

# The Sapphic Sentinel

Vancouver's\* Queer Women's & Trans-inclusive News Source

Since 2006

## 2006 Dyke March: Expected to be Largest to Date

Sena Hussain

The Third Annual Vancouver Dyke March will once again fill the streets of Commercial Drive with well... dykes, Saturday, August 5th.

This year's March is expected to draw even more than the nearly 3000 participants it gathered last summer.

Marchers will gather at McSpadden Park, where thousands of queer women, their allies, supporters, families and friends will prepare to display their sheer numbers and unity as a community.

"One of the goals is increasing the visibility of Queer Women," says Sam Levy, Vice President of the VDM.

Prior to the actual marching, participants will contribute art, comments and messages concerning the event on a giant canvas with provided paint and brushes. Local MC Brige K will rile up the crowd and start their massive, Rainbow Concert Band-led jour-



**The Beginning:** The Vancouver Dyke March was started by current VDM president Michelle Walker in 2004. The March has grown exponentially from 1200-3000+ participants in the last two years.

ney to Grandview Park with canvas in-hand.

Once the March reaches Grandview Park and the crowd settles in, the entertainers take the stage, and the festivities begin. Aside from Brige K and the Rainbow

Concert Band performers will include Australia's Fruit, Doria Roberts, Carole Pope, and Drag King Vancouver so far. Local comedian and queer favourite Morgan Brayton will be hosting the Grandview Park festival.

The VDM happens a day before the Pride Parade each year, and although the format and goals of both are somewhat similar to one another, according to Levy, the focus is different.

"There are women's or-

ganizations in the Pride Parade, but we're seeking something focused on Queer Women."

Levy also points to certain technicalities that set the two events apart.

"We don't have floats, and you don't have to sign up to be a part of [the march]."

Perhaps the most obvious difference is the little-to-non presence of corporate advertising in the March.

"The March is grassroots driven, it's funded by donations, events and merchandise sales," explains Levy.

In fact, the VDM organization is entirely volunteer driven, from fundraising, and booking entertainment, right down to logistical duties such as renting out port-o-poties and picking up trash.

"We rely a lot on volunteers. The community helps raise funds and contribute their time and energy, and it's really great to be a part of that," says Levy.

## More Choices Equal Party-Packed Pride Weekend



**Climax:** Last year's show featured a group number's by Vancouver's DKUnited, a drag king troupe..

Sena Hussain

Synonymous with "Pride" is "parties," and this year's number of choices may leave you scratching your head trying to choose one, or two, or three to attend. Everyone has their favourites, whether it's the long-running flygirl produced Hershe Bar, a high-end party at Chicas at the Mansion, or a brand new event like Shame, the choices are endless.

GProductions, a relatively new queer women's production company, will be

\*Coast Salish Territory

throwing their Climax party at Sonar for the second Pride in a row.

"We're a new and younger generation of promoters trying to make a difference in the community," says Osiris of Gproductions.

This year's show will again feature drag king troupe DKUnited and Firebelly, a circus-esque aerial dance performance group. Performances will happen throughout the night with dancing and MC Brige K hyping the crowd in between. There will be two levels with different types of music being spun by

DJ DeLux and Seattle's LA Kendall.

Another event being thrown by Gproductions will be 4-Play at the Storyum the Saturday night before Pride.

"We're creating our own nightclub," says Osiris, "we're expecting a crowd that's a mixture of the Vancouver community, anyone who's queer-friendly, it will be an all-inclusive night."

The big draw for 4-Play will be Salt-n-Pepp's Spinderella and MC Brige K. The whole night will be a dance party with bartenders from Lick serving up the liquor.

As with most Pride events this year, proceeds for both events will be going to charity, namely, the Friends for Life Society. Door prizes will include a mini motorcycle, a gift certificate for a free tattoo and Gproductions merchandise.

For a list of Queer women's and trans-inclusive events, check out the listing to the right for The Sapphic Sentinel's Pride Weekend Party Guide

### Pride Weekend Party Guide:

#### Friday, Aug. 4th

Hook-Up, 7pm  
Balthazars Lounge

Danceteria, Lick, 9pm  
DKUnited, DJs Delux & Betti Ford

#### Saturday, Aug. 5th - Dyke March

4 Play - Storyeum, 9pm  
DJ Spinderella (Salt-n-Pepp), MC Brige K  
DJ T, LA Kendall

The Buzz, 9pm  
Waldorf Hotel  
DJ Tracey D

Triple Threat DJs & Drag,  
Lick, 9pm

Girls Night Out, Club 23,  
9pm

\$3 Bill, DJs T, She & Revoked

The Dyke March Dance,  
Wise Hall, 8pm

#### Sunday, Aug. 6th - Pride

Chicas Mansion, 3pm  
Macaroni Grill

Queer Youth Dance,  
Westend Community  
Centre 9pm  
Ages 14-25

Oddball - Wise Hall, 8pm-12am  
The Wetspots

Hershe Bar - The Red Room, 9pm

Shame - The Anza Club, 9pm-4am

DJ Alyson Calagna, DJ Tracey D & Shine, 9pm

Lesbians on Ecstasy, Better Friends than Lovers  
DJ Fembot & dance mix 96

DJ Betti Forde, DJ Daniella

Climax - Sonar, 9pm  
DKUnited, Firebelly  
DJ DeLux, LA Kendall

Have a safe Pride, drink responsibly!

