvl.com/](http://www.courtyardtvl.com/)  
1-800 437-9685 and ask for Bobette

this right now for only \$250 each. Courtyard's generous policy allows cancellation with a full refund up until mid-October.

Both Robert and I are already busy planning on-board activities. We feel we'll have a huge group on this cruise. The Jewel is the second newest ship in NCL's fleet. In addition to early and late dining choices you can make your own choice of 'Freestyle Dining' in one of their 9 restaurants. The ports include Roatan, Belize City, Costa Maya, Mexico and Grand Stirrup Cay. We've looked ahead and have seen all the great excursions offered at these ports to so many of the Mayan Historical Sites.

We are still planning our 2010 Repositioning Cruise. Most people have asked for a Fall date (sailing from Europe to Florida) but it is too early for the cruise lines to release prices and agendas. As soon as Courtyard Travel has this information we'll pass it right on to you.



**A view of the Norwegian Jewel. Look at all the verandahs!**



## Watch for Another Award in Boston!

Boston is at it again—this is the preliminary design for their "Award Winning Float." They are serious, they have won many awards for their Boston Pride floats in the past.

The group continues to make progress designing the next "award winning" float. The above is Jamie's rendering of our ideas. As you may see there are palm trees, a bird cage, and of course, the disco ball. The parade date is Saturday, June 14, and our theme is LaCage, with appropriate music and characters. But, keep in mind that La Cage was a club, so others marching in the parade will be "on their way" to the club.