

Prime Times



PRIME TIMERS WORLD WIDE

DECEMBER 2007

SINCE 1987

FORGET E-MAIL, VOICE MAIL, AND CALLER ID

WE LIVE IN A TIME OF LOVE

BY MICHAEL STONE, PRESIDENT, PRIME TIMERS WORLDWIDE

We live in an age of 'email', 'voice mail', 'call waiting', 'caller I.D.', heavy traffic, impatient drivers, electronic processing and robotic customer service reps! These things are designed to speed us on our way. We seem to have lost the personal interaction that is so vital to the nurturing and growth of all of us as humans. But, though all of this certainly does exist, we also all live in an age where there is Prime Timers.

As an organization we will always provide support, friendship, warmth, and a welcoming smile. We are about 'customer service' because we are there to help make the golden years that much brighter. You can't find our brand of camaraderie anywhere else.

At the convention in Reno I glanced around; wherever I looked I saw laughter, warm and smiling faces, and camaraderie in a way that *should* exist. The good news is that it does: it exists in each and every one of us and we need to keep putting it out there by sharing that fact that our 'glasses are half full'.

Do you have any idea of the love that radiated from those faces in Reno? For the past four years I had worked together with so many of you. We formed a partnership to start a chapter or to work through problems within an existing chapter. And then I stood before you and I saw something I've never quite felt so much of in one room in all of my life: I felt your love and the love we share together in the work we do.

I love you guys for your wonderful sharing and your great ideas. I steal them from you all of the time and then share them with others. We know each other on a first name basis. This is part of the bond. This is part of what I do in my relationship with you. On the Friday night after the dinner I was

a bit under the weather and was trying to get back to my room. So many of you stopped me and posed me with your chapter members and boards for photos. As I crossed to the escalator the flashbulbs never stopped popping and I forgot my

personal ills. I had trouble seeing the escalator because of the flashbulbs and I remember joking that I now knew how Madonna felt with the paparazzi!

Thank you for all the great photos. I see them in your current newsletters. Thank you and thank yourselves for being Prime Timers. Thank you for the love!



**HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND
BEST WISHES FOR A
GREAT NEW YEAR**

**FROM PRIME TIMERS
WORLDWIDE**

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PRIME TIMERS WORLDWIDE BOARD

FOUNDER FILOSOFY

BY WOODY BALDWIN, FOUNDER,
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www.PrimeTimersWW.org

I have always wondered when someone is being
honored how he can say that the experience is humbling,
but this anniversary year has taught me why they say
that. The many recognitions that I have had this year
have taught me why they say it. Part of this is, as I have
said many times, that I consider myself to be merely the
person who turned the key in the ignition. It is you and
you and you and the other the soon- to-be 10,000 mem-
bers, who are responsible for the growth and prestige
that Prime Timers enjoys today.

When I started our organization 20 years ago, it was
designed to be, simply stated, a place where older gay
and bisexual men could go and not feel intimidated or
unwanted. With 70 chapters now and more in the womb,
we have accomplished not only that; but, in our own quiet
way, have elevated the status of older gay and bisexual
men. We are no longer the pits of society but are proud
to be up with the best. And, without it being our ex-
pressed intention, have shown younger gays that gay life
does not end at an imaginary date but can be a happy
lifetime situation.

I hope you are proud of what we have achieved and
will fight to see that we stick to our original simple pur-
pose and do not fall into the temptation to reach out to all
gays, and in so doing make us an ordinary gay organiza-
tion of which there are many. We are unique as the
only worldwide organization that focuses on older
gay men. With our phenomenal growth, we are success-
ful. I belong to the "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" philosophy.

Thanks again to all those hard-working guys who
have planned and executed the honors I have received
this year. I am proud of our 20 years and hope there will
be many more when I pass on. I feel that Prime Timers
has capped off a wonderful life for me. Obviously, some-
one up there likes me despite the "sins" I have commit-
ted. I have been so fortunate. May you be so blessed.

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OUR NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BY MICHAEL STONE, PRESIDENT, PRIME TIMERS WORLDWIDE

Too often we plan and work and look ahead as to what we want to accomplish. Not often enough do we stop to 'smell the Roses' and realize just how lucky we are. That's how I feel about our new board of directors. I am as 'proud as punch' about this board so please indulge me if you will by letting me introduce and tell you just a little bit about them!

Our Vice President of Chapters, **Rob Howard**, is in his fifth year on the board. During his four years as a Member-at-Large we all know he was much more than that. He was constantly coming up with ideas and plans, which benefited all of our members and allowed us to grow. He brings his background and knowledge as chapter president of Central Oklahoma chapter with him. As Newsletter Editor (which he continues with) he continues to create and improve on an exciting document, that everyone is eager to read and learn from. Rob and I will always continue to work hand in hand together in our goals.



Our Vice President of Independents, is **Jay Pitard**. This is Jay's third year on the board. He brings his energy, enthusiasm and ideas to his new position. Formerly he was a Member-at-Large. Jay also brings his know how on how chapters operate with him - he is past president of our San Diego chapter. Jay is in alignment with our board and its future goals.

