

SPEAKER 1: And just try to ignore them. And the reality is, is that by the time the parade starts, they're tired. They've been there all day. And they don't have the-- the adrenaline doesn't kick in like for the rest of us. And like the parade just starts, we're all just having a great time.

And that's the important thing. It is a great time but it is this incredible political statement that we're walking, we're taking over the streets of our community. And those are our streets.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah, that's one thing when-- shortly, after I started going to the Pride parade, my brother asked, why are you holding it down there in the Montrose area? Why isn't it downtown like every other parade we have here in Houston? And I had to sit there and tell this, to my straight brother, that well, we're celebrating a rebellion at a gay bar, protesting a police action.

And we're down there in our community and our neighborhood. And I mean, the Pride banner, the rainbow flag banners that went up the last week, wasn't it?

SPEAKER 1: Yes.

SPEAKER 2: To mark off our area. And it's a growing community I mean, we have so many different points of view of people who are coming into the community, who aren't necessarily gay. They just like the wonderful housing that we used to have in some places, and are preferring the tacky townhomes that we have up now.

SPEAKER 1: The future projects, yes. The Midtown projects is I call them. A rainbow termed at the cardboard houses. And the whole interesting thing about how these people want to move into the inner city, and then they want to change it. But we're going to make a statement that we're still there.

The banner district, which you were referring to, and we're one of only four in the city of Houston. And from our understanding, we're probably one of only two that really follow the rules and try to-- that's the thing, is that we are an organization that has to be somewhat run like a business.

And I mean, run by a business that were professional and we work within the rules. And if we don't like the rules, we try to change the rules. And that's exactly what happened when we started doing the Night Parade. The ordinance says that the parade had to be 0.7 miles or less. And we had to start lining up on Mandel, rather than in Woodhead like we do now, and have the Lanier Middle School.

Well, after two years of having the smaller parade, we went to work with the committee that drafted the ordinance, and they redrafted an ordinance, specifically, for the Pride committee to allow us to go back to that longer parade and have that parade because we've been acting responsible.

And the whole behind the scenes of having to raise the money that we have to spend about \$2000 to hire a group to clean up the streets after us. A lot of people in the parade do a very good job of cleaning up after themselves. But it's hard to tell 150,000 people in the streets to keep the streets clean.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. Well, my first parade that I walked in, someone forgot to tell one of the horses that too. And unfortunately, that was the year I've walked in one and I rode in a float in the second one. And unfortunately, the horses were around the time when I walked in the first one.

SPEAKER 1: And we try-- there's supposed to be a system that they clean up after themselves. And that's the whole thing about sharing this thing. There's this variety of not only people, but animals and vehicles and floats, and all this type of stuff.

SPEAKER 2: And of all ages, too. Usually, the gay and lesbian parents group has children on their floats. Remember in past years, they've had play sets and swings for the kids on their float, and really made this into a family event. I mean, the diversity of the organizations, the religious organizations that are out there that support our community and the bars. And just even just the company groups.

SPEAKER 1: Yes. And I don't know where I heard this, but with some radio interview, where somebody was talking about Harvey Milk and saying that he would have never imagined the corporate groups. And this is Houston, Texas, a redneck city that's based on energy.

And the oil companies, who were so conservative that now have company groups that have nondiscrimination, some of them have domestic partnership benefits, and they are part of our group. Chase Bank has been with us since this first year we started doing the Night Parade.

They fly some executives in from New York, because they're not in the New York parade, to watch our parade because of the-- and the reality is that Chase is probably one of the largest contingents in our parade, but that the majority of the people that are in the parade are not gay. And it's their pride team. And their pride team is not just the GLBT part of their community. It is their whole diversity thing. And their group is just fabulous.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah, because if I remember correctly, if they continue with what they did last year, if you go into a Chase Bank here, you'll probably be seeing some panels from the AIDS quilt, that they've done during June.

SPEAKER 1: And the awards that we give out, some of these corporations, actually, display it in their lobby. And that's an amazing statement. And it just doesn't talk about our committee, it talks about our community, our entire community that we work together and help put this together.

I am just absolutely honored that when we see the diversity within the parade and the groups that are in there and the people involved, and then putting together. There's this movie called *Wag the Dog*, which when a part of the theme is there's no Academy Award for producing. And basically, what we do is we produce the parade and we provide the stage for the community to put this on, and the community does it.

