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club, louis, years, people, big, party, sundance, hcc, houston, guess, fun, feel, towners, long, women, cocktail, leather, turnout, involved, grow

SPEAKERS

Jimmy Carper



Jimmy Carper 00:02

The sound and we're we're having a little bit of fun today or this weekend at the Louis event it is their 25th anniversary. Well, you know, I've only been doing I've only been coming to this thing for about four years. And I'm sure some of you are veterans. Oh, Don Bowden, you must be the veteran. I tell you what,



00:31

he's got a few years on me. But



00:32

I've been coming up. We're talking about participation company



00:37

here with Cindy was an original. Now she's been participating ever since she's been member, and



00:50

still draw on her strength as a founding member of Sundance calorie counting. Now, she doesn't give me a lot of information. But I know she's behind this.



Jimmy Carper 01:01

Well what did you think was? The first one you went to? What was the biggest turnout?

Well, what did you think was? The first one you went to. What was the biggest turnout. Probably



01:13

70. At your actual participants, there were a lot of people to tag along.



Jimmy Carper 01:22

And what do you think have been some of the biggest changes?



01:25

The biggest changes, people don't have to make our own pins. We had those stupid little machines, and we had to make our pins run fans for the weekend. But we had been doing that too. It's the biggest changes is that we've gotten so much more participation over the years.



01:50

The camaraderie just gets better every year.



Jimmy Carper 01:55

And how does it feel when you see somebody? Like you have I'm sure, do it for the first time.



02:05

How it's like get in there and do well. There's a smile on their face when they were like a



02:15

mother hand but you also have to make sure that they enjoy themselves properly.



Jimmy Carper 02:21

What do you mean by properly?



02:27

There's always do's and don'ts on any run. You know



Jimmy Carper 02:29

that? Well? Yeah. I was just trying to see what I could get you to say on the air. For you. What about Helen, what about you? What do you remember about your first



02:49

first learning? Oh, my first Louis was an extraordinary experience. I actually probably remember less about it than I should. But of course that's half of Louis. Yes, it was a flawless experience. I was. It was my first year with the club. I did the show and had to say oh man River and bass. And I was a smashing success. And I remember being so stunned about that. How much fun I had. It was wonderful one time my favorite party of the year.



Jimmy Carper 03:25

I have to say it's one of mine too. Which one would you say was your your most memorable one?



03:36

They're all memorable. None of them are to be forgotten. Who can say which one's better than the rest. We always just get in the truck to Dawn dad named crews



03:47

till we drop always made sure we have a vehicle that will fit on.



03:54

He has trouble with a writer but



Jimmy Carper 03:58

you know occasionally you're Hey, could you hear a lady? Just say something? And that's Phoebe. Now how many years have you been coming to this thing?



04:10

At least seven





Jimmy Carper 04:13

and what was your first one long?



04:14

Oh god I've slept since then. Don't ask me that.



04:18

Yeah, the neat thing is that a lot



04:19

of people like myself participate in these runs every year for many years before they decide where they want their loyalties to lie with a particular



04:34

club. The more I participate the more I come out the more I get involved in you know I finally decided fuck work



Jimmy Carper 04:45

why don't we just say that on the air who's



04:48

been in it? Work to doing this then that can farm is like a retired Ammar vacation for you What about you?



05:03

Well, when I first came to Lily, my very first one was 89. I remember that. My leverage Just passed my first one. And he introduced me to the letter scene and my most exciting, my most exciting, I guess was, well, every one of them all gooeys are very memorable. And I guess my most exciting was, well, we weren't the venture and, and it was kind of warm outside. I do remember that. And we were all just, you know, kicking back.



Jimmy Carper 05:40

Then y'all do that. So



05:41

well. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.



05:47

Talk about hanging this look at them.



Jimmy Carper 05:50

Now



05:53

they'd be hanging anywhere and I started to smoke, you know, then the candle that that. And then I saw this lady turn around, took off her blouse. And then I saw some demonstrations. And I'm like, interesting. So I started, you know, yearly, I started coming. There was a couple of years that I did miss.



