

NGLTF report illuminates anti-gay violence in the U.S.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Statistics released in a report by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) illuminate the dramatic prevalence of hate-violence perpetrated against gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals in the United States.

The 9th annual NGLTF survey documents 1,813 anti-gay incidents in six U.S. cities in 1993, including harassment, threats, physical assault, vandalism, arson, police abuse, kidnapping, extortion, and murder. This total, while troubling, represents a welcome 14% decrease in anti-gay incidents over the all-time high of 2,103 incidents reported in Boston, Chicago, Denver, Minneapolis/St. Paul, New York City, and San Francisco during 1992. This figure represents the first annual decline in reported anti-gay incidents after five years of a steady and dramatic rise. While the number of overall incidents fell, the individual incidents in 1993 comprised a higher number of offenses per incident. Nationwide, the severity of anti-gay incidents rose by 22%, from 1.6 offenses per incident in 1992 to 1.9.

"While any decline is welcome, it is too early to draw conclusions on whether 1993 numbers indicate a downward trend," said Martin Hiraga, Director of NGLTF's Anti-Violence Project and author of the report. "Anti-gay violence is still an epidemic out of control in this country."

In Boston, Chicago, Minneapolis/St. Paul, New York City, and San Francisco, the five cities recording anti-gay violence since 1988, anti-gay incidents increased 127% over the six year period, from 697 incidents in 1988 to 1,584.

The highest number of anti-gay episodes were recorded in New York City (587), followed by San Francisco (366), Minneapolis/St. Paul (240), Denver (229), Chicago (204), and Boston (187). Because of under-reporting by victims, it is estimated that these figures reflect only a fraction of the actual number of incidents that occurred in the six urban areas last year. Evidence in this report shows that in one community a signif-

icant percentage of victims did not report their incidents because they fear public disclosure of their sexual orientation.

Anti-gay arson was the most serious form of offense to increase this year. Arson rose 200% from 2 incidents in 1992 to 6 in 1993. Vandalism also rose 10% from 141 incidents in 1992 to 155 in 1993. Bomb threats increased 8% from 13 incidents in 1992 to 14 in 1993. Harassment—personalized, confrontational incidents in which lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals are intimidated face-to-face, on the phone or by mail—rose 35% from 1230 incidents in 1992 to 1665 in 1993.

Reports of threats and menacing dropped 9% from 667 incidents to 605. Physical assaults, or gay-bashing, fell 16% in the six cities from 848 incidents in 1992 to 710 in 1993. Robberies declined 28% from 85 to 61. Reports of police abuse dipped 36% from 248 to 161. Anti-gay murders fell 50% from 14 to 7. Murders in which the victim's sexual orientation was one of several factors declined 25% from 24 to 18.

Only 322 anti-gay crimes were reported to local police in six cities. Police reports declined 14% in 1993 from 375 in 1992.

The decline in anti-gay episodes could reflect a variety of factors, according to Hiraga. These include increased outreach by lesbian, gay and bisexual crime prevention education programs, greater vigilance against anti-gay violence by local law enforcement officials, and enhanced penalties in local hate crime statutes. However, these figures also indicate that homophobic violence remained an on-going and prevalent problem in the six urban areas during the past year. Intolerance fomented by Far Right operatives may have contributed to anti-gay violence in many communities. For example, Denver victim advocates documented a 12% surge in homophobic incidents during 1993 in the wake of the passage of Amendment 2, an anti-gay ballot initiative in Colorado. In 1992, Denver advocates received 41% of the year's reports in November and December,

Continued on page 34

Miss Southern States USA Pageant

April 22

Scandals Night Club

Asheville, N.C.
(704) 252-2838

Starring

Sweet Savage

Miss Gay USA 1993

This is the last Preliminary before the 1994 Miss Gay USA Pageant!