Pat Karr has jumped right in as our Treasurer. It is right up his alley because Pat is a CPA. No one knows more about the dynamics of how a chapter and board operate. Pat has been our President for the past four years and is there with his knowledge and support. We will always draw on that knowledge in our work to achieve our future goals. It's great to have him with us.



Steven DuBois is the new kid on the block but no stranger to any of us. Steven helps balance the board. He may be young but he is wise in the ways of Prime Timers. He has worked with the board for the past two years as a Traveling Ambassador and has been instrumental in helping start and work with chapters during that time. He is a terrific Secretary; whenever I

need something he is able to pull the answer out of his head nearly as fast as he is able to produce the written notes. He is an integral part of our future.



Don McVay is also new to the board. He is one of two Members-at-Large. Don has been my Assistant during my past two years as Vice-President of Chapters. He has worked with me by contacting and visiting chapters and in helping to start new ones. Don is also President of our Kansas City chapter. He divides his time between Kansas City and Palm Springs. His enthusiasm and hard work will move us right toward our future goals.

Ed Healey hails from our Toronto Chapter and brings with him a lot of experience and expertise. He will be instrumental in his continued work in Toronto in producing the 2009 convention there. Ed is also our Member-at-Large and his work on our board and with the Toronto chapter will provide for smooth and efficient communications between the two of us. Welcome aboard, Ed!



I am celebrating my fifth year on the board and my first as President. I am full of enthusiasm and energy in working with such a wonderful group of men. My background includes starting Prime Timers Sarasota and serving as their President for five years. I am currently in my second year as Vice-President of our local Suncoast Stonewall Democrats group in the Sarasota area. My educational background includes a Master's Degree in International Relations and another in Special Education. Most of my career was in education, culminating with eight years of work in Special Education.

Of course, no Prime Timers Worldwide board would be complete without our Founder, **Woody Baldwin**, who serves as an ex-officio member.

We all look forward to bringing our individual talents together to serve the membership of Prime Timers Worldwide, and to work to expand your organization to many more cities.



For contact information see the panel on page 2, or check www.primetimersww.org



POTLUCK AT PRIME TIMERS

by Sonny Darnell, Member, Prime Timers-Central Virginia

Start your day with a pot and a pan, it might help you to find a man!
Some things I cook are carbon dated, and go with drinks that are carbonated.
They say to get to a man's heart, it's good cooking that's a healthy start.
With other charms that you may use, you may increase from those to choose!
But pots and pans bring nothing more than things to wash and things to store;
It's what's inside those pans and liners that you bring to Potluck at Prime Timers!
There's fellowship and food for thought, and things from Ukrops* that you have bought.
There's fancy cakes--some made by hand—that will tempt the pallet of any man!
With good home cooking to use as bait, how those handsome men do salivate!
With veggies, pasta, and lots of meat, it makes eating time complete!

There's seeing friends that you have missed, and getting hugs and getting kissed,
And fun and games sure please the guys, when their ticket wins that day's door prize!
Sometimes the speakers are just the best on subjects we share with great interest.
And sometimes the room is filled with snores, as some speakers turn out to be real bores!
With lots of planning and lots of cajoling, it's the president's job to keep things rolling.
There's laughter and funnies and time for jokes, and even lots of friendly pokes!
When getting together and sharing good times brings on a reason for writing in rhymes,
We get up and get out of our P-jammers to come to Potluck at good ole Prime Timers.

*Ukrops is a local grocery store



(Left) Poet Sonny Darnell lends a hand in the kitchen on potluck night
(Right) Prime Timers Central Virginia members prepare dishes to carry out to the serving table.



Colorado Prime Timers hike during the club's Mountain Picnic



Vintage Men / Melbourne Prime Timers at the Alternative Lifestyle Tea Dance, Melbourne, Australia



Calgary Primetimers enjoying the banquet at Reno convention October 2007

Palm Springs Chapter Plans New Year's Eve Party and You're Invited

The Prime Timers of the Desert, Palm Springs, California is once again holding its New Year's Eve Party on Monday, December 31, 2007. It will be held in the Primrose Ballroom of the Palm Springs convention Center.

The evening begins with a no host Cocktail reception at 8:00pm. Dinner will be served at 9:30pm. The menu includes Citrus Salad, Beef Tenderloin, and Raspberry Mouse Cake. DJ Rick Vargas will be on hand providing music for everyone to dance the night away and welcome in the New Year.

The cost is only \$90 per person. Dress for the event is Dark Suit and Tie; Black Tie Optional.

For more information, please contact Russell Schnepf, PTOD President, at (760) 318-0160. Deadline for reservations is December 10, 2007.





HERE AND THERE

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BY ZACH MULLANEY, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR, CENTRAL OKLAHOMA PRIME TIMERS

CHICAGO – 184 members: The city has dynamic live theatre, and the chapter has many members that meet and attend various venues as a group. On Dec. 20, the group plans to attend a production the gay play “Bare”, performed at the Bailiwick Repertory. Also, many plan to attend an AIDS benefit with a one night performance by “Les Ballets Trocadero de Monte Carlo”. This group is a fun blend of comedy and dance, and an opportunity for these MALE ballerinas to dance ‘en pointe’. I’ve seen them and it will be a dynamite evening.