Jimmy Carper 06:16

It's horrible. When you can't come I know what pulls you away. And that isn't exactly what I meant. Now, do you still live here? And



06:30

you know, I'm currently an honorary Sundance. I've been for the past two years. And Helen was my big brother



06:41

was my big sister. And I am Joe directors sponsor



06:52

not been



Jimmy Carper 06:54

with the club, so you need to talk to the boy and of course you're gonna come back to every

Louis.



06:59

Oh, I ain't gonna miss no more. No, no, it's my favorite level. Stand up.



07:05

And I'm gonna start getting ready for the next year. So I'm going to start them cherries.



Jimmy Carper 07:09

Why? She said over there being quiet shy sometimes. Come here, Susan. Come on. They've heard you sing before most of them come here get real close to me honey. How long have you rattle rattle I can't really answer. Louie first time was the most memorable time when we're not even a second place right now going back to this with the writer so you are a writer. Okay. You're on air handling Sundance. You're not gonna give us specifics. I can't do anything you want. I can't I can't remember. You know, I got these. I've had that happen. Before. My mouth is really dry. Can I have this is gonna kill me. All right, he's dropped off the mic. No, I Hey, I know I drink. Did you can't Well, that's better. So what do you think about the number of people that are appeared this year? Every year, what would you tell somebody who had never come who has never been



09:09

over needed? Literally? Besides that



Jimmy Carper 09:20

there's nothing else. Well, guys, I have I've got to move on. I don't want to make each one of these too long. I've got a lot of people to talk to. I'd like to thank the Sundance Cattle Company are talking to me for just a few minutes. I hope you've heard everything and I hope some of it made sense. Of course, we're gonna talk. Thank you, Don. I'd like to right now introduce Bill Staniel. He's one of the guests at the Louis event their 25th anniversary. I'm gonna I'm gonna ask him a few questions. I'd like to start off With how long? How long have you been coming to this thing?



10:05

Well, to the best of my recollection, probably about 18 to 20 years



Jimmy Carper 10:09

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18 to 20 years.



10:13

I may have missed a few in the early last 10 to 15. I've probably been to just about all of them are.



Jimmy Carper 10:21

That that's remarkable. Number one, not that not that you've been to all of them and have partied at all. It's the fact that there's been an event like that like this that has lasted so long. What does it feel like when you see or know someone has is coming to this event for the first time?



10:55

Wow, that is going back aways. But again, I was impressed by the diversity of the group. The number of people even back then, and it certainly wasn't anything like it is now. But the friendliness, I guess everybody was just a big party weekend and not terribly structured, especially in the early years, but just a lot of fun, fun party.



Jimmy Carper 11:22

Let me get a drink of water here. I've already told them. My mouth is just so dry. Another question I'd like to ask you as? What is your reaction to the amount of people we have this year?



11:42

Well, I'm not really surprised, because each year, word seems to spread further and further and it's become almost a national happening now, as opposed to years back when it was more of a local flavor.



Jimmy Carper 12:00

And if you had to explain what Louie was to someone, what would you tell them?



12:10

Well, Louis, is just like Mardi Gras itself, I guess which it's patterned after it's just a continuation of the big party in New Orleans the week before. And it is just a chance for everyone to get together and have one big last fling. If they're serious about the Olympics, they can help me already anyway, but already party party, that's not gonna be the game.



Jimmy Carper 12:39

I've decided I'm giving up a limp. But the other thing is, are you gonna be coming back then? You'll be doing this again. And again. As long as I am able I



12:59

will read. Yes, I certainly wouldn't anticipate continuing to come to Louis every year. And, of course, I have an advantage over a lot of people in that I do live in Houston. So it's a little easier for me than some people don't have to worry about hotel or travel. Right. That's true.



Jimmy Carper 13:15

That's true. Another remarkable thing about this, and I guess from my perspective, with the amount of years that I've been coming to this event, is the fact that it has remained free to out of town guests and still only charged \$10. Lift I mean, is that it? I mean, are you amazed at all that it's still done that way?