But the audience is what we're doing it for. And that audience may be the 150,000 people that are watching the parade or more importantly, somebody who is growing up, who doesn't have no concept of who or what we are, who may be watching two blocks down the street because they're afraid to be in that crowd or seeing it on television the next day or that night.

We've been incredibly lucky. I mean, when we decide what time the parade was going to be, we were lucky that that was the time that live news starts in Houston, on the major stations. *Fox* at 9 o'clock and the other stations at 10:00. And lucky that Saturday is usually a light news night. So they're out there with live trucks.

And we bought-- there's a company that does electronic clipping, that they record the TV news stuff, and we bought the tape last year. And I was amazed to watch the coverage. And the Channel 11 reporter was talking about her beads that she got at the disco ball live on TV. And the anchor saying, well, I want one. And she says, no, this is mine.

And one of her quotes was, "I can't believe I'm getting paid to do this." And it's like you never hear a professional journalist say that on the air, that they're having such a great time, and you're watching them with the lights from the disco ball behind them. And it's just like we couldn't stage something that well.

And they're interviewing the people in the crowd saying that things are going to start to change because look at us out here. Look at all these people out here. And we couldn't have scripted that better if we were doing it ourselves.

SPEAKER 2: I mean, that's the next step. I mean, when it comes-- I mean, the number one parade in Houston is the Livestock Show and Rodeo Parade, correct?

SPEAKER 1: We believe that is the biggest parade. Certainly, we're bigger than the Thanksgiving day parade.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. But I mean, the Rodeo Parade, two different stations cover the same parade. And they're like two blocks away from each other their booths. And I mean, the Thanksgiving parade is carried on that. I believe you even see the Cinco de Mayo parade, all these other parades.

And it's eventually, someone's going to wake up and say, hey, maybe there's a market out there that we can do this one year and just see-- just to throw it out and see. Let's just show it. Let's show a lot more of it than this little brief segment here. And let's just wait and see how many people call and complain.

SPEAKER 1: San Francisco's parade is done live on TV. And that goes on for like six-- I don't know, six hours. I don't know how long the parade coverage is. We had actually sat down and talked to, in fact, Mike Stubblefield, who is no longer with us. We tried to sell it to a TV station or come up with the concept of doing it. And it hasn't quite been there. The parade has been covered live on KPFT for a couple of years.

SPEAKER 2: Oh, yes. I remember hearing it.

SPEAKER 1: And in fact, I did it those years and we were on top of marriage and we had an absolutely great time. But a parade on radio sometimes it doesn't seem to make sense, but it was a lot of fun to be able to do it. And we hope, eventually, that we'll be able to do it.

And even just recording it had gotten really expensive to do it. Luckily, there is a person who wanted to do it, who did it for incredibly reasonable price. And we do sell copies to just, basically, cover our cost. And we're hoping to do that again this year. But you're right, we wanted to do it on TV. We want to be able to get a live. And we will be there.

SPEAKER 2: I mean, just for the basic fact of-- I mean, one of the things we enjoy, especially on our show here is a lot of our audience is the kid under the covers.

SPEAKER 1: Absolutely.

SPEAKER 2: And to be able to have that shown in the homes, where out in the suburbs, where the kids who can't come in, who aren't able to travel in that distance, they don't have an excuse for coming downtown on this event. But just for people to kind of be demystified about it.

The first time when my father heard that I was going to watch the Pride parade, he asked all of my family members. He goes, it's like, oh, he's not going to be in it. He's not going to be in it. He's just going to-- and if he would've told me that, I said, well, dad, the thing is this. When you come out, every year they take everyone who comes out. And they put their name in a hat. And I got picked as Grand marshal.

But he never talked to me about it. It was like, he's not doing that, is he? But it's just a great thing to go out and see the whole thing and see the diversity in our community.

SPEAKER 1: The perception of what other people think. There's that wonderful movie called *Ordinary People*, where the mother was always concerned, which really had nothing to do about the GLBT community in their broad sense, but in part of it, it did that what does other people think about what our son or daughter is going to do or be. And we all have to go past that prejudice.

The amazing thing about living in a big city like Houston is a lot of us come from 1,000 miles away or further, and we don't have that family thing, worrying about seeing us on TV. And we do. I mean, we have people that would say I'd love to go to this or be involved in this, but I don't want to be on TV.

Luckily, we have enough of us in the community who want to be on TV. But the reality is, in the coverage, only one TV channel actually covered a particular person from the Pride committee. Other people were just interviewing people from the street. And last year, of course, a big news was the Mayor being in the parade.