SEATTLE: The third Sunday of the month is their monthly potluck/general meeting. They meet at the First Baptist Church (1111 Harvard Avenue) at 2pm. If you’re in their beautiful city, you’ll certainly be welcome to join them.

OKLAHOMA CITY -105 members: Zach and his partner Luis flew to Long Beach to visit friends, and to enter the Long Beach Marathon. Luis completed the 26.2 miles, and while he was running, Zach competed in the 5K race, in the 65+ division. He took second place, and as it was his first race, is pleased he did that well.



Here and There contributing Editor Zach Mullaney crosses the finish line, placing second in the 5K race / 65+ category in Long Beach, CA

MELBOURNE,

AUSTRALIA – 83 members: The chapter meets in a facility called the Betty Day Centre, named after a gal, since having passed, that had worked tirelessly for the gay community. The various organizations that use the Centre have outgrown it, so the Melbourne community is in the planning stages for enlarging the Centre. The Vintage Men are impressed with the architectural renderings, and it should be completed by 2009.

ALBUQUERQUE: Remember, if you’re heading north, south, east, or west, there’s a good chance you’ll pass through their fun city.

(Great Mexican food!) Try to hit it on a Friday so you can join them for cocktails at the Albuquerque Social Club. It’s a private club, but just tell the doorman who you are meeting. Check listing for address.

TALLAHASSEE: The city’s art district has what they call the First Friday Gallery Hop, and many of the P/Ters are turning out for it. Several museums are in the general area, also. People gather around 5:30-6:00pm, and go ‘hopping’. Eventually it is decided where to go for dinner. Sounds like a good once-a-month activity.

SAN ANTONIO: If by chance you’ll be in their city the weekend of Dec. 16, a Sunday, their Christmas party will be held at the El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel, and the festivities start at 12:30pm. You will need to RSVP so they can plan on you, no later than Dec. 12. For more info, contact brnel-son@aol.com.

BALTIMORE: Boy, does this chapter have events going on! One to mention is the Breakfast Brunch Lunch Bunch that meets at Two Sisters Place on the corner of 27th and Howard. Their December group meeting there is December 15 at 11am. So, if you’re in Baltimore,.....

MIAMI VALLEY/DAYTON: Another busy chapter, they meet for coffee every Monday morning, 9:30am at Signature’s Coffee Shop in Fairborn, Ohio, a Dayton suburb. The coffee shop is gay owned, specializing in designer coffees, light snacks, and pastries. (That already sounds good to me.) A group of guys call themselves “Friends of Italian Opera”, even though they have nothing to do with opera. But they meet at the Spaghetti Warehouse in Dayton every Tuesday. They meet, chat, and imbibe from around 6-6:30pm, then enjoy dinner.

VANCOUVER, BC – 110 members: When I think of Vancouver, I think of what used to be called Lee’s Trail in Stanley Park. Wild! Is it still as it used to be? The Prime-Timers are having their Christmas Party on Friday, Dec 21, 6:30pm, at the Holiday Inn on Howe Street. Also, a group of their guys walked in the AIDS Walk and raised \$2600 bucks (or should I say ‘loonies’?). Good going, guys.



Bob Shorthouse, Sid Jenner, John Smith and Greg Rose of the Vancouver BC chapter raised over \$2,600 in their local AIDS Walk

TULSA: The Tulsa chapter has been in their new home almost a year now. If you haven’t seen the new Center, it’s quite a nice facility. Their general meeting is always the first Tuesday evening of the month at the Center at 6pm. If you find yourself in Tulsa, but have not yet seen the new Center, the address is 621 E. 4th St.....at Kenosha.



HEALTHCARE CONCERNS

Gay and lesbian seniors, whether coupled or not, face several significant healthcare issues that are not faced by single and married heterosexual couples. Because of the significant difference in the number of gay and lesbian seniors who live alone (66% vs. 30% for non-gay seniors) there is a stronger likelihood that they will need access to more social programs.

However, fear of discrimination often prevents them from seeking care that is freely available to all seniors. This can result in a sense of isolation, and have significant effects on the quality of life, and its longevity.

The HIPAA Act of 1996

The HIPAA Act of 1996 (officially the “Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996”) placed severe restrictions on the disclosure of personal medical information. Lacking either written or “informal” permission, healthcare providers cannot release any information about a patient, including – in the most extreme cases – whether or not a person is being treated at a hospital. Most hospitals don’t go to these extremes. But because of the HIPAA rules, having a “Durable Healthcare Power of Attorney” naming a person as your “proxy” to make medical decisions for you is important to LGBT people, regardless of age.

For a “Summary of the HIPAA Privacy Rule,” a 25 page document is available on the web at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacysummary.pdf>

Medical treatment and visitation

For a married couple the spouse of a person who cannot make medical decisions has the right to make primary decisions about healthcare, visitation, and other medical issues. They have the right to visit their spouse, and in most hospitals are even allowed to stay with the patient around the clock without regard to visiting hours.

For a single or partnered gay man or lesbian, lacking documents to the contrary, only family will be allowed visitation rights and decision making. Very careful drafting of a durable medical power of attorney giving a partner or friends access and the right to make decisions is an imperative.

