



A CAUSE TO PARTY

Club Nur proceeds to benefit IGLHRC

On Thursday, Nov. 20, Club Nur—the Gay Middle Eastern Club Night held Thursdays at MJ's Bar in Silver Lake, complete with sultry Middle Eastern music and hookahs—will donate the night's proceeds to the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission.

"Every week, Club Nur creates an ideal Middle East, where men and women of various nationalities and religions come together and enjoy their cultures, music, neighbors and friends," says Club Nur promoter Hrair Sarkissian. "With the wonderful work that IGLHRC does internationally, we hope (to make) the lives of gays and lesbians abroad a little safer."

Longtime friends Sarkissian and Ally Bolour, a co-chair on the IGLHRC Board, worked to create the event. In addition to the \$3,000 Sarkissian hopes to raise for the nonprofit, the event also strikes a personal chord.

"As a Middle Eastern club night, with many of our more than 400 weekly attendees who come from that region—some of whom have actually experienced violence and discrimination in their homelands—we believe that fundraising for this organization here, today, is particularly poignant," he says. "We are thrilled that we'll be able to contribute to the much-needed and appreciated work that IGLHRC does around the world."

"(Hrair) has been one of IGLHRC's supporters," adds Bolour, who's also an immigration attorney. "He has donated money and time to us and is very enthusiastic about doing everything he can to further the cause for IGLHRC."

And Sarkissian is no stranger to fundraising—a recent Club Nur event raised just under \$7,000 for No on Prop 8.

While IGLHRC is based in New York, the nonprofit works on a global level. "When LGBT [people] are persecuted, raped, mugged, beaten, tortured or killed, IGLHRC is there and makes sure the atrocities do not go unnoticed," Bolour explains. And with three of its board members in Los Angeles, "We would like to see more events [held] here in L.A. ... and we hope to extend our membership and add board members [in Los Angeles]."

Future L.A.-based IGLHRC fundraisers are already in the works. "On May 17, we are going to have a major fundraiser at a fabulous house in the Hills," says Bolour. "I also would like to duplicate the [Club Nur] event at other clubs."

IGLHRC runs on a budget of about \$2 million, says Stephen Goldberg, IGLHRC's director of development and marketing, and the event will provide some much-needed funds for the organization's programs.

"We've had house parties, but this is the first time someone has come to us" with a club event, Goldberg says. "We're so grateful for this opportunity, and we're looking forward to spreading the word about IGLHRC in Los Angeles."

the details

Club Nur
Thursdays
MJ's, 2810 Hyperion Ave.
Silver Lake
\$5 before 10:30 p.m.,
\$8 after.
clubnur.com



Tell Us How You Did It!

BY PETER DELVECCHIO

If you've managed to dump Tina, and keep her dumped, kudos to you! You probably feel like the recipient of a miracle. That's what it felt like for me anyway, and after almost three years clean, it still does. But having received such a magnificent gift—no less than a rebirth, a second chance at getting our lives right—don't we now have a responsibility to "pay it forward?" Having been hauled out of Tina's cesspool, whether by God, a higher power, friends and family, or by a sheer act of our own will, don't we now have an obligation to at least try to throw a lifeline to others still down there treading piss?

One of the easiest and most effective ways to help is to simply share your recovery story with those still struggling. Take a look at the *Big Book* of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA is for meth addicts, too, by the way). It's full of uplifting, often very funny,

first-person accounts of ordinary people beating addiction. Whatever your take on 12-step programs, you can't help but be moved. Recovery stories provide hope and inspiration because they prove to those trying to quit that not only is success really possible, but, just as importantly, that there are many, many paths to victory. It all boils down to this—"I did it, and that means you can, too!"

IN Los Angeles magazine is collecting recovery stories for both posting online and printing in the magazine. So, if you've quit meth and been clean and sober for at least 90 days, won't you please take a moment to share your story with others still suffering? (Or if you know someone who's quit, ask them to do it.) You don't need to give your real name or any other identifying information if you don't want to. You don't need to write a book. Even a few lines will do. I know you're busy, but please think about the gift you received, what it's meant to you and how, for just a few minutes' effort, you can help pass that gift along to others, and maybe even save a life or two.

Please also consider this: The holidays loom, the days are shortening, the economy is tanking, and Prop. 8's passage has reminded us all again just where we still stand, even in supposedly enlightened California.

Unfortunately, 'tis the season for depression and relapse. Your help is most needed right now.

So please, send your story to me at peter@inlamag.com.

Peter DelVecchio is a reporter for IN Los Angeles magazine and an attorney. He is also writing a book about his experiences with meth.



Peter DelVecchio