SPEAKER 2: Oh, yes.

SPEAKER 1: It seems like the past couple of years, we've had something that sort of framed the issue-- the disco ball, the Mayor being in the parade. And then this year, it's going to be the rally that we're going to have before the parade.

We really haven't talked a lot about this because this is really progressive voters, who's helped putting this thing on. Before the parade, about 7:00 PM, at the Grand Marshal stage, the Mayor and a number of the city council people will be speaking and talking about nondiscrimination, that's going to be happening at City Hall, hopefully, in the next couple of weeks, about and the fact that there will probably be a referendum.

And the fact that we have a very good chance of winning this, this year, because of the organization of progressive voters and some of the other things that are going on in the community, are working towards the fact that people will go out there and vote for nondiscrimination.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. I mean, I remember hearing about that at the Mayor's breakfast with the community on that. But I hadn't heard anything really about the rally that we're--

SPEAKER 1: That is something that really that we're just sort of help putting together and working with some other groups and diversity of other groups within the city and unions and groups outside the GLBT community, that we want to be inclusive of.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah, it sounds like-- I mean, a full day of events going on there.

SPEAKER 1: Well, exactly. Yes. I mean, and then this year, with the festival, there's events going on. There's events that we don't even know about. There's the Nelly Ribbon Party that happens during the parade. There are different restaurants and stuff that-- or people who live around the parade route.

One of the things is that we line up in this little neighborhood around Lanier Middle School. And unlike Dallas, who has this long street to line up in numerical order, we have to fit in this neighborhood with the trees, all these floats driving through this stuff.

And organizing this thing is an incredible thing of trying to fit all these people in there. And then bringing them out together in numerical order, because you don't want all the floats together, is really sort of a tough thing to do, but we do, do that.

And we meet with these groups. And there's a lot of non-GLBT people who own homes, who've been there a long time. And what we try to-- and then we're infringing on their parking space and their access to their own community, but we work very hard in notifying them. And some of these people have barbecues and parties out in their lawn, just watching this assembly going on.

SPEAKER 2: Oh, yeah. That's the best part with doing it the past couple of years, is just leaving the area where I was at and just seeing some of the other floats. Because wherever I was at, you don't get to really see the parade.

SPEAKER 1: Right, exactly.

SPEAKER 2: You see who's in front of you and who's behind you, but it's one of those things of just going through and seeing the other ones out there and what they're putting together. And I mean, that's the great part. I still remember when we talk about the disco ball.

When I was walking down, the first year I was in a walking group with Q patrol. And when we made that turn in front of Charlie's and saw the ball, it was just like whoa. I mean, I saw it at the dress rehearsal and I saw it, but to see it up there, lit up and to be walking under it.

Last year, when I took pictures during the Pride parade, the only thing that came out, of all the pictures I took on this cheap little camera I got, was I've got a picture of the ball because I was right underneath it when I snapped the shot and there was enough light there.

SPEAKER 1: Well, the amalgamation of putting this thing together. We didn't come up with the idea of a Night parade. It actually started in Sydney, Australia. And from our understanding, from what-- we've met with some of these people at some of the Pride conferences that happened in this country and other countries. They were going to have a celebration, a Stonewall celebration like in '79, I guess, they started.

And when they started this celebration, it ended up being their own version of Stonewall. And by law, they had to have a night parade. They couldn't have it during the day. And the gay Mardi Gras, which is termed that happens in Sydney around end of February or early-- end of January, early February, is the largest event in Australia with the exception of the Olympics this year, that in a year, it's not the largest GLBT event. It is the largest event.

And their National television network covers that live. And they have upwards of 600,000 people watching that parade. They have people coming from all over the world. They have a warehouse to not only build their float, but help other organizations build their float. And we are good at stealing other people's ideas and working with them and learning from other people's mistakes.

And one of the things that they do is they do a workshop every year on building a float. And we did it last year and we had a few people show up. And we did it this year, and we had more people show up. And we have this wonderful person, who's part of our committee, who's doing the float this year.

There's a lot of things that happen in this organization, which I really don't have much involvement or knowledge about. I just know that it works so well and people do such a great job. It's like the float. That's the last thing we do.

And the other thing is that we have the organization, in itself, the Pride committee of Houston, does not judge the floats. And we, also, just disqualified ourselves from our own float from getting awards. And there's a certain organization in town that loves to give awards to themselves and their board members, which will remain unnamed. But we definitely don't want to do that.

