

YES, IT'S CUSTOMARY TO START THE FESTIVAL EACH YEAR FROM SCRATCH...



# Funtimes swarm at Clute's festival

by Colette Hutchings  
Battalion Staff  
BUZZZZZZZZ. Swat!  
That's one of the familiar sounds in Clute, home of mass quantities of mosquitoes. So many in fact, the town celebrates its most prolific inhabitant in a festival.

The Second Annual Great Texas Mosquito Festival will be held Friday and Saturday in the Clute Municipal Park.

The festival opens Friday at 5:30 p.m. with an "Anything Goes Parade" led by the "Bug Brigade" — Volkswagens decorated like mosquitoes.

Featured in the festival will be a "Ms. Squito" beauty pageant and mosquito chases as well as "Larvae Land," where most of the children's activities will take place.

A men's "Mr. Mosquito Legs" contest and the "Buzz Off" — a mosquito calling contest is planned as well as a bed race.

And if you have the perfect mosquito ode buzzing around in your head, you can enter the song writing contest.

For competition in the food area, a chili cook-off and the Ice Cream Crank-off is planned.

A "Game of Clute" tournament will be featured and the first-place winner will receive a

\$100 cash prize and the title of mayor of Clute for a day.

Clute "Swat Team" members are trying to produce the world's largest mosquito. A "Name the Mosquito Contest" will be held after the debut of the big bug.

Providing entertainment for the festival are two bands: Asleep at the Wheel and the Lost Highway Band, both scheduled to play at the Street Dance beginning at 8 p.m. Saturday.

So for more fun, buzz on over to Clute. It's located 50 miles south of Houston on Highway 288.

For information on festival activities contact Clute City Hall, at (713) 265-2541.

## Texas has growing population of gays

United Press International  
Texas, which takes pride in rugged image of its lanky boys and oilfield roughnecks, has become a national mecca to 1.5 million homosexuals, giving it the third largest population in the United States.

Gays have made major strides in Texas in the last several years politically, socially and economically — but they say they are beginning to fight what will be the civil rights battle of the 1980s.

A National Gay Leadership conference will open a three-day meeting Friday in Dallas, where gays have made monumental progress in the last several years. The conference will attract about 500 national leaders, including the board of directors of the National Gay Task Force.

It will be the first time the task force board has met outside New York City. New York and California have the largest gay populations.

Task force officials say it is possible to arrive at an exact figure on the number of gays in Texas since many remain "closeted" because a National Gay Rights Bill has not been passed. The group says, however, that the 10 percent yardstick of the Kinsey Report is an accurate measure. Texas has a population of about 15 million, which gay leaders say places the number of gays in the state at about 1.5 million.

Moving from within Texas and without, Houston and Dallas have become the focal point

of the new gay vanguard, with distinct gay communities and lifestyles almost on a par with New York City and Los Angeles.

An estimated 250,000 gays live in Houston, which has the largest homosexual population in the state. The Dallas-Fort Worth area has an estimated gay population of more than 200,000, San Antonio 90,000 and Austin 40,000.

Real gay power remains a phenomenon of the cities because many gays leave rural areas as soon as possible for the relative freedom of an urban environment, especially if they live "open" lifestyles.

Gay leaders say Texas' growing popularity among gays from throughout the nation is not only because of the gay community's strength, but is also attributable to housing, jobs and other factors that have boosted Sun Belt population.

Austin's gay community is politically potent and already has obtained passage of city civil rights ordinances forbidding discrimination on the basis of

sexual preference in housing, employment and public accommodations.

In San Antonio, gay leaders say the city is so comfortable for homosexuals — with virtually no repression to serve as a focal point for change — that there isn't a great deal of push for anyone to come out of the closet.

