

TGSF • The Channel •
Transgender San Francisco
(formerly ETVC)

79SF at 9SF Coronation!



The Channel

TGSF/ETVC, Inc., a non-profit corporation, is a non-sexual, membership based organization serving the educational, social, and recreational needs of gender-gifted people, their spouses, significant others, family members, friends, and professionals in the helping services. For details about TGSF/ETVC programs, membership, article submission guidelines and classified ads, please write to TGSF/ETVC Secretary, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486.

ExCom 1998-99 Officers

(Fiscal Year: May 1 - April 30)

President Leslie Bailey
 Vice President Lulu Blau
 Secretary Veronica Smith
 Treasurer Lisa Ronald
 Education Nancy Cupps / Juana Smith
 Outreach Sandra Brewer
 Social Nicole Cook / Evette RoqueLaurie

Secretary's Report

Membership as of September 6, 1998 242
 Total Fiscal Year 1997-98 Membership 327
 New Memberships this year 39

Treasurer's Report

Est. Account Balance as of October, 1998 \$12,500.00
 (Includes the "Home for TGSF/ETVC" Fund)

TGSF/ETVC is a non-profit corporation. *Donations to TGSF/ETVC are TAX DEDUCTIBLE on both Federal and California income tax returns. Talk to your tax advisor for details.*

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Newsletter Staff

Editor and Advertising Ayme Michelle Kantz
 Contributing Photographers Telzey Adams, Nicole Cook
 Veronica & Juana Smith and Jamie Fey Fenton

Ad Rates

	Per Issue	Six Months	Per Year
Business Card (3-1/2 x 2)	\$ 25	\$125	\$ 250
4x5	\$ 60	\$300	\$ 600
Full Page	\$100	\$500	\$1000

Personal ads from TGSF/ETVC members: \$10 for up to 40 words per issue. We will not accept ads with a sexual objective. Ad deadlines are the 15th of every month. Send ad copy and check or money order to TGSF/ETVC, Advertising Dept., PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486

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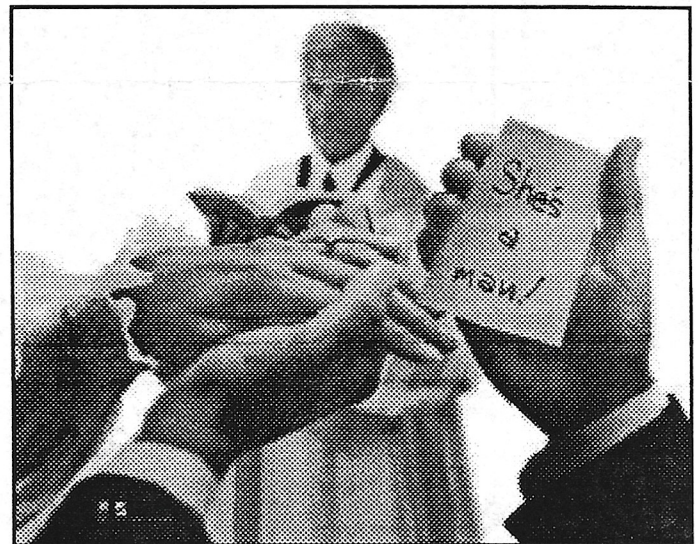
FROM THE EDITOR...

Recently, a networking company called Network Associates, Inc. ran an ad in *PC Week*, that was titled: "It's nice to know about something before it becomes a problem." The picture in the ad (see below) shows a pair of hands from a bride and a groom, along with a pastor in the background. Someone (presumably the groom's best man) holds a card towards the groom. The card says: "She's a man!" The copy ends: "It might just save you from an embarrassing situation."

I was furious! Needless to say I fired off a few salvos at this corporation and cc'd GLAD and the HRC as well! As a transsexual woman who is herself about to be married, the ad implied that I would be so shallow and deceitful towards my intended husband as to cause him "embarrassment" later by marrying me; as if the only way I could get married at all is to resort to lying about my transsexuality. I would think a bride and groom (or any couple about to be joined together) would've discussed issues such as these before they got to the altar. This ad's approach is hurtful to me and clearly classifies transsexual women as unworthy of the trust embodied within the sacrament of marriage, as if only "normal" heterosexual couples are entitled to complete honesty. How arrogant! How outrageous!