13:49

I don't know if amaze is the right word I'm, I'm frankly a little well, yeah, I guess you could say amazed, I may get in trouble for saying this. I've already started an HTC meeting and I don't even have any capacity and ICC. But I told him, I really think you need to look at raising your prices to the local people. \$10 You know, it's nice to be able to do it. But everything goes up over the years. And I really think realistically, I'd like to see them continue offering it free to the out of town. That's the idea. But really if local people want to come to it, it's certainly worth more than \$10 You get all your your cocktails and everything. Not to mention all the just pure fun you have and whatever other entertainment you can arrange on your own. But yeah, I think it is amazing that they continue to do it for \$10 I



Jimmy Carper 14:42

have traveled to a lot of different states and I've been to a lot of different parties that are supposed to be a lot like this. They're more expensive, and they're not nearly as much fun. Oh And in my opinion, I mean, I've had great times, but maybe it's because I'm from Houston. I don't know. But I do know that it is the only party I have ever heard of. That is offered to out of town. Yes.



15:15

I'm not aware of anything else in the within the continental United States. Their visors say there may be other gatherings. I don't think on the scale that Louis has gotten to be. But it's the only one I know where Yondu you know, out of towners can come in and just party for for just or

whatever their personal expenses. The party itself is free.

 Jimmy Carper 15:42

And they do treat you well.

 15:43


Even if you have to buy your own drinks.

 Jimmy Carper 15:47

Yes, you do. And they do have a lot of cocktail parties that

 15:50

this thing. Yeah, a lot of cocktail.

 Jimmy Carper 15:53

I know I take part in everyone. Well, I'm not going to keep you forever. And I hope you enjoyed yourself. By the way. Again, this has been a standing up. I didn't tell you. He is the Secretary for Teach CC that is the Texas conference of clubs. And thank you again, and I know I'm gonna see you many, many years.

 16:15

Thank you very much. My pleasure. Keep on Louis.

 Jimmy Carper 16:21

Well I'm still at Lulu and I'm having a great time. I think I'm probably going to have another cocktail soon either better probably shot a vodka. You do that at these things drink all the time. Right now I'm talking to a friend of mine. She's been coming to these things for a while. You want that winter down? Just a little bit. Okay, well, she's been coming to these things for a while. But sorry, we're in my car. If you haven't figured that out. It was one of the quieter places is that okay? Oh, yeah, that's fine. Okay, let me turn this off now. Okay. She has a minute. I'm we're talking to a friend of mine. Her name is Cindy Ewing. She's been involved in literally from my God forever. Well, when was when was the first Louis you ever went to?

 17:15

It would have been when I first came in eclipsing which would have been about 1980 to

 Jimmy Carper 17:20

1982. The years of decadence? Yes, those

 17:25

were the years. And there were a lot of fun years, I had met Rini, who was with Sundance, she was president, the first female president of any club in the country, and actually held that for many years. And when she got me involved in and I was really a completely different person back then I was very shy. I was very, very much an introvert. Introvert in the club really brought me out. I really learned how to shine and mingle with people. And you know, it was it was a wonderful experience, and still is

 Jimmy Carper 18:05

to do recall, about how many people were at the first loo you into probably about 75 or 8075 or 80, mostly male, or was there an even split

 18:16

mostly male for? I would say the first five to six years that I was in the club scene, I was one of only three women that I'm aware of in this part of the country that were in the club, say Marini being the other one. The other was a girl named Becky Pitner was Colt 45. And that was back in the days of the locker and everything and the only times that I was allowed in there because I was a female was if I had my colors on. And even going around to other club runs in New Orleans and places like that I was allowed in places that women are not allowed only because I have my colors on. And we made a lot of ground in the clubs.

 Jimmy Carper 18:58

Yeah, because I've been in the scene for about, you know, between five and six years. And women for the most part have very, very accepted by the leather man

 19:12

that they weren't accepted back then. There weren't a lot of women involved in leather s&m. Back then they were very much closeted. Most of them were heterosexual. But, you know, I think the guys finally realized that that, you know, they could perform sexual acts around us and not be uncomfortable that it wasn't bothering us. I can remember one time being at the drum. And Randy and I were in there and I think there may have been one or two other women maybe that I don't recall. And as a joke, they served hors d'oeuvres that were oysters with a pimento in the middle remade, shaped and to look like a woman's body part as I fly um das,

and we just we grabbed the tray and walked around and surfed, and we, you know, we took a lot of heat. We weren't gonna give up on it either. We, we had a lot of friends, there were a lot of people that were behind us. And we just had to prove to everybody that that we were, you know that our goals in the club same were the same as theirs.

