



drunken risi who simmied up the sides of a stupor, holding a martini glass. "It had the drunk stumble down," Julie Jeakle said.

At the hopping Solstice post party, revelers people-watched among food stands, live music and a caged beer garden. Some parade veterans called this year's gathering a serious improvement on previous years. "This is the best one yet," Katy Sanborn said.

Inside the beer garden, Steve Town recalled participating in the first Solstice parade, a 15-person event that celebrated the birthday of his friend Michael Gonzalez.

"The idea was just to gather his friends and have a party," Mr. Town said of Mr. Gonzalez, who died of AIDS several years ago. "(Michael) just loved life, and that's what we're doing, celebrating life."

Paul Wolden, a bearded man drinking a beer and wearing a hat brimmed with sunflowers, agreed. "People need to know that we're not all bad. People have a good side. This is it."

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SPENCER MARLEY / NEWS-PRESS PHOTOS

Rasheed Joiner flips for the Solstice Parade — literally, as he performs backflips down State Street during the annual procession celebrating the longest day of the year. Behind Mr. Joiner is Marc McGinnes as a red-tailed hawk, taking a more gingerly approach as he strolls along on stilts.



A flight of little children glide peacefully, far left, while a pack of paparazzi — Brooks Institute of Photography students, who say the Michael Jackson verdict destroyed their livelihood — attack amateur shutterbug Ismo Rakkolainen, above. Meanwhile, a band belts out the day's theme song, "Wild Thing," left.