I mean, these awards are people in the community, not for us. And the judges that we choose every year have no connection to the Pride committee. The same thing with voting with grand marshals. We used to vote at that on a meeting, and only members of the organization could vote for the grand marshals at that time. And to be a member, you only had to show up for two meetings without missing two meetings that year.

But still, in a city of 1.8 million people, people have other things that are going on, that somebody came to us and say, you need to open this up to the community, And We have. I think we have the most inclusive voting for grand marshals that any committee that we know of.

The fact that you can either mail it in, fax it in, or show up at a particular day that set aside, that is open, that has accessible. And all we ask to do is show your identification. And it's opened it up from like about 10 to 15 people choosing grand marshals to about 500.

SPEAKER 2: And no butterfly ballot issues.

SPEAKER 1: No, not at all. Not at all.

SPEAKER 2: But I mean, to see how all this is expanded, I mean, when you started with pride the Pride events and that, it was mainly just a parade and the festival afterwards.

SPEAKER 1: It used to be a week, more or less.

SPEAKER 2: A week.

SPEAKER 1: And it was really about 10 days. And the people who started this, Ray Hill, who's still around, and Larry [?] Vonareese, ?] who's living in New Orleans, and I know there was other people. I moved here at the end of '81, so I wasn't here at the very beginning. But this organization has evolved from people from the caucus.

And we use to talk about there being five people in the community who were activists and they wear all the different hats. And in many ways, there's still some of that. But the community has expanded so much that we have such incredible organizations. And that this is sort of a celebration of thanking all the volunteer hours over the years that people have done to have a great time. And hopefully, for other people to join us in that and say, hey, I want to get involved.

And it's not necessarily the Pride committee, it's all these other organizations that we have some very unique things like Q patrol in this city and diverse works, which is this incredible arts organization, performance space. The Film Festival--

SPEAKER 2: Oh, yeah.

SPEAKER 1: The Film Festival, who basically started from a bunch of straight women, and at one time, was looked at as that there are all these different venues, how could it work. Now, it's this incredible thing that we have all these different venues that can show different types of films.

SPEAKER 2: I mean, even having now with producers and the directors of these movies coming in. I've visited with one on last night and there was another one today with the Film Festival, getting to see these different types of films that you don't get to see.

SPEAKER 1: Absolutely. Absolutely. And there is somebody who stopped by at the Center today, who was just coming out. And I was talking to this person and basically saying, this community is what you want to make of it. I mean, we have this diversity and we have-- there's all these different aspects of the community, whether it's a drag part or the leather part or the trans part of this community.

Or, we also have people who basically want to find a partner and move out in the suburbs and live like a heterosexual couple in a sense. But the diversity of this community that is not just part of this community, but the diversity of this city that sort of works together.

And I sort of look at the culture of this community as sort of the glue that binds it together, and the fact that we have all these theater groups now. I remember, when we first started doing this, that Joe Watts put together a small group called the Group Theater Workshop. And now, we have four or five different groups that are producing plays and doing incredible stuff.

SPEAKER 2: Oh, yeah. I mean, it just seems that we're coming more into our own, in Houston, of a solid community with different interests and different venues and different events that were not just this-- we go to the bar and we go home. And there's just so much things you can see.

I mean, I don't think you even get that in some of the other communities in the Houston area, whether it's ethnic or just the part of town you're in.

SPEAKER 1: Absolutely. And one of the things that we started doing back in '87, when we started doing the yearly pride guide, and I started doing the pride guide and had-- not a concept being a radio person, had not a concept of how you do a print thing. And sat in front of my first Macintosh back that day, putting this together.

But one of the things we started doing was putting together the community resource guide. And over the years, everybody who has sort of been part of the committee just realizes how important this thing is, is that we list every organization that we know of, as long as they will send us in the information and we hound these organizations--

SPEAKER 2: Oh, yes.

SPEAKER 1: --to get this information because we want it to be accurate and correct unlike some other yellow pages that are in town. And we've tried to share this information. I mean, this information, we'd be happy to give to these other books or things because we just want it to be accurate. And it's in the *Pride* book.

And I need to tell people is that we actually do to pride goods. There's a *Pride* book that's out, which is a 300 page. I can't tell you exactly where to get one because we have about 100 different locations, but they just keep on going. We print it 20,000 copies.

