

History of Pride Youngstown

Each June communities all over the world celebrate Gay Pride Month to commemorate the Stonewall Riots of 1969 that sparked the gay rights movement in America. Pride Youngstown is a newcomer to such celebrations forming in 2008, and holding the first festival on June 5, 2009 in Youngstown Ohio.

The Mahoning-Trumbull-Columbiana Gay Pride Inc, better known as Pride Youngstown celebrated its 1st anniversary this year. Pride Youngstown stemmed from a dangerous, mentally challenged brain trust of three friends Carlos Rivera Jr., Kim Akins and Anita Davis (aka the Musketeers). Like in a Disney movie, Carlos a true geek, went to his two friends and said he would like the three of them to put together a gay pride festival in Youngstown (this was something never done before in the city frozen in time). His friends without hesitating of course said, sure buddy boy, okay.



The trio had a history together of putting on several successful Star Trek conventions and horror movie shows in the area. There was never any doubt in their minds that they could not put together a gay pride festival in less than one year. It was going to get done.

Carlos a barfly, had the bar connection and put out a call for entertainers. Kim, the straight person in the trio, is a licensed attorney, who walked the fledgling organization through the legal minefield. Anita brought her warm personality and organizing skills.

They held fundraisers, sold raffle tickets, played the lottery to raise money to have the event for 'the show'. They also thought about selling off some of their precious Star Trek memorabilia, but quickly nixed that idea. Fortunately for musketeers, Pride was the recipient of a kind donation from two anonymous lesbian business women, the Split Level and the downtown Youngstown theater, The Oakland. The Trek collections were saved.

Our pride celebration was held on N. Phelps Street in Youngstown, a small side street in downtown Youngstown. The event drew nearly 1,000 people, a great turnout for a city the size of Youngstown and it was well received by the crowd.

Buoyed by the success of the event les trios mousquetaires declared their intention to have a Pride Youngstown 2010. The swordplay continues...