Why You Should Join GNO Pagan Pride: A Listicle.

We’ve come to the time of year when every nonprofit around is scouring the city to find that precious, fleeting, and crucial resource: Board members. These are the folks who dedicate themselves to a cause and an organization, and put their money (and their time, energy, love) where their mouth is by becoming its most committed and involved volunteers. I am the last remaining original board member of the Greater New Orleans Pagan Pride Project, and after seven years, I’m retiring at the end of the year. And I’m here to tell you why you should take my place:

1. Friendships. The PPP board works closely together, and we bond hard. People I have met serving on the board have become some of my closest friends. The friendships I already had prior to it have deepened and grown. When a group of people work hard, putting their diverse talents to work, building mutual respect for a common cause, it’s powerful. I am so grateful to have had their trust all these years, and to call this amazing group my friends.
2. Community connections. If you’re looking for a place in the Pagan community, this might be it. We don’t worship or practice together, but we’re in it for each other, and our people. And, since the goal is to get the different groups within the magickal community to work together, you end up forming strong connections within each of them, plus with the shop owners, teachers, solitaries, and others who cross (walk?) our paths. I feel so connected to the entire network of Pagans in our area that I know I’ll still have a place within that community even when I’m no longer on the board.
3. Learning experiences. You will learn. So much. You will learn how to throw a festival, how to navigate city bureaucracy, how to get a diverse team to work together, how to find the people you need when you need them, how to fundraise, how to run a nonprofit, how to troubleshoot crises as they develop, and, as a special added bonus, how to deal diplomatically with crazy people. You will be a better person for this experience.
4. Resume builder. As long as you’re comfortable being out of the broom closet on your resume, nothing gets an employer’s attention quicker than serving on a nonprofit board.
5. Fun! This is seriously a great time. Yes, it’s a lot of responsibility, and can sometimes get stressful, but for the most part, you’re hanging out with your friends and planning parties and talking about spirituality. We’re great at entertaining each other and taking the time to enjoy each other’s company. And then at the end, there’s a festival!
6. The satisfaction of contribution. Very little is as rewarding as looking around you at the festival that you and your friends created, knowing it couldn’t have happened if not for what you brought to the table. Everyone has skills or talents that they can lend that make each festival special (plus we’d love to expand beyond just doing the annual festival). But there have been so many years when someone has said to me, “I’m so glad this is here. I’ve been looking for something, but I didn’t know what.” It is such a great feeling knowing that you can give that to people—to *your* people.

I’m not going to lie. It’s a lot of work. And it’s a two-year commitment. But it’s a labor of love, and it’s so incredibly worthwhile. If you don’t want to make a two-year board commitment, try out one year on either our festival committee or our fundraising committee to get your feet wet. I promise you, it’s worth it.