But also, the Texas Triangle has worked with us. One of the problems of doing this big book is that it has to go to publisher in the end of January. And we don't know of all the events that are going to happen. Luckily, the Houston Triangle has been working with us, and they publish all the official events that happen every year.

And they do it for like about five weeks through throughout the end of May and early June, that they continue to publish that. And it's also on our website pridehouston.org and *OutSmart* also publishes these things as soon as they get their publication out.

But the resource guide is the one thing that we do that list about 100 different organizations, what they are, who they are. And you can either get it from the *Pride* magazine or you can get it from our website, pridehouston.org.

And another aspect of this resource guide that we do is called a media guide, that we send just to the media organizations, that not only includes information about this organization, but includes the phone numbers of people involved in this organization.

So that if there's a news story that happens and they're on deadline, that they can not only call the answering machine of this organization, but hopefully, they can find the key person of this organization with the cell phone number or pager number or home number to be able to get a response and get our side of the story. And as far as we know, we're the only Pride committee in the country that does this.

SPEAKER 2: Well, it just goes to show that we want to make sure that everyone knows who the people are in the community, and to help get the correct story out.

SPEAKER 1: Absolutely.

SPEAKER 2: I mean, you don't want to throw out. I know Q-Patrol, back when Andrew Cunanan was still out on the loose, we got calls about that. And it's like, that really has nothing to do with us, but we'll take the publicity.

SPEAKER 1: Well, and that's it, sometimes-- and Ray is very good at this, Ray Hill, is that they come and they ask you a question. And it may not have anything to do with you, but you try to either steer them in the right direction because I get lots of media calls that they want information, which really has nothing to do with the Pride committee, but many times, were able to steer them to the right person if it's a political thing or if it's a social thing or it affects a certain group, who better to talk about that particular group.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. I mean, that's the great thing. And one thing I want to talk about is the-- I saw an article here that President Bush won't be issuing the traditional, that we've had for the past eight or so years, the little less than eight years, I guess, the gay proclamation of making it national.

SPEAKER 1: Yes. And it's interesting because in Atlanta, when the conference was-- the InterPride conference, which is a conference that started in somebody's living room in Boston about 20 years ago with six pride committees, now, has about 40 different private committees from around the world going to it. And has a website that lists probably about 150. Pride goes on all around the world.

And that's an incredible thing that something that happened in June, in the day that Judy Garland died in New York City, is now this event that's celebrated all over the world.

SPEAKER 2: Oh, yeah. I mean, I saw the partial list in the Pride guide there of just the different cities and the countries and what they go to do this.

SPEAKER 1: Well, and Houston has played a big part of this organization. And in fact, the organization is incorporated in Texas because of the Houston Pride committee. And Houston manages the database for all the Pride organizations around the world. And the website is interpride.org that list all these organizations, what we know of, and do it.

But Houston has supplied the mailing list to the White House to send this proclamation out. And in past years, under the Clinton administration, he or Vice President Gore, at the time, used to send out this proclamation to all these Pride committees.

And as we were sitting at the Pride conference back in the fall, and the woman who was in charge of this says, if the Democrats are not re-elected to the White House, my office will probably go to the NRA, the National Gun Association. And I think that probably has happened. And they decided, declined to issue a letter this year.

SPEAKER 2: Actually, I got to hear the part of this here. White House spokesman Scott McClellan said that Bush will not, as President Clinton did, issue a proclamation with such a designation for this month, nor is another White House official put into writing this week will the Executive Office of the President sponsor an observance.

The president believes every person should be treated with dignity and respect, but does not believe in politicizing people's sexual orientation. That's a personal matter. But he was going on and signed a proclamation designating Black History month, Women's History month, Irish-American Heritage month as well, but nothing for the gay and lesbian community. But they said the interior and transportation departments will be planning observances of their own, regardless of what the White House says.

SPEAKER 1: And it's interesting this is the person who went to Bob Jones University, a University that preaches discrimination. And the other interesting thing is that for years, the politicians has shunned the Pride parade. And it's like well, we don't need them. This is our parade. This is a community parade. This is not necessarily a forum for them to get advancement from.

And last year, when the Mayor asked to be in the parade, certainly, Mayor Brown has done everything he can to work within the community. And the breakfast we attend, I mean, that was the first ever. And there were some politics behind it, but at the same time, it's like we've got to work together.

