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GAY COMMUNITY MOURNS DEATH OF LOCAL DRAG LEGEND

OIA Newswire

CINCINNATI - One of the Queen City's most famous and beloved drag personalities passed away. Miss Peaches Laverne, who held the title of "Cincinnati's Oldest Female Impersonator" for longer than anyone can remember, died on Nov. 24 after being hospitalized for complications from diabetes and kidney dialysis. She was 79 years old.

Miss Peaches, whose real name was Peter Thompson, began her drag career in 1947 at Newport's Varga Club. She had been a fixture in the area's gay scene ever since. In the early 1980s, the "grand lady," as many remember her, frequently appeared at Badlands in fabulous custom-made gowns and jewelry. For the past 15 years, she acted as cocktail hostess for shows at The Subway, where she delighted crowds by singing her saucy rendition of "Red Hot Nuts."

In recognition of her years of work doing shows to support many local charities, Peaches was named Grand Marshal of the Cincinnati Pride Parade in 1999 and 2000 and was given the ceremonial position of "Queen Mum" in every parade since.

Many people held Peaches as the last of the true grand female illusionists. In her later years, she was often mistaken for Barbara Bush, with her rhinestone-studded cane and head of perfectly coiffured gray hair. She gave her last performance this past May at The Court's "Glammy Awards."

During Peaches "work career," she was an x-ray tech at an East Side hospital. Michael Chanak, who knew the late diva for more than 26 years, remembers a friend telling of being

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National Headlines

- > Drag Queen Pleads Guilty in Man's Death
- > Jury Gets Case in Gay Sex Abuse Trial of Priest
- > Studies Show Being Gay Has No Effect on Parenting Abilities
- > HRC Conference to Inspire, Strengthen Black Gay Students
- > Gay Democrat Org. Endorses Dean for DNC Chair
- > 2005 Gay Buying Power

attack.

"As he was being admitted, he looked up from the gurney, and recognized the face of Peaches. Of course, being glad to see her, he exclaimed 'Peaches!' But Peaches, in a low masculine voice, said, "Honey, my name is Pete here," Chanak said.

Chanak interviewed Peaches several times over the years for the local radio program "Alternating Currents."

"I was always struck by her hospitality. She knew everyone and was without a doubt the First Lady of Cincinnati. I consider having known her to be a true blessing," he said.
[12/2/04]

Estimated at \$610B

> Poll: Gay Marriage, Abortion More Important Than Iraq to Voters

> Ky. Jury Suggests 30 Years for Gay Man's Killer

> Bush Renews Support for Gay Marriage Ban

> Rare STD Potentially Prominent Among Gay Men

> Mayor Faces Charges for Gay Marriages

> Debate Flares Over Teaching Kids Tolerance for Gays

> House Urges Reversal Recruiting Decision Despite Military's Gay Ban

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> Gay-Marriage Amendment Put on Kan. Ballot

> New Vacation Planner Highlights Gay Ft. Lauderdale

> HHS Argues for AIDS Research Whistleblower Protection

> Summit Highlights Anti-Gay Beliefs Among Religious Blacks

> Report: AIDS on the Rise Among Blacks

> PBS Stations to Air Episode With Lesbians, TV

> Bill to Fix Utah Gay-Marriage Ban Loses

> Spelling Sticks With Criticism of PBS for Including Gay Couples

> Utah Amending Gay-Marriage Ban Problems

> Gay Rights Group Challenging Marriage Ban

> Ky. Man Gets Manslaughter in Gay Killing

International Headlines

> Canadian Muslim Group Supports Gay Rights

> Gay Rights Activist in 'Who's Who'

- > Mexico's AIDS Director's U.S. Visit Builds Bridges
- > Canada Lawmakers Craft Gay-Marriage Bill
- > British Gay Lawmaker Reveals HIV Status
- > Anglicans Abroad Say Apology for Gay Bishop Not Enough
- > Gay Human Rights Campaigner Arrested
- > Gays Among Honored Holocaust Victims
- > Number of People Using HIV Drugs Improves
- > Spain Rejects Pope's Criticism of Gay-Friendly Gov't
- > Group Aims to Stop Gay Marriage Bill
- > Spanish Gays Upset Over Reversed Church Policy
- > Gay Games Stretches Strength with Sydney Mardi Gras
- > Cardinal Wrong to Say Charter Shouldn't Include Gays, Group Says
- > Germany, France, South Africa Bid for 2010 Gay Games
- > Spanish Gays Welcome Change in Church Policy
- > Livingstone Defends Qaradawi, Despite Outburst
- > Russian AIDS Epidemic Not Just Gay Problem
- > Women's Flag Football Championship Set for February
- > New Website Hopes to Bring Gay Travel to Manchester
- > New AIDS Campaign Uses Animated Characters
- > Tsunami Hits Thai Gay Resort Community
- > HRC Counters Pope's Gay Family Remarks
- > Pope Reiterates Church's Anti-Gay Position
- > BBC Airs Springer Musical Over Protests



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