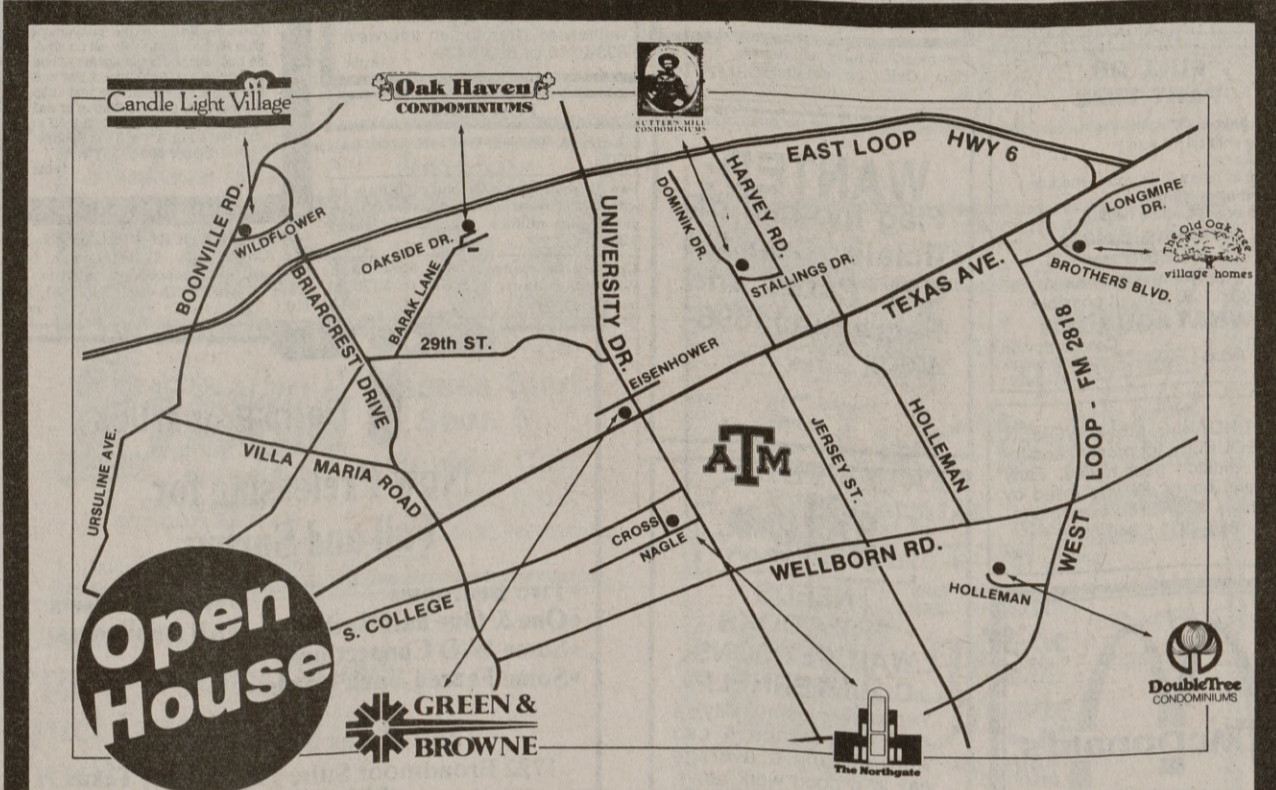
Don Baker, 35, a Vietnam veteran and president of the Dallas Gay Alliance, says:

"We've come a long way. In the last 10 years Dallas has come from the point of zero to almost full-fledged development. We have one of the most organized communities in the country."

Larry Bagneris, 34, president of the Houston Gay Political Caucus, says:

"We've got momentum. We've got economic clout. Houston also has a powerful gay business community which has risen up to service the community. The whole thing is like a spiral."

"We are an explosive force in Houston politics. We put together a tough machine."



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**2nd Annual GREAT TEXAS MOSQUITO FESTIVAL**

CLUTE, TEXAS Friday, Aug. 13th & Saturday, Aug. 14th

"It's Just Swat the World's Been Waitin' For!"

- Saturday Night Street Dance — featuring — ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL and the LOST HIGHWAY BAND
- "Ms. Squito" Beauty Contest
- "Mr. Mosquito Legs" Contest
- Children's Carnival
- Anything Goes Parade
- And much, much more!...

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Saturday — 9 a.m. to 1 a.m.

**Festival Admission:**  
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\$7<sup>00</sup> Family (Kids 6 yrs. and under, or 65 yrs. and over, FREE)