

## Reel good



Jack Reavley, left, and Bob Claunch are the stars of "Bob and Jack's 52-Year Adventure."  
MAD STU MEDIA

### Quality of this year's gay film festival is tied to its growing stature.

By Rick Bentley and Donald Munro  
The Fresno Bee

**T**he biggest problem facing the board for Fresno's 17th annual Reel Pride gay and lesbian film festival was figuring out how to show as many quality productions as possible during the five-day run of this year's event.

"This year was a particularly strong year for films," says Jon Carroll, the festival's director. "We looked at a lot of movies that, at the end of the day, we could not screen during the festival because we just did not have the space."

The festival opens Wednesday night and runs through Sunday. Films will be screened at the Tower Theatre and the Starline.

This year's event will present 20 screenings of feature films, documentaries and short films. Carroll adds that the wealth of quality films being shown is because of the reputation the local film festival now has with filmmakers. During Reel Pride's early years, the better films and documentaries weren't always made available to the festival.

"Now we are told by filmmakers and distributors that they are certainly

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going to show their films at our festival," Carroll says.

The film festival runs only five days, compared to the 10 or 11 days for other similar festivals. That means the Reel Pride staff is able to fill each screening slot with strong productions from Wednesday through Sunday. Because other film festivals have to fill so many time slots, they tend to schedule their top films at 8 p.m. each day.

"We tell people that they should not think of films that are scheduled earlier or later in the day during our festival as being of less quality. They are all strong," Carroll says.

The festival director warns fans to buy tickets in advance to the films they want to see. Many films, especially those scheduled for 8 p.m., tend to sell out during the festival.

There is a long list of casts and crews connected with the festival films scheduled to be at the screenings.

Bob Claunch and Jack Reavley, the couple featured in the documentary "Bob and Jack's 52-Year Adventure," are set to be at the screening 5 p.m. Sunday.

"How could we not? We feel honored to be chosen for such a successful festival so close to home," Claunch, an 80-year-old Los Angeles resident, says in a news release. "With everything going on across our state with the right to serve movement and with gay marriage, we hope people are encouraged by our story. We didn't have it easy, but we didn't give up."