# What it Means to be Trans During Pride

Sena Hussain

What does it mean to be Transgender during Pride? To one MTF activist, it means a history of exclusion from without and apathy from within the Trans community.

"There's been very little involvement in the past," says Tami Starlight, organizer of the Transgender Day of Remembrance in Vancouver.

Tami points to the fact that there has been some activism by a handful of Trans people in the community, but because there are so many issues to tackle and rights to gain, they end



**Trans Day of Remembrance:** Marchers showed their support for Trans victims of hate crimes in November 2005.

The reasons for this, according to Tami are, "the community isn't training activists, there's little understanding of anti-oppression work, and there is a focus on one's own transition rather than the wider community."

Although the Vancouver Pride Society is open to Trans people getting involved, it is difficult for Tami to see Trans interests being considered at all.

"I see the point, but it's hard to think about the trans voice being heard," says Tami.

The division between MTF's, FTM's and other gender variant groups is also a cause for the lack of a trans voice and presence in large events like Pride. Tami has also noticed a big shift in this regard.

"The FTM community has catapulted themselves to the front of the [Trans] community," says Tami.

Tami does see positive movements emerging that may lead to important changes in the future such as gender studies programs in colleges and universities that look at gender in a variable way.

"As our community grows, so does society," says Tami.

# Mixing it up at Lick: What's in a Name?

Sena Hussain

From Lick to The Mix, back to Lick, what's with the name changes? According to Lick's manager, Tara Taylor, it was about misrepresentations in the media.

It seemed people became confused as to the intentions of the name change, and thought the safe-space aspect of the popular bar might change.

"A lot of people stopped coming," says Taylor in reference to The Mix.

Although they're sticking with tradition in terms of the name, a facelift for the nightclub is in the works. The walls have already been painted, the DJ booth raised, and there are plans to cut the length of the bar, extending the stage, and adding art.

# Queer ESL Tutoring Program Emerging

Sena Hussain

ESL Programs have become one of the biggest industries in Vancouver, with private ESL schools popping up at an unprecedented rate.

"The world of ESL is largely based on the notion that a world of opportunity awaits those who acquire a certain level of English, which is problematic," says Inika Arentsen.

Arentsen is co-founder of Queer ESL Tutoring, and works full time as a teacher and student advisor at a large ESL school in Vancouver. As a teacher she started noticing a discouraging trend.

"By creating a space where students from all different backgrounds are coming together for one sole purpose but then framing it in an exclusively heterosexual environment, it creates a non-supportive learning environment," explains Arentsen, "The classroom is a hot-zone of issues which most students find stressful because of the charged discussions on religion and cultural issues."

Arentsen especially noticed a curiosity about queer issues.

"I believe this is due to queerness becoming a more visible part of North American society-students often bring up queer issues during class, and it becomes difficult when choosing how many questions should be addressed."

For this reason, Arentsen felt it was necessary to start a separate program for students who identify as queer.

"It's to go beyond the inclusive environment to include resources and extensive knowledge of queer culture in North America."

Students can visit [www.geocities.com/queeresl](http://www.geocities.com/queeresl) for more information.

# Queer South-Asian Visibility to get Boost from Bhangra Night



**Desi Pride:** Supriya Ryan, organizer of a South-Asian event at Lick poses with her partner Cassie Turner.

Sena Hussain

Friday, July 28th, Lick will play host to a Desi event as a warm-up to Pride. Organizer Supriya Ryan has big hopes for this queer-

friendly, yet not exclusively queer event.

"I want anyone who wants to participate in the intersection of queer and South-Asian culture to attend," says Ryan.

Ryan is starting this event for three reasons.

"There's not enough visibility of South-Asian culture in the queer community, there's not enough queer visibility in the South-Asian community, and the desire for me to express different aspects of myself and have a safe envi-

ronment to do that in."

Ryan points out that this is not starting for political reasons, but recognizes that there will be certain meanings attached to it.

"It's hard enough to be part of one minority, but to be part of two or three really accentuates oppressive attitudes within hegemonic society."

Ryan also realizes that there is a fine line between bringing two communities together and appropriation of a culture.

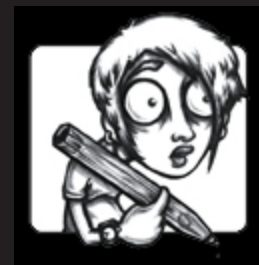
"It all comes from ignorant intent," explains Ryan, "representation of somebody else's culture that is not yours is appropriation, but participating and being excited about an opportunity is not, to me it's all relative."

Ryan's hope is that, "People should come and challenge themselves about their own beliefs."

## Help Wanted

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[www.indelible-art.com](http://www.indelible-art.com)



Illustration/Communication design  
Amanda Murray



P r i d e 2 0 0 6

**4PLAY**

Saturday, August 5th, 2006  
@ Storyeum - 111 West Cordova St.

**CLIMAX**

Sunday, August 6th, 2006  
@ Sonar - 66 Water St.

[www.gplayproductions.com](http://www.gplayproductions.com)  
...for details...

The Sapphic Sentinel Staff: Sena

Hussain

Please send Letters, Questions/  
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