





**THE SHOPPING CART PARADES**

Although we can now march in the streets of Fresno, that wasn't always the case.

For decades before 1991 it was risky, even dangerous, for LGBTQ people to be out of the closet, let alone have an organized march.

The Shopping Cart Parades was a tradition started in the mid 1980's at the Metro Bar and continued at the Red Lantern.

LGBTQ patrons would gather anything on 4 wheels... shopping carts, wagons, laundry carts...anything they could use. They would decorate them and create miniature floats to parade through the bar.

Community members, local drag queens and the Imperial Dove Court would all participate.

Some pushed carts, others were passengers.

It was a contest and there were winners and prizes. Decorations could be anything from balloons and crepe paper to chandeliers!

These "floats" were the counterparts of what was already happening in cities like San Francisco and Los Angeles.

It was what we could do in Fresno, and how we showed our Pride.

The Shopping Cart Parade was a resistance to the environment that made it unsafe to march.

...and people in Fresno may not have let us march outside, but it didn't stop us from marching inside.