And of course, Annise Parker has been in the parade every year she's been in office, and even before that. Deborah Dannenberg and Sheila Jackson Lee, and we're very happy to be that, but that's not what the parades for. The parade is for us.

SPEAKER 2: Oh, yeah.

SPEAKER 1: But of course, if these people want to be part of the parade, we'll be happy to have them in there, but it is our parade.

SPEAKER 2: Especially with seeing some of the politicians in that, I mean, I was kind of impressed with seeing Sheila Jackson Lee, last week, at Marie Minicucci's memorial service. I kind of looked over twice. I'm going, is that who I think that is?

And then seeing her entourage, it's like just to show that, I mean, you care a little bit more about the community of your constituents, to show up at something as large, where you're going to get the attention like a Pride parade, but just for something smaller like that to remember.

SPEAKER 1: Well, Ray Hill's birthday, that we observed last October, Sheila Jackson Lee showed up.

SPEAKER 2: That's right.

SPEAKER 1: She walks in there and she was late because Sheila has an incredible schedule of going from one event to another. And she never knows when she has to stay in Washington for a weekend because of what's going on up there.

And I work hard in this community, but I wouldn't want to have her job of having to go to all these different events. But as soon as she walked in, her and Ray got into this conversation about some aspect of something that's going on. And it's just like, go ahead, you do that.

And it was interesting, years ago, I was having dinner with Ray and my friend, Mike. And I was going on-- and this was before the Night parade. I was going on and on about the parade and Ray just turns to me and he says, seventy-six trombones.

And I says, Ray, what are you talking about? And Ray says, to a lot of us, this parade is like the music man. None of those kids can play a single note, but every parent heard the most beautiful symphony or marching band that they ever heard. And the reality was in the early days, our parade was just sort of this thing that we all just showed up and Ms. Slimey bi you with our feet sticking out of the limo, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

Well, this community has transformed that parade into being this very professional parade, and to have-- and we also understand that it costs thousands of dollars to do a float. And that was one of the things we did at this workshop. And we hope to be able to put a lot of the workshop on our website, is that you can build.

This is the most creative community there is anywhere. And you can do things and you can be creative. And we don't want to discriminate. We don't want to discourage people from me in the parade, but we also want people to realize is that if you're going to be in this Night parade, you need to stand out.

You just can't drive in a convertible or march with your group. You need to do something that attracts, that is original, that lights up, that you can throw, et cetera, et cetera. But we understand that not every organization has the budget to do something like Chase Bank.

SPEAKER 2: Oh, yes. One thing that last year with the community center, we were kidding about the fact that it was the lesbians who built it and it was the gay man who decorated it.

SPEAKER 1: Yes. Oh, yes.

SPEAKER 2: And that's exactly how it was. The group of lesbians were there and they put the whole float together and built everything up. And they just turned around and said, OK, gay guys, get on there and put on the ribbons. And that's how we did it. We split up the group and we got everything going on that.

And yeah, we could have probably used a few more lights and some more shiny beads to throw, but it's a great time and a great event to go out and be a part of. And like I say, I look forward to being a spectator again this year because actually, riding in a float was more tiring than walking in that thing last year.

SPEAKER 1: Well, it is. I mean, the different aspects of being in the parade, helping build a float, or putting a contingent together to watching it, is just incredible. I mean, for many, many years, I did the broadcast on KPFT, and I was never in the parade.

And I had never planned to actually end up being running this organization and being the head of this organization it sort of just happened. Because I was happy doing my little thing with media or help broadcasting it or behind the scenes type of thing.

And also, you don't see the Pride committee riding in the convertibles. Some of us are on our float, which is at the end or we're working it.

SPEAKER 2: Oh, yeah. And the amount of volunteers you have, I'm pretty sure you still even need more volunteers.

SPEAKER 1: Yes. First of all, our organization is very open. Our meetings are the third Tuesday of every month at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, which is accessible, which is a city guard-- we have security there, lighted parking lot, plenty of parking. And it's at 7:00 PM, 1475 West Gray.

The first Tuesday a month is the board meeting, all meetings are open. Volunteers, we always can use volunteers. I mean, we need upwards of 100 volunteers the day of the parade. And if you're interested in volunteering, you can go to our website, pridehouston.org. It's a PDF File that you can download, fill out, either fax in or mail in. Or show up to one of our volunteer sessions, which are usually on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM or Saturdays at 11:00 AM.

