

# Plaine Kern Unmasked?

THE DEN OF MUSES -- Who is Plaine Kern, the man who reigns as Krewe du Vieux's 1999 royalty? We know him as the long-time, long-suffering, long-winded captain emeritus of the Krewe du Vieux. The beleaguered, bewildered, beloved leader of Carnival's ragtag krewe of satirists and satyrs. But who is the man behind the mask?

Many have called Plaine a legend, a mythical, mystical being who rises each year like a phoenix from the ashes of parades past to gather together the diverse, deviant, multitudinous, multi-attitudinous hordes of the Krewe du Vieux to lead them through the streets of the French Quarter in Carnival's most splendid and sordid display of creative license and licentiousness.

For ten years, Plaine was the captain, ring leader, taskmaster, agitator, headman of the krewe. He was the man at the helm, the guide, conductor, the spark plug and driving force. "I finally ran out of gas," was his explanation of his sudden and totally unexpected tenth annual resignation, which the krewe, in another annual tradition, refused to believe.

When the krewe finally roused themselves from their stupor, induced by disbelief and other substances, they realized that their revered captain really had flown the coop. Literally, that is. Plaine Kern was gone! Nowhere to be found. The krewe, broken-hearted and adrift, pulled itself together and chose new leaders by the time-honored "whoever's in the bathroom gets elected" method. But it still wasn't the same without Plaine. He was their inspiration, their guru, their third eye when they were seeing double. However, he had made it "plaine" he would not be induced, seduced or reduced to being Captain again. What was the krewe to do?

After further deliberation and

libations, the Krewe du Vieux came up with the obvious solution: King Plaine. Electrified and fortified, the krewe set out to search for Plaine. There were reports of sightings, as well as visions and some hallucinations. Several witnesses swore they had seen him in Mexico disguised as a bimbo selling hats on the beach to pay his/her? bar tab. Others said they had spotted him in the French Quarter, trying to get the mules and buggies to line up in parade formation. After a worldwide search and dedicated bar-hopping, Plaine was found at the Den of Muses, a vast, drafty warehouse deep in the Bywater. He was barricaded behind cases of Dixie Beer and Barq's, settled in on his barcalounger with a Dixie in one fist and the remote in the other. The krewe discovered him when he went out in search of a Lucky Dog and followed him back to his refuge.

When informed of his elevation to Krewe du Vieux sovereignty, he cursed mightily and refused the honor. After much plying with food and drink (well, actually, drink and drink), the krewe was starting to wear him down. Finally, after being told that several others, including Louis Armstrong, Marie Laveau, Dutch Morial and Jean Lafitte, had turned down the Krewe's offer, and being reassured that he was the absolute last choice, the bottom of the barrel, Plaine relented. He mumbled something, which the Krewe interpreted as "ok." He has, however, refused all further requests for interviews, photo opportunities and public comment, stating, "I've already said too much."

And so, on the night of January 30, Plaine Kern will be riding the king's float in the thirteenth annual Krewe du Vieux extravaganza, even if the Krewe has to blindfold and sedate him, drag him kicking and screaming to the parade. Thank you, Plaine.

# Interview With the New Captain

MID-SIN-CITY -- In a *Hustler*-esque journalistic scoop, *Monde du Merde* tracked the new Captain of Krewe du Vieux down in his hot tub, where he was pretending to be horribly overworked while interviewing potential interns to work under him. Our alert reporter noted several blue dresses tossed carelessly around the tub perimeter, along with empty champagne bottles and other party debris.

The new captain would give out only his initials, which are thought to be the call letters (or call girls) of a west coast radio station. The transcription of the subsequent interview includes only those segments which could be printed in a family publication like this.

MDM: How did you get elected Captain?

KGCT: I went to the bathroom at the wrong time during our first Krewe meeting of the year.

MDM: Why would you take the job of Captain of Krewe du Vieux?

KGCT: It could be a stepping stone to the White House, or at least the Governor's Mansion. Also, Plaine Kern said it makes you a babe magnet.

MDM: What's the hardest part of the job?

KGCT: Drinking heavily at all the sub-krewe meetings, and beating off all the women.

MDM: Do you have any particular famous saying as your motto in this job?

KGCT: Yes: "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." I absolutely intend to get powerfully corrupted.

MDM: What is your main goal for the parade this year?

KGCT: To make it all the way to the end without passing out.