

For Immediate Release
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The Official Pride Festival of Seattle Pride®, PrideFest, is Back for Its Biggest Year Yet

After taking over the Seattle Pride Festival in 2007 with just six weeks [not 'works'] to produce the event, One Degree Events came back in 2008 with a bigger footprint, star entertainers, and a huge attendance at Seattle Center with over 50,000 attendees. This year, PrideFest is back and with a slightly bigger footprint, more vendors, more restaurants, and more sponsors than before, and this year's Seattle Pride Festival promises to be bigger than ever before.

Seattle PrideFest 2009 will occur from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sunday, June 28, 2009, with the main programming starting after 1 p.m. as parade attendees start to pour into Seattle Center from Downtown Seattle. Nearly 150 sponsors, commercial vendors, non-profits, arts and craft vendors, two beer gardens featuring major sponsor Redhook, and eight restaurants are featured at this year's event. Vendors and stages are spread throughout four different areas: the International Fountain space, the Fisher Green, the Fisher Pavilion, and the roof of the Fisher Pavilion.

A diverse collection of artists round out the PrideFest experience on the Main Stage. Headlining this year's festival is Shoshana Bean, Broadway star of *Wicked* and *Hairspray* and a pop artist in her own right. Also featured is #1 Dance Artist Abigail, singing her new single *Forever Young*. Abigail was a favorite at PrideFest 2007, and is being brought back by popular demand. QBoy, an artist from the UK, brings his own sound with a unique mix of rap, hip-hop, and electro-pop. THEE Satisfaction is a local favorite fusing jazz, soul, and a capella to create an original music experience well-appreciated by their fan base. Fuchsia FoXXX is a local burlesque act that will be featured on the mainstage. Other acts include the 5th Avenue's musical sampling from future shows and dueling pianos from 88 Keys. Hosting the Main Stage is Sylvia O'Stayformore, the consummate Seattle drag hostess, who will also be doing announcements for the Official Seattle Pride Parade Downtown on 4th Avenue.

This year, PrideFest will celebrate the 40-year anniversary of the Stonewall Riots in New York City which kicked off the modern gay rights movement. In keeping in line with the celebration, PrideFest will be honoring four local heroes who have made a mark in the local LGBT community, from Trans-activism to the fight for LGBT marriage equality. "Heroes are a rare breed," says Egan Orion, Festival Director for PrideFest. "I think it's crucial that we celebrate their work and hopefully inspire a whole new generation of heroes who will fight tomorrow's battles in the LGBT community."

One of the hallmarks of all Pride Festivals is to rally supporters of LGBT rights to action. Speakers representing groups formed to counter Initiative 71 (to limit marriage and domestic partner rights of LGBT couples) will also speak at the event in an attempt to raise consciousness about the initiative and to get energy around the movement to stop it before it gets enough signatures to be on the Fall ballot.

2009 brings with it a number of new Pride events around town. Most notable is the “Celebrate Stonewall” event in Volunteer Park on Saturday, June 27. Plans are also underway for a small Broadway street festival the same day. According to Festival Director, Egan Orion, this is a good thing. “In the past, there’s been a lot of confusion around different events going on Pride weekend. I believe this was largely as a result of moving Pride downtown and the backlash that was created. The community has grown to love and embrace the Parade and Festival downtown and now that our events have a history of their own, we feel confident they will remain the centerpiece of Pride weekend.” Still, Orion thinks the community wants there to be a large diversity of events. “I think it speaks to the power of the local LGBT community that so many great events are thrown and are supported during Pride season. There’s definitely enough to go around for all businesses and event-goers, on Capitol Hill, Downtown, and throughout the City.”

There is significant support from sponsors in 2008. Returning as the Official Beer Sponsor and a major contributor to the event is Redhook, featured at both of the event’s beer gardens. SmartWater and VitaminEnergy are also back to support this year’s festival and will be giving away free samples of SmartWater and their new low-calorie enhanced water, VitaminEnergy10. Media sponsors include ‘mo magazine, The Stranger, Movin’ 92.5, and AM1090. Also returning as sponsors for this year’s Festival are the W Seattle, the Greater Seattle Business Association, Team Photogenic, Comcast, and Ajaxx63, providing the official t-shirts of PrideFest. Alaska Airlines and Horizon Air are also significant supporters to this year’s Festival.

Other supporters of PrideFest 2009 include PacMed, Efficient Communication Solutions, Inc., MetMeds Pharmacy, and the Baltic Room.

PrideFest is produced by One Degree Events with Production Management from New Growth Event Solutions.

PrideFest is a partner with Seattle Out and Proud, producer of the Official Seattle Pride Parade, Downtown on 4th Avenue. Festival programming immediately follows the end of the parade, and parade official ends at the edge of Seattle Center.

Beneficiaries of this year’s event include Equal Rights Washington and the GSBA Scholarship Fund.

More information is available at www.seattlepridefest.org.