Silicon Valley companies are known for their support and promotion of diversity within the workplace, but this company's shallow attempt in cleverness at promoting their products by the use of this stereotype is offensive and misleading. Obviously their advertising agency is unclear on the concept of gender identity in

Continued on Page 3



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Leslie Bailey

Cotillion '99

We have three months till Cotillion '99 is upon us and I hope everyone is making plans to attend. Saturday February 6th, 1999 will again find the San Francisco Design Center Galleria transformed, this time into a South Pacific transgendered paradise. This marks our Fifteenth annual pageant and I think we are on the brink of making this one of the premier gender events. We have a marquee city and an elegant venue. We are building on all the fine efforts over the last fourteen years which has seen this event start in the back room of the *Chez Molet* and grow to fill the *California Club* and *The Russian Center*. This event can be what it is today because of all the efforts of a lot of dedicated people over the years.

So what is the Cotillion? It is a great show. It is a public relation vehicle. It is a pageant where we select someone to represent us for the ensuing year. Although it may look to some like a "Miss Whatever" contest, the judging criterion as outlined in the Judge's Handbook (largely the work of Jazz Star) puts a preponderance of emphasis on the contestant's ability to articulate gender issues and to represent our community as a spokesperson and as a quality individual. Well over half of the contestant's score is derived from the interview with the judges that occurs a week before the show and from the final nerve wracking question at the end of the show.

But, more than anything, the Cotillion is a Pride Event. It is a chance to be 300 or 400 or more strong, together, beautiful, elegant, at ease and confident. It is a great event for someone to come to for their first venture out of the closet. It is a very safe location. It is a great event for the well seasoned. It is a chance to wear the best outfit in your closet. But don't stay home just because you do not have a new formal to wear, being there is what's important. Being in community is what it is all about.

So where can you get your ticket? And when? Tickets will be available by the middle of November. You can buy them at all official events or check the hot line (415/564-3246) or the December *Channel* for information on locations around the greater Bay Area where they will be on sale. You can also contact myself at 510/527-5398 or via email at SBalbany@slip.net, or other members of the ExCom. We are nudging the prices up by \$5 a ticket to help avoid the shortfall that we experienced last year. Prices for the 1999 Cotillion are \$35 premium, \$30 regular and \$40 at the door general admission. Those interested in competing as Contestants should call Lulu (415/821-6509) or myself soon.

Significant Other Support - East Bay

Questions or concerns about your partner's crossdressing? Please call Julie at (925) 937-8432, e-mail Julie39@ibm.net or write to: Julie Freeman, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885.



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From The Editor...

Continued from Page 2

general and transsexuality in particular, and the issues surrounding them. Please contact Network Associates and voice your displeasure: Phone 800-332-9966; web: <http://www.nai.com>.

NLGLA Elects First TG Co-Chair

In the news, our own Melinda Whiteway made history at the 1998 National Lesbian and Gay Law Association's Lavender Law Conference in Boston as she became the first transgendered female co-chair of the organization.

NLGLA is a national association of lawyers, judges and other legal professionals, law students and affiliated lesbian and gay legal organizations. NLGLA sponsors regional and local events throughout the U.S. and has become a national voice for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgenderers in the legal profession. It was established in 1988 and has been an affiliate of the American Bar Association since 1992 - the only queer law association to have such an affiliation. Our heartiest congratulations go out to you, Melinda!!

Good Reads

Lot's of good, thought-provoking stuff in this issue! Check out Mr. Les Feinberg's article (page 12) penned in the aftermath of Matthew Shepard's death and recent incidents in New York that concerns us all; also two very different perspectives of last month's Southern Comfort conference in Atlanta, one from our very own Veronica Smith. And while the input from our membership has dropped off somewhat, we did get an interesting letter from Ms. Bowman concerning her controversial donation, as well as a new report from the Gender Skybox courtesy of long-time member, Erin Souza.

Got Something To Say?

Want to get involved? Not getting some information you need? Got a gripe? Got a compliment? Contact the hotline or email an officer, join a Committee, present a seminar, attend a Social or just write a letter. Last time I checked, the US Postal Service was still working reasonably well, and it costs a pittance to keep that PO Box filled 'ya know (although September's election results clearly showed a lot of you still overlook what a 32 cent stamp will get you these days).