ONE IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES

If you have missed some of the articles, or if you would like to receive a copy of the full report NOW rather than wait for the entire series, send an email to robhowar@aol.com and I will email a copy to you. If you'd rather have it on a CD, send your name and address by email, or by US Mail to Rob Howard, 4436 NW 59th St., Oklahoma City OK 73112.

Fear of discrimination and abuse

Access and visitation issues are significant. Just as significant is the fear of most gay men and lesbians that they will be discriminated against in the delivery of healthcare because of their sexual orientation.

Most gay and lesbian seniors today understand the attitudes of society toward their lifestyle. While patient abuse for any reason is prohibited, the fear of abuse lingers. Stories abound of negligent treatment in nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

One participant in a focus group, quoted in “50Plus Magazine (2005)” said:

“It gets me crazy. Do you know that there are policies in some long-term care institutions forbidding same sex partners to visit? To VISIT! I’ve heard that some places actually write the ban into their admission policy.”

While this is (hopefully) the rare exception, clearly, if you are looking for long-term care facilities, you need to discuss their policies with them upfront.

Much more likely, cultural attitudes by healthcare providers and by other residents may lead to discriminatory or negligent treatment. One Minnesota writer quoted in “Good Age Newspaper,” summed it up by saying:

One big problem today is that many frontline care providers in nursing homes come from cultural backgrounds that do not look kindly on homosexuality. In housing situations, there also might likely be needs to train other residents to be more sensitive to those lifestyles, board members said.

The consequence of the fear of abuse and discrimination is often for the patient to go “back into the closet” – denying a lifetime of experiences, friends, even a partner; unable to openly have mementos or pictures of a relationship. It brings stress, frustration, and loneliness into the healthcare equation. Failure to be honest with your healthcare providers can also seriously impact the healthcare received, and affect both the quality of the care received, and the lifespan of the patient.

The solution to this problem is to provide sensitivity and diversity training to front-line healthcare workers, and to enforce anti-discrimination policies with strong personnel policies. Unfortunately, that training is not happening. As an example, of 39 nursing homes surveyed in the District of Columbia (out of hundreds, only 39 were willing to even participate in the survey), most weren’t able to answer that they did any sensitivity for staff on gay and lesbian issues.

Unfortunately, nursing homes and assisted living facilities are not required to provide such training. The Health



Care Financing Administration sets standards for facilities that receive federal funds. Their standards are silent about discrimination based on sexual orientation.

A private certification organization, the Joint Committee on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) does address the issue. JCAHO requires "appropriate accommodations for married couples and residents with significant others regardless of sexual orientation" in their standards for both nursing homes and assisted living facilities. However, the number of nursing facilities in the United States is over 17,000; the number accredited by JCAHO is 2,200, or just 13%.

While that number is somewhat encouraging it varies from state to state. For example, in my home state of Oklahoma, the number of nursing homes that are JCAHO certified is two; the number of JCAHO certified assisted living facilities is one.

Significantly, many more hospitals and home-care companies are JCAHO certified suggesting that, at least in hospitals and home healthcare, some progress is being made.

What does this mean for you if you are looking for a long term care facility?

The unfortunate fact is that most long term care facilities don't address this issue in their training, or their admission and care policies. So, when you are shopping for an assisted living or nursing facility, it is important to be completely forthright about your sexual orientation, and ask hard questions about the facility's policies, training, and statements about being open to LGBT residents so that other residents know it is a welcoming facility.

This obviously complicates your search, but in the long term, it will make your stay in a facility more comfortable for you.

If you have contacts with your local LGBT advocacy groups, enlist their support in helping long term care facilities provide the training, revise their policies, and get "LGBT certified." (There isn't any LGBT certification that I know of, we all need to work to develop this process.)

NEXT ISSUE: HOUSING

The larger your estate, the more likely it is that you need significant legal assistance in setting up your affairs.

Try to find an attorney who is gay friendly, familiar with issues related to same-sex couples, and who is certified in Elder Law. He or she can advise you on estate planning, wills, and Living Trusts to ensure your assets take care of your needs, and are passed to the people you want.

Thanks for having me as your President for the last four years. Now I get to turn my attention to your treasury for the next two years, as you elected me to the office of Treasurer for 2007-2009.

I perceive my role as Treasurer, to oversee the financial matters of the Worldwide organization. Dave Miller, Kansas City (Treasurer 2003-2007), has done a splendid job of keeping our reserve funds fully invested over the last four years. He was also the voice of financial resource protector during our board meetings. I will now assume that role.

The "Woody Baldwin Chapters Fund" is new for the 2007-2009 board to manage. Many chapters have already come forward to make contributions to this fund. These funds are not for general expenditures but will be restricted to chapter development and maintenance and other expansion costs.

Since the beginning of Prime Timers all costs for travel have been absorbed by individuals. Board members receive no pay (except for a stipend paid to the newsletter editor) and no expense reimbursement for travel costs. However, during the year 2007, an individual and a chapter (Capital District Prime Timers) contributed some restricted monies that were expended to reimburse for travel expenses that resulted in two new chapters.

We are hopeful the careful spending of the Woody Baldwin Chapters Fund will yield similar results. Thanks again, for entrusting me and my fellow board members with your resources, we will spend them wisely, in your behalf.