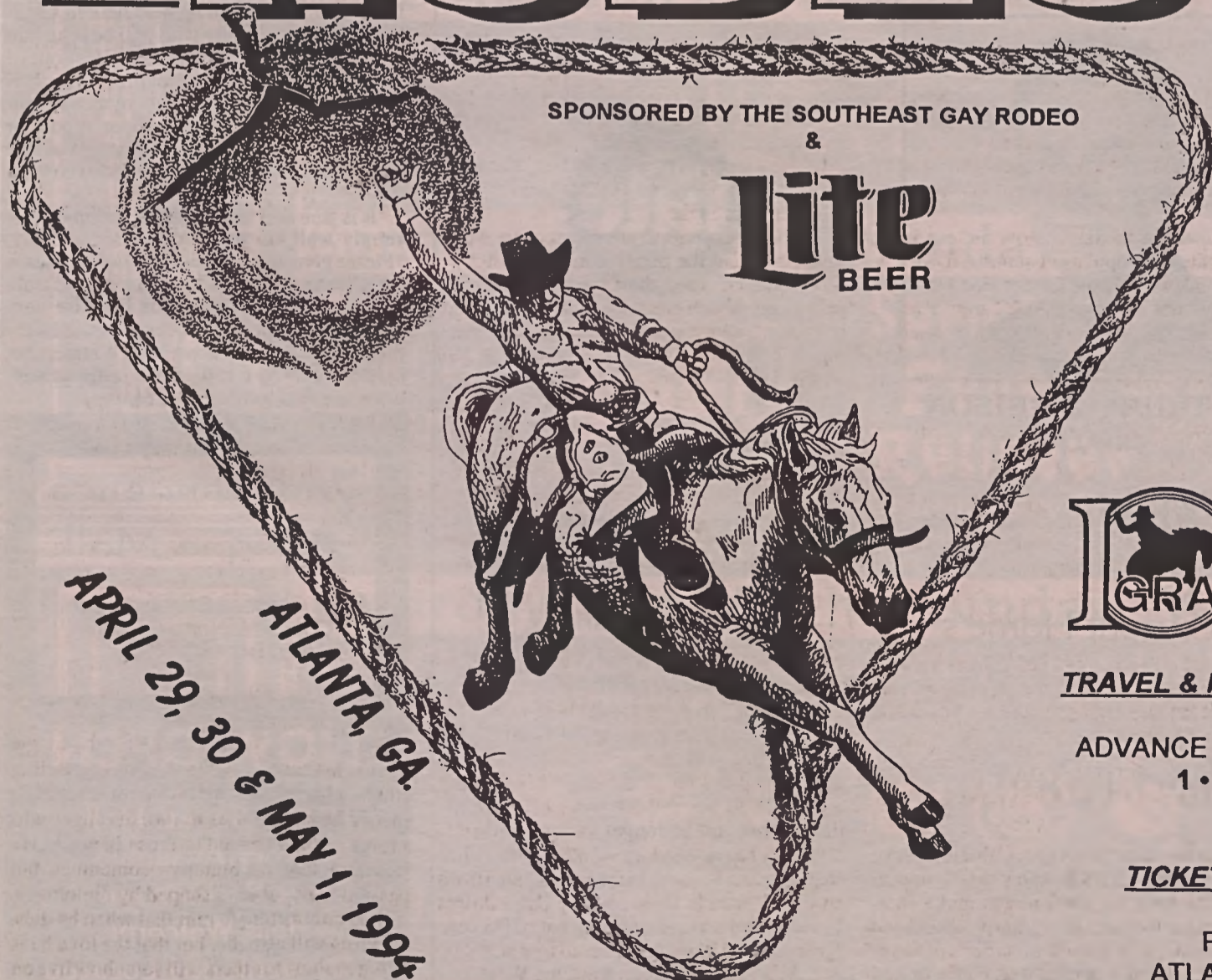


Official USA Preliminary

1ST ANNUAL DIXIELAND RODDEO

SPONSORED BY THE SOUTHEAST GAY RODEO &

Lite BEER



TRAVEL & HOTEL ARRANGEMENTS

ADVANCE • DAMRON VACATIONS
1 • 800 • 695 • 0880

TICKETS & INFORMATION

P.O. BOX 7881
ATLANTA • 30357-0881
404 • 760 • 8126

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Thursday, April 28
Royalty pageant
Mr./Ms/Miss SEGRA

Friday, April 29
Rodeo registration 6-10 PM
"Welcome to Georgia"
Dancing & Entertainment
8 - 2 AM

Saturday, April 30
Rodeo Performance
12 Noon - 6 PM
"A Night on Peachtree"
Dancing & Entertainment
8 - 2 AM

Sunday, May 1
Rodeo Performance
12 Noon - 6 PM
Awards Ceremony
The Last Dance
8 PM - ?

Dances \$7.00 / advance
Rodeo performance \$13.00 / advance
Weekend Package \$35.00
Awards Ceremony (Sun) no charge

APRIL 29, 30 & MAY 1, 1994
ATLANTA, GA.