

Obama

Washington DC, Dec 10, 2008 (CNA).- President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden have officially invited the Lesbian and gay Band Association to march in the Inaugural Parade. One of the association's web sites reports that the group will also march in September as part of the homosexual "Southern Decadence" festival infamous for its public lewd acts.

The Lesbian and Gay Band Association (LGBA) is a network of lesbian and gay bands comprised of concert and marching bands from various American cities.

According to a December 10 press release from the Presidential Inaugural Committee, the group's appearance in the Inaugural Parade on January 20 will mark the first time an "openly LGBT group" has been invited to participate.

"I am honored to invite these talented groups and individuals to participate in the Inaugural Parade," said President-elect Obama. "These organizations embody the best of our nation's history, diversity and commitment to service. Vice President-elect Biden and I are proud to have them join us in the parade."

The main web site of the Lesbian and Gay Band Association hosts a YouTube video reportedly showing 250 of its members marching in the 35th Annual Village Halloween Parade in Greenwich Village in New York City.

The YouTube video, titled "Male Witch Marching Band – Halloween NYC 08," shows a glamorously dressed man followed by two people wearing fairy costumes. They lead a band of people dressed as witches who play the song "Gimme Some Lovin'."

The marchers were attendees at the LGBA's 2008 conference, titled "Deliciously Wicked."

"The weekend more than lived up to its name," the web site states, noting the conference's receptions, parades, performances, and costume ball.

As of Wednesday morning, the web site for the LGBA's 2009 conference in New Orleans, lgba2009.org, describes conference plans, saying "We will also be marching in the Southern Decadence Parade on Sunday, September 6th."

The web site reports that the LGBA conference will be held as part of Southern Decadence and Decafest. The site links to the Southern Decadence festival, which has often been targeted for protest because of its extreme indecency. In 2003, the Atlanta Journal Constitution reported that it had "become routine" for men to flash their genitals and perform public sex acts at the event, which bills itself as "the Gay Mardi Gras."

"The city's wildest neighborhood gets even crazier as the French Quarter is packed for the entire event," the Southern Decadence festival's current web site says. In its Frequently Asked Questions section, the web site tells those with "an interest in the adult film business" that a pornographic filmmaker will be in attendance.

In a statement on its web site, the LGBA said its participation in the Presidential Inaugural will be "truly our chance to make history."

Organizations wishing to participate in the parade reportedly submitted an application to the Armed Forces Inaugural Committee, which assisted the Presidential Inaugural Committee in reviewing applications. Experienced military musicians evaluated the presentation skills of marching bands, musical acts, and drill teams.

In total, 1,382 organizations applied to participate in the Inaugural Parade. Many of the groups approved to march in the parade are high school bands.