



Despite A Tough Economy, The Party Must Go On

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February 27, 2009

The tough economy hasn't stopped the celebrations that are underway for the 2009 Winter Party Festival in Miami, Miami Beach and Broward County, benefiting the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

The emphasis on family events continued this year, with a LGBT Family Picnic that was held at the TY Park in Hollywood last Sunday and a youth skating event geared toward the 13 to 20-year-old crowd at the Gold Coast Roller Rink in Ft. Lauderdale.

But don't feel left out on the fun if you haven't participated, because the legendary parties that have made the Winter Party Festival famous continue this weekend, along with several other events. You still have time to buy some tickets at a discounted price.

Friday is booked with events all night, from shopping sprees sponsored by the Diesel and Kiehl's stores on South Beach, to a happy hour cocktail at Lincoln Road's Halo Bar from 6:00p.m. to 9:00p.m. 20 percent of the proceeds from the two shopping events will go to the Task Force and free cocktails will be served.

The main Winter Party Beach Party event on Miami Beach starts at noon Sunday, March 1st with DJ Tracy Young spinning her signature house sound on the 12th Street beach.

Other events this weekend include the Mercury Rising Party at Downtown Miami's Parkwest Nightclub Saturday night, a Woman's Jazz Brunch at the Van Dyke on Lincoln Road, and the Red Eye afterhours party for those hardcore partiers who can't get enough Monday morning.

The Winter Party Festival benefits the National Gay And Lesbian Task Force's and local advocacy and service groups in South Florida.

Many non-profit organizations nationwide have been suffering because of the economy, but the Winter Party is one of the Task Force's biggest fundraisers. The Task Force reports that the festival, along with annual Miami Recognition Dinner have raised close to \$2 million in funds for local LGBT organizations to date.

Most discounted tickets to events have to be bought at the Surfcomber Doubletree Hotel Welcome Center before 8a.m. the day of the event.