MORE NEWSLETTERS GOOD DEAL UNTIL 12/31

In 2008, there will be **six** issues of Prime Times, with more stories, more chapter activities and events, and more travel opportunities.

The price for an annual subscription will increase on January 1, 2008, to \$15 per year (Independent Members get it included in their membership).

BUT, if you act now, you can subscribe or renew at the current rate of \$10, if your order is post-marked on or before December 31.

Mail your check for \$10 made to PTWW, and your name and address, to

Prime Times, c/o Rob Howard, editor,
4436 NW 59th St., Oklahoma City OK 73112.

Special rates also available to chapters which want more copies of the newsletter.



SPRING PRIMETIMER GATHERINGS



SAN ANTONIO'S 3RD ANNUAL FIESTA EVENT SET FOR APRIL 18-20, 2008



It's not too early to start planning for four days of good fun, good food, and good fellowship when we celebrate our 3rd Annual Fiesta Regional Event, beginning Friday, April 18th through Sunday, April 20th. Prime Timers who attended past Fiesta events enjoyed a fun-filled weekend here in the Alamo City and said they wanted to do it again...so it is now a permanent event on our annual calendar.

Friday afternoon, the 18th, we'll welcome everyone with a casual cocktail reception on the patio at one of our popular local bars. On Saturday afternoon, we'll enjoy the weekend's premier event, the "Fantastic Fiesta Fandango," hosted by Chapter Past-President Paul Walthall in the spacious back yard of his historic North Central San Antonio home. The Candlelight Coffee House patio will be the setting for a casual, relaxing Sunday morning brunch, starting at 10 o'clock.

Scheduling our functions prior to the two big Fiesta San Jacinto parades the following weekend will make it easier for our out-of-town visitors to move around the city and enjoy attractions like the San Antonio Riverwalk and some of the downtown events.

Additional details regarding the San Antonio Fiesta Event will be announced in future issues of the Newsletter. For more information, contact Bruce Nelson at brnelson6@aol.com. We want to see you there!

PRIME TIMERS WESTERN REGIONAL GATHERING APRIL 27-MAY 1, 2008 IN LAS VEGAS

The Las Vegas Chapter is excited to announce that we are hosting a Prime Timers Western Regional Gathering this April 27 - May 1, 2008, in "Sin City" Las Vegas. Our motto "What Happens in Vegas - Stays in Vegas".

Since this is our first venture into hosting such an event, we feel that early interest and registration is essential to helping us determine the agenda we can present for the Gathering.

We have secured a block of rooms at the famed Imperial Palace Hotel and Casino, in the heart of the Las Vegas Strip. The room rates are \$73.50 for a standard room based on double occupancy. To get this price, you have to book three consecutive nights. This price includes all taxes. If you are familiar with the prices on the Las Vegas STRIP, you already know that this is a great price.

Our website www.events.LasVegasPrimeTimers.com has a special section with details and registration forms to download.

As part of our Registration Package, the Wednesday Night Banquet will include some Las Vegas style entertainment, and we are trying (and hoping) to secure the famed "Legends" theater which is right next door to the banquet room. The capacity of this theater is 650 seats so our registration head count is essential to our decision in including this entertainment as part of the Package.

We are also negotiating with the Imperial Palace Hotel for some limited special rooms that open directly onto the Pool. If you don't already know, late April in Las Vegas is perfect swimming & splashing weather, and the pool is also heated.



(Photo courtesy Las Vegas News Bureau/LVCVA)

...a fond farewell

If you missed the Reno Convention, you missed a GOOD one!!! My partner and I were there for the whole shebang and had a wonderful time. It was my last ballyhoo as the Vice President of the Independents as I turned over the duties to Jay Pitard, I wish you continued enjoyment as Independent Members and I know you will keep Jay updated on your comings and goings. This is so important to maintain a good and close relationship with PTWW. I will miss the daily influx of mail and emails from you guys, so if you have any questions or you just want to say "hello", I'm still at the same address. I've enjoyed the last five years and now I bid you a fond farewell.



Jarvis Cummings

Jarvis

WHAT'S ON MY MIND

BY JAY PITARD, VICE PRESIDENT INDEPENDENTS

WOODY BALDWIN CHAPTERS FUND

BY MICHAEL STONE



One of the things that I'm constantly asked when I talk to people about Prime Timers is why a younger man is so involved in an organization that is geared toward older men. Some of you have even heard me get up on my soap box to rave about the good that Prime Timers does or the vision that Woody Baldwin had when he began it; others may not have asked me, or asked and not believed me, and just assume I'm only involved for sex or to find myself a life partner or maybe some other ulterior motive.

I guess that it's time to finally 'fess up...everything I've mentioned above is why I joined Prime Timers more than 10

years ago. And they are the reasons I'm still involved, and get more and more involved as time goes on.

Well, I've found a life partner, and like everyone I've been involved with for the last 10 years, he had never heard of Prime Timers before I came along. The same can be said of many other friends of mine.

They thought they were "too young" for the organization...even those who were in the mid-60's when we met. It's time to change these things (more on how YOU can help will come later).