 Jimmy Carper 20:23

And, you know, another amazing thing is that you've seen this thing, grow, grow, grow. And also the fact that, if I'm not mistaken, you put some of these together.

 20:40

I was a chairman for several years and CO chairman for several years. I also was the secretary treasurer for about three or four years. So I actually held an office for probably eight or nine years doing worry,

 Jimmy Carper 20:54

Louis, can't talk, let us entertain you.

 20:58

And it has grown and I have a little different view of why it's grown. And some people usin is very special in the club scene because we don't have a lot of infighting in the clubs. Well, we have and what we offer Louis is completely different from any place in the country. Not just let us entertain you but Houston Council of clubs itself, Oh, yes. Other cities, Dallas, New Orleans, all and the clubs are fighting each other. And we've never done that. We have always supported each other. I mean, there have been many times it's been hard to tell a person what club he or she was really in, because of the support we have for each other. And I think that support of HCC and the fact that we get together and put Louis on. I think that feeling it transcends to the guests that we have it literally I think they feel that the camaraderie that we have, and and it gives them a really positive experience of Houston a positive experience of us. And then a positive experience of a part of a party and in can we do know how to throw a hell of a party. And I think that's one of the things one of the reasons it's grown.

 Jimmy Carper 22:12

Well, it just from what you're saying to me, right now, I get the feeling that, you know, if I didn't live here, and I came to this city to lose my, even though we all wear different back patches during those three days of the year. I mean, we work together all your young, long, but during those three days of the year, I believe the outside world looked at us, like one big clo Ungroup.

 22:43


And they're very impressed by that. And I've had people many people over the years tell me that and asked me how we do it and how it works and how it got, you know, and another interesting part is that HCC is governed and managed on tradition. There is not one set of bylaws or rules in print for Houston Council of clubs. It is all done by what's been passed down from one year to the next one all

 Jimmy Carper 23:11

you know, that's, that is kind of cool in itself. Yeah,

 23:16

it's, you know, and and let us entertain you is 25. ACC has 22 years that we've been doing. Now, why is that? Well, it originally got started, I believe now recall or somebody or the chops may correct me but I think it got started by HMC and Mary's as a way to get people to come to use them to spend a little money here after Mardi Gras. And they did it the first year or two. And it got so big that they asked a couple clubs to help them American Leatherman in particular, and I believe Texas writers, and then they got together and they decided that they would form Houston Council of clubs in order to organize it a little better. And it's just transcended from there. For many, many, many years, it was just four or five clubs and and it's only been within the last couple of years that they've accepted memberships and groups that, you know, aren't considered laterally by organizations

 Jimmy Carper 24:16

and also even groups of women. Yes. Which, you know, you being the, the chairman of HCC for the years that you versus a whole lot about the group and you know, within itself

 24:33

and it's something I am very, very proud of. There's only two people in the 25 year history up until now that have been awarded an award from HCC for achievement and dedication and service and I am one of the two the other one is Rick Coleman. And unfortunately my plaque burned in the old barn fire years ago. What you know, it's An honor and something that I'll take with me to my grave, you know, I'll never forget that that's just, you know, to go from not being allowed in bars that, you know, to getting an honor such as that. It's pretty great.

 Jimmy Carper 25:12

Yes, I can imagine. Let me ask you another question. During the years that you did, you know, put on HCC? I mean, literally as the chairman. What would you say the turnout was? Because I know, it's, it's gotten bigger every time

 25:32

25:55

it has gotten bigger, I would say it grows probably 20 to 25% every year. And we always plan for that. It's always, you know, we know it's gonna get bigger. The word of mouth alone, you know, would give us a hell of a weekend if we never advertised if, if we're just by word of mouth, we would have a good turnout.