Now that we're in season, we're not always going to have those volunteer sessions. But certainly, if you can't do it this year in July, we're going to be gearing up for 2002. And those volunteer sessions are at the Community Center, which we are just so proud of being part of the Community Center because the resources in that little old gay house that we have is just incredible, at 803 Hawthorne at Stanford.

And I have just an incredible amount of people that work, that are part of this committee that I'm so proud of, and work very hard in putting this thing together. And not to say that we don't have our problems. I mean, I've got to be honest with you. Just a few days ago, it looked like we weren't going to be able to have the disco ball because our funds, one of our major sponsors, backed out this year.

And it wasn't because of us. It was just finances on their part, that we were so concerned. And our community does everything at the last minute, that the Astroworld tickets, at that time, looked like they weren't going very well. And Friday, people were just lining up at Basic Brothers, buying tickets.

And I know we had more than 500 because I didn't go to Astroworld today, but it looked like we were going to break records in the amount of people we had. Of course, I didn't hear any of the reports from the concert tonight from village people, which is something that Astroworld did. We didn't do. But it just all sort of worked together.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. I was just thinking, that's who we should add in here for an interview. We could add the village people.

SPEAKER 1: They are probably all in bed by now.

JIMMY: Yeah, probably. At their age--

SPEAKER 2: Well, Jimmy, what are you still doing up?

JIMMY: Hey, hey, hey, I'm just the regular night owl here.

SPEAKER 2: And it's not like it's all the original cast.

JIMMY: No, I know. I realized that.

SPEAKER 2: But no, so let's give a final promo here on when the parade is, the rally before the parade and the festival. Let everyone know.

SPEAKER 1: There are pride events going on in the entire month of June. In fact, we started in May. And you can get the best way to get that information is in the Houston Triangle, either pick up their magazine or online, txtriangle..com or the Pride committee website, and it's under Community Calendar at pridehouston.org.

And that all these different events from a fun run going on next Saturday to the Grand marshals reception. I mean, it's just this incredible diversity of different events. There's over 100 different events. And most of those are sponsored by participating organizations or even some companies are doing things.

The parade is June 23 at dark, which is 8:45 PM, Lower Westheimer from Woodhead to Stanford, somewhere around Whitney, that area. We expect 150,000 people to show up. If you want to be in the parade, there are about 120 different contingents. Get involved at one of those. I'm sure they're looking for either volunteers or people to be in the parade. That happens.

And then the next day, on June 24, will be the rally at Garden in the Heights. It's on [? Fake ?] and just off of [? Wah. ?] And we're going to have a number of different performers and a lot of organizations are going to have booths. There's going to be food.

Tickets are reasonably priced and you can pick them up at Basic Brothers or order them. Go to our website, you can order them online. Or you can buy them at the door. And we really want this festival to try to rival some of the other festivals that happen in other cities.

SPEAKER 2: And just part to bring back a little bit of that history and more the community building.

SPEAKER 1: Absolutely. I mean, we say that going to the parade, seeing the parade with 150,000 of your closest friends is a pretty incredible statement. And if you don't feel comfortable enough being on the streets, there are places where you can sort of sneak and watch a couple of blocks down the road. But hopefully, you can feel comfortable enough because not everybody watching the parade is part of the GLBT community. There's a lot of straight people who come out there and watch it.

SPEAKER 2: Oh, yeah. They find out about the beads and they think it's Mardi Gras.

SPEAKER 1: Exactly.

SPEAKER 2: They keep showing the wrong things to the wrong floats, though. Jimmy. Are we about ready to wrap up?

JIMMY: We are just about ready to wrap up. You've been listening to *After Hours*, queer radio with attitude on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station. Coming up, at the top of the hour, is Rob Bluff. He is right here behind me with the early morning groove.

And Jack, I am really happy that you have been here tonight to explain pride.

SPEAKER 1: It would take more than the three hours to explain all of it, but I--

JIMMY: I know. I know.

SPEAKER 1: And I want to thank everybody who is part of Pride, whether you're part of the organization or just showing up for the parade.

JIMMY: Yes.

SPEAKER 2: Well, until the next time. I believe you have your traditional closing.

JIMMY: Yeah, I do. First of all, I want to tell you that the music in the background that you're listening to is kind of a reflection on where we are now with pride because we have nighttime parades. The song is by Jeff Krasner. And it's called "110 In The Shade." And one of the reason why we have a nighttime parade.

But anyway, until next week when decorum becomes repression, the only dignity free people have is to speak out. Thank you. We'll be with you next week.