Have I mentioned sex yet? I'm not going to deny that I've had a few rolls in the hay with fellow Prime Timers. To do so would be a disservice to them and me. I cherish the memories I have of these occurrences, but they are a very small part of the joy that keeps me around this organization

The main reason I'm still involved in Prime Timers is because I believe in what it stands for: a safe space where older gay and bisexual men can socialize with other men — in whatever form that takes. Every time I meet Prime Timers from other cities the discussion almost always turns towards the people that they've met through the organization, the chapter-hosted events or what Prime Timers means to them. The passion these people (and I include myself in this) have for the organization is amazing. We have to be — the only pay we get for doing this is the good feelings we get when we see the good that Prime Timers does for those involved.

If you've ever read or heard anything that Woody Baldwin has published about his reasons for starting Prime Timers almost 20 years ago, his vision was just that; to create a safe space for older gay and bisexual men to gather where they won't be discriminated against because of their age or their sexuality. Even in these more "enlightened times," there still needs to be a place for those who are past their "gay prime" (you know? 25!).

Did I mention my ulterior motive? I really want Prime Timers to be around when I finally grow up.

With all that Prime Timers has to offer today and with all the changes I've seen both the San Diego Chapter and the World Wide organization go through in the last 10 years, the only thing I can say is that this organization has only gotten better with age just like a good wine or a good man. But like wine, it won't survive without good stewards; and like good men they need to be cherished and nurtured. We can do that — the "we" being each and every member of this organization from the youngest to the oldest member and from the newest member right up to Woody.

Someone else wants the soapbox I'm standing on right now, so before I sign off, I have two questions to ask you. First, what does Prime Timers mean to *you*? And second, what can you offer to Prime Timers?

Our twentieth anniversary has given us the opportunity to honor, celebrate and pay tribute to our founder, Woody Baldwin. Without Woody none of this would exist. We are so lucky to have this wonderful man still in our midst, giving guidance and support.

What better way, then, to celebrate Woody than to honor him by starting a fund forever bearing his name? Some months ago Minneapolis/St. Paul past President Harry Hartigan contacted me telling me that he wanted the chapter to make a donation to Woody's favorite charity and would like the other chapters to also do so.

About the same time current MSP President Denny Wiegle called, thanked the board and me for our support and mentioned that he felt we needed to ask for a raise at the upcoming convention for the work we do. He was dead serious, and was stunned to learn that we are all just volunteers (like himself) and that our work and the sometimes necessary travel we do are paid for by each of us, individually.

One of my goals for the future of our board is to form regional teams to facilitate the start-up of new chapters and to be able to meet, support and work with chapters in need. Denny and I discussed this and when we talked with Harry he felt it was right on. I told him I felt Woody's favorite charity would be Prime Timers. Denny met Woody in Oklahoma City and asked him. Of course, his answer was 'Prime Timers'.

Because chapters are so important to all of us and we wanted this to be something that would forever bear his name, I came up with "The Woody Baldwin Chapters Fund".

Harry asked the MSP chapter to donate \$200 to start the fund and followed that up with letters to all 70 chapters. His plan was to honor Woody in Austin on November 17 by surprising him with the fund.

We have heard from many chapters. Some have generously given more than the suggested amount. It was my honor to announce the continually growing fund at the Austin dinner honoring Woody. The fund is strictly voluntary and we all understand that smaller chapters will donate what they are able to.

The funds have been set aside with very strict guidelines: the money can only be used for necessary costs involving travel when absolutely necessary, to work with local men in starting a new chapter or to work with present boards in resolving chapter issues (failing membership, inability to recruit board members, etc.) Use of the fund must have pre-approval by the full board.

We sincerely thank those of you we've heard from and look forward to hearing from the rest of you. The fund will be ongoing. Checks should be sent to our current treasurer, Pat Karr, and marked for the 'Woody Baldwin Fund'.



SENIOR LIVING OPTIONS: SPIRIT ON LAKE HOUSING

This month, "Prime Times" takes a look at a new housing option, the Limited Equity Cooperative. There are over 60 of these developments, 50 of them in Minnesota. The development is being marketed to "mature" LGBT people. It is a reasonably priced alternative to purchasing a condominium, and to other independent living developments that require a large entrance fee.

One of the most gay friendly places to live in North America is Minneapolis. The Twin Cities, as the cities of Minneapolis, St. Paul, and the surrounding metropolitan area is called, is a vibrant city of nearly 3 million people. It is awash in culture with a variety of museums and theater including the world renowned Guthrie, and is a major stop for major touring Broadway shows. If you like sports, the Twin Cities are host to four major league teams – the football Vikings, baseball Twins, NBA Timberwolves, and hockey's Wild.

Minneapolis is one of the gayest cities in the US, with vibrant gay life, including a variety of bars, three choruses (one male, one female, one mixed), every organization you can imagine, including a strong Prime Timers chapter, one of the largest LGBT Pride festivals and parades in the

world, and many gay and gay-friendly churches. You could go on and on about the Twin Cities – in short it is a great place to live. Not even its fabled winters slows the pace of life in this northern metro area.

A great addition to the Twin Cities scene is a new concept in gay and lesbian senior living called Spirit on Lake Housing Cooperative. The development is targeted at middle and lower income LGBT people, and is structured as a Limited Equity Cooperative (see box). This allows residents to pay reasonable monthly payments while enjoying the tax advantages of ownership such as the deduction of interest and real estate tax.