Jimmy Carper 25:57

Did what happened this year shocking.



26:01

With the turnout, oh, I'm still blown away by it. Still. I'm just almost cried last night, just looking around and, and realizing, you know, what, what we've gone through and how it's changed. And, and yet at the same time, how it hasn't changed.



Jimmy Carper 26:18

Yeah, I understand. You know, in the five years that I've been coming to it, I've seen it. That what I thought, you know, five years ago was a big event. Right? And I've seen it grow and grow and grow. But I've also the fun is still there. Yeah, that people come in and and even the out of towners? It's it's almost like they're from here.



26:43

Oh, I know, it's really relaxed. It's, it's just completely different. You know, and the average run to have a really good run, if you've got 200 people on that run you, yourself, you did well, an incredible job and to get, you know, almost 800 people last night about 1037 84 What it is this morning, I haven't figured it out yet.



Jimmy Carper 27:06

It's well over 800. Right now what they're doing is if I'm not mistaken, as they're allowing people to fill out application and registered with the knowledge that there is not



27:19

right, any pen registrations officially cut off, there's no pens, they won't be served dinner. They're given a scheduled or invite, you know, invited to join in with all the festivities and come to the show. But they're, you know, I mean, it's unfortunate, but when you plan an event like this, you know, you you just have to have a limit.



Jimmy Carper 27:39

 Jimmy Carper 27:15

Oh, yeah, I agree completely. But you know, I think because of this next year, we will be planning for something that's a whole lot more,

 27:49

well, this year is really special, because it's the 25th so, it'll be interesting to see if we have this same turnout next year, or if we're having this turnout, because because it's and I'm just completely overwhelmed by the number of people that are here. And, and not you know, I saw gentleman in colors last night from Melbourne, Australia. You know, every year, we have, you know, two or three countries and, you know, 15 to 18 states represented, you know, with people that come and go and a lot and I'll tell you what, I also like about it, I have seen a lot of in town people that are not club members. But that you know, around the bar scene or wherever clubs, no individual people that may be in clubs, this is a one time a year when they will pay their \$10 and they will join a club function and actually participate in the run. And, and any other time of year. If you know Texas later in life through a run and we're charging 4045 \$50 They wouldn't participate. But it gives a lot of the in town people a chance to get to know the club people in what we do. A little easier.

 Jimmy Carper 29:04

You know, gives them the opportunity to to see it how we party because you realize that, you know, we just like to have fun and

 29:12

years ago, you know, people were scared to death of leather. I mean, you know, you would walk in in a Twinkie bar like the old Jr's and you'd be in full leather and people would kind of parked away for you, you know? Yes. And now it's a lot more accepted. And

 Jimmy Carper 29:29

for the most part, we're getting there.

 29:32

There's facets of the leather lifestyle that people are still pretty shocked by but, you know, I mean, there are facets of every lifestyle that people are shocked by so

 Jimmy Carper 29:40

hey, I look at it like this, you still have the ability to be shocked. You should pray every day. Because it means that to some extent, you still have some base of what your mortality is



29:57

complacency is an awful thing and You know, it would be really boring if it was the same all the time day in and day out. It'd be like working in assembly line 24 hours a year live. Like hello.



Jimmy Carper 30:13

What does it feel like? From your point of view, when you see someone experience Luli for the first time



30:23

I'm very proud I feel kind of like a like a proud papa, you know, or something, or a mom or whatever mood I'm in



30:34

Daddy,



30:36

you know, and I'm very proud of that. And you know, I've taken a backseat in the club's name for a fair amount of years now because I got really burned out back in the 80s. When I was really involved in it in early 90s. I was out in the bars every night I never wanted to bar without my colors. I went on a run at least once a month, sometimes twice. And I really got burned out so I've taken a backseat and taking and taking that backseat I've seen people come and people go but I've also had the privilege of seeing some individuals really blossom and really important people in our community and I'm proud of that because you know, I can sit back and say I knew that when and I've seen him grow up and and the people that have taken the reigns over for a lot of us