This is an important feature when considering a place to retire. Many of the most gay friendly places to live and retire also boast higher costs for housing. The Twin Cities is no exception. Because Spirit on Lake is a cooperative, there is no "entry fee" to pay – just a down payment like any other place you own. Both the down payment and the monthly expense are comparable to payments for similar sized apartments in the area – with the important difference that you own your unit and can resell it to the cooperative if you choose to move.

Spirit on Lake Housing Cooperative features forty-one one and two bedroom units in a variety of floor plans. The smallest is 700 square feet, the largest 1400. Every unit will

have a balcony or a patio. Underground heated parking is available at additional cost (and you will appreciate it a lot in the winter.) Building maintenance is the responsibility of the association – even your appliances are included in this. The cooperative is an independent living community, although the units are designed to be accessible if a resident graduates to a walker or a wheelchair. (As a part of the long range vision that produced the Spirit on Lake concept, there is hope that eventually there might be an assisted living and long term care facility associated with the community, but when that might happen is uncertain.)

The building includes space for Spirit of the Lakes United Church of Christ. Spirit of the Lakes was formed in 1988, and joined the UCC three years later as the first openly LGBT congregation in a mainstream denomination. The church space will be separately owned by the church, but its facilities and programming are also available to residents of the building.

Spirit on Lake Housing Cooperative is a joint development effort by the church; LGBT Generations, a senior LGBT organization that had its roots in the church before becoming a community organization in its own right; PRG, a non-profit organization that develops quality, affordable housing in the Twin Cities area; and the city of Minneapolis.

Spirit on Lake is located in the heart of Minneapolis. Ten

blocks to the East, connected by frequent bus service, is the Hiawatha Light Rail Transit line, which whisks you to downtown Minneapolis, the airport, and the Mall of America. Downtown Minneapolis is just three miles away with several gay gathering spots including bars, restaurants, and coffee houses.

For health care, you could hardly do better than the Twin Cities. It is a center of health care service and research. Just a few blocks away is Abbott Northwestern Hospital, one of the largest in the Twin Cities. University of Minnesota/Fairview Hospitals, a major research and teaching hospital, is nearby, as is the Minneapolis Veterans Hospital, one of the top hospitals in the VA system.

If travel is your thing, the Twin Cities is definitely the place to live. Northwest Airlines has one of its hubs here, with over 500 flights a day to every large city in the US and Canada, as well as non-stop service to Japan and Europe.

What will it cost?

Down payments on the units range from \$26,000 for the smaller units, to \$45-\$50,000 for the larger ones. Down payments aren't due until the association is ready to begin construction. For people who don't have that kind of ready cash, bridge loans are available to cover the down payment until it is



COOPERATIVE IN MINNEAPOLIS



11

How Does a Limited Equity Cooperative Work?

- A non-profit corporation is created, which owns the building
- Purchasing a share in the corporation makes you a member of the corporation and gives you the right to live in a specific cooperative unit.
- The sum of all shares is the building down payment; the balance is financed with a blanket 40-year mortgage insured by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as well as public grants and loans.
- Members pay pro-rata share of monthly expenses, referred to as carrying cost, including blanket mortgage, principal and interest; property taxes and insurance; maintenance and reserves.
- Cooperative members elect a board of directors, which runs the corporation.

Benefits of Cooperative Housing

- Property tax and mortgage interest deduction.
- Resident control—hire and supervise management, participate in governance, establish budgets, set operational policies and procedures.
- Operates at cost—returns any surplus after expenses and reserves to the members.
- Strong sense of community as a result of joint ownership of the building.
- Long-term affordability.
- Building maintenance is the responsibility of the corporation.

time to sell their home and move into the building.

If your income is at or below 80 percent of the Twin Cities Area Median Income (AMI) there are special arrangements available, including help on the down payment, and in the case of those with income below 50% of the AMI assistance with monthly payments as well.

Monthly payments are estimated to be \$900 to \$1200 a month, and include the mortgage payment, taxes, maintenance reserve, common area maintenance expenses, and replacement reserves for appliances, furnaces, and air-conditioners in the units. Mortgage interest and real estate taxes can be deducted on the owner's federal and state income taxes, just like on the home you now own.

What happens when it is time to move again?

When the time comes to sell, the association will buy your unit back for what you have put into it, plus a formula for increase in value based on the number of years you occupy your unit. This achieves two things: it ensures that there is a market for your unit when you want to sell, and it protects the nature of the community for all residents. The association, while it welcomes both LGBT and non-LGBT residents, has approval power over new residents to ensure that it will remain a community open and welcoming to LGBT people.

What if I am interested?

To get on the reservation list costs just \$200, and it is refundable. When all the drawings and specifications are complete for the unit type you're interested in, then you will do a purchase agreement, with earnest money of \$800. The down payment isn't due until construction is ready to begin, expected to be the spring of 2008. Occupancy is planned for Spring 2009.

For more information you can check out the website at http://prginc.org/spirit_on_lake.html, email Barbara Satin, Director of Marketing for the project at barbsatin@aol.com or call her at 612.670.1978



UNIT J
2 MASTER BEDROOM
1198 G.S.F.

To view all floor plans, go to
www.prginc.org/sotl_floorplan.html

About Spirit of the Lakes UCC

Spirit of the Lakes UCC (SOTL) was started in 1988 by a group of people who wanted a more liberal, inclusive LGBT oriented church. They rapidly attracted the attention of the United Church of Christ, one of the most progressive denominations in the United States. (In Canada, the UCC is called the United Church of Canada.) In 1992, they were accepted into the UCC as the first openly LGBT congregation in a mainstream denomination.



SOTL has evolved over the past 19 years, but has retained its focus as a predominantly LGBT congregation. As it describes itself, "SOTL is a community of faith; a community of love and support; a community where all people are affirmed for who they are; a community of fun and work, of laughter and tears, of comfort and challenge. We are an Open and Affirming and Just Peace Congregation."

More about Spirit of the Lakes UCC at
www.spiritucc.org



COURTYARD TRAVEL CRUISES

ESCORTED BY PRIME TIMERS

MICHAEL STONE AND JOE FUTCH

Our 'Reunion 2 – Panama Canal' cruise is less than 60 days away (January 22, 2008). We have a nice sized group aboard this, our first 10-day cruise, and are busily preparing all of our onboard social activities. We've been fortunate in finding a Gay Tour Agency in Puerto Limon, Costa Rica, who's arranged a private excursion there. Booking at this late date *may* still be possible!

Our 'Reunion 3 – Mediterranean' (October 3, 2008)



Rome

cruise aboard Celebrity's Galaxy will be one of the largest groups yet.

Our numbers continue to grow. A few cabins remain in each category but prices are sure to go up soon.

This is also a 10-day cruise. So, if you're wanting to visit Rome, Sicily, Greece and Turkey for under \$1,000 (plus port charges and

taxes) contact one of us right away. A few cabin shares are also available. CALL NOW if you are interested.

As we go to press we have some very exciting news.

Courtyard Travel has just made the best 'deal' we've ever seen. This is our 'Reunion 4 – Southern Caribbean' 11-day cruise aboard Celebrity's Galaxy (January 19, 2009.) This cruise leaves out of San Juan, Puerto Rico. Current airfares are very reasonable from most U.S.

cities. The itinerary includes: San Juan; Aruba; Curacao; Grenada; Barbados; St. Lucia; Dominica; St. Kitts; and Tortola, BVI.



Tortola, BVI

With 11 nights at sea there'll be plenty of Prime Timers social activities for all of us to join in. Currently, deeply discounted cabins are available as follows (plus port charges and taxes):

Inside \$649; Outside \$790; Veranda \$1550

If you have sailed with us before (or are booked on one of our two upcoming cruises) Courtyard Travel is offering an additional

'Early Bird' discount of \$50 if you book by January 30. That brings prices down as low as \$599. Deposits of only \$450 per person will reserve your cabin and you may cancel for a full refund by November 2008 if needed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO BOOK THESE CRUISES

Michael Stone 941 359-8212

mstonefl@verizon.net or

Marc Solomon 917 359-3888

marc@courtyardvl.com or

Courtyard Travel Great Neck, NY

www.courtyardvl.com/

1-800 437-9685 and ask for Bobette

AMSTERDAM – PARIS TOUR

SEPTEMBER 22 – OCTOBER 2, 2008

A PRIME TIMERS TOUR HOSTED

BY AL RONNENBERG

Al Ronnenberg, a member of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Chapter, loves to travel, and loves to take his Prime Timer friends with him. Last year, he took a group to New York City. This year, Al has designed a tour to two of Europe's great cities – Amsterdam, and Paris. With five days in Amsterdam, and four in Paris, including both local tours and plenty of free time, the group should have a blast. The tour departs to Amsterdam on Monday, September 22.

Amsterdam is without a doubt Europe's gayest city, with dozens of gay bars, and plenty of sights. Use your free time to explore its canals, party late at the bars, and have a traditional Rijstaffel meal. If culture attracts you, the world's foremost collection of Rembrandt paintings is at the Rijksmuseum; the Van Gogh museum displays the genius of Vincent Van Gogh's tormented mind. A visit to the Anne Frank House brings home the irrepressible nature of the human spirit. Highlights include a welcome dinner, three tours, and five nights in the centrally located, four star Golden Tulip Hotel Intel Amsterdam-Centre.

On Sunday, the group will take a high-speed train to Paris, just four hours away. Paris, the "City of Light" features a mind boggling number of sights, including two of the world's premier art museums – The Louvre with its classical art, and Le Musee d'Orsay which has a huge collection of Impressionist works. The hotel in Paris is the four-star Hotel Jardins du Marais. On Monday, there will be a city tour; on Wednesday night, a farewell dinner at the Eiffel Tower. As in Amsterdam, there will be plenty of free time in Paris, with side trips planned by the group.



The cost of the tour is \$2899 per person (double occupancy; single supplement is \$1409) and includes 9 nights at four-star hotels, 8 breakfasts, 2 dinners, tours, and the train trip from Amsterdam to Paris. If you wish to include your airfare in the package, the total cost is \$3799, a significant discount from the regular fare.

For more information and a brochure contact Al Ronnenberg by email alronnenberg@aol.com, or by phone 651-917-3400.