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ExCOM MEETING MINUTES

The monthly meeting of ETVc's Executive Committee was in San Francisco on October 4, 1998 at 5:00 p.m. In attendance were President Bailey, Vice President Blau, Secretary Smith, Outreach Chair Brewer, Social Co-Chairs Cook and RoqueLaurie, Education Co-Chairs Cupps and Smith. Guests included Debbie and Chelsea. Treasurer Ronald was absent. The Meeting was called to order at 5:30.



Communications and Announcements: Governor Wilson signed AB 1999.

Leslie and others attended the ISE's Coronation on September 26. There would be a TG documentary on A&E network October 5. There was to be a memorial service for Margo Bell. Nancy would send flowers. Evette reported that the Community Center Project would show its plans on October 8. LYRIC was having a Resource Fair on October 10. A Cotillion planning meeting would be held October 11 in Sebastopol. A planning meeting for the Gender Conference was scheduled for October 12. There was to be a planning meeting for the Millennium March on October 14. Lulu announced that Dame Edna was doing a benefit performance for Theatre Rhinoceros.

Old Business: None.

September's Minutes: Veronica confessed two errors: in Outreach, she meant DVC (for Diablo Valley College) rather than DVG; and under New Business, the correct bill was AB 1999, not 1029.

Lulu and Leslie were unable to read their copies of the Minutes in RTF, and were forced to read them as they appeared in the actual e-mail rather than in the attached file. In the future, Veronica will attach the Minutes in RTF and in Microsoft Word.

Lulu was confused about the designation of officer duties in the Retreat part of the Minutes. Veronica responded that the discussion of officer duties had been part of the discussion about Standing Rules. But Lulu pointed out that each officer's responsibilities had not *officially* been determined and she wanted more distinct definitions. Juana agreed with Lulu, and moved that each officer would have her official duties outlined and presented by the December meeting. Lulu seconded the motion and it was unanimously carried. With these corrections and resolution, Nicole moved for the Minutes to be approved. Juana seconded the motion and it was unanimously carried. Leslie suggested that each officer e-mail her developing outline for the Standing Rules.

President: Leslie had two checks to deal with: the California Dreamin' check and the Janet Bowman check. It was quickly determined to give \$150 each to RGA and DVG. There was consid-

erably more discussion about what to do with the Janet Bowman check. The ExCom agreed that Janet's check and offer had initially not been given appropriate consideration. Sandra pointed out, however, that the offer's discussion had been under *New Business*, at the very end of the August four-and-a-half hour meeting in Livermore when the temperature was 106. But even though it had previously deserved more discussion, some thought that it was too late to do anything about it now. Nevertheless, Veronica urged for the check to be returned with a thank-you note to Janet. Veronica wanted it publicly and clearly noted that Janet's check had had absolutely no impact on ExCom's decision-making process. But guest Chelsea offered that nearly 70 percent of the membership did not even vote, so they probably did not care about the check. And although Leslie agreed that it should initially have been more thoroughly discussed, she was comfortable in her certainty that it had not affected the name change process one iota, she had already publicly commented on it, and frankly she thought it was time to move on. But Veronica moved for the ExCom to vote on the subject anyway. Juana seconded the motion and the ExCom unanimously resolved to vote on the issue. However, the actual vote on the issue was not unanimous. Four voted to keep the check, three voted to return it and one officer abstained. The check was kept.

Vice President: Sharon Durand has agreed to direct the Cotillion. Trauma and Birdy said they would help (although they have other commitments), and the theme will be South Pacific. Leslie had the contract for the hall. Veronica had brought 100 flyers advertising the Cotillion to the Southern Comfort Conference (SCC) and placed them among all the other advertisements for upcoming TG events. Nancy expressed disappointment with the brief content of the flyer for several reasons: it did not contain a description or pictures of last year's event and did not contain any of the detailed suggestions she had e-mailed to Leslie and Lulu two weeks before SCC. Some of Nancy's suggestions to convince people to come to SF in early February were: the favorable weather in the Bay Area compared with much of the U.S. at that time; a summary of major attractions from Napa to Carmel that would provide additional incentive to spend a week in Northern California when attending the Cotillion; and a mention of some other TG-friendly places to visit while in SF. Nancy believed a great opportunity to sell tickets at the country's largest TG convention had been missed. Some of the SCC attendees would travel across the country if given sufficient reason to do so. Nancy appreciated Ayme's efforts to assemble the flyer on short notice. Lulu lamented the lack of a press secretary.

Secretary: Membership had become flat with 242 and 39 new as compared to 285 with 50 new as of last year's October 12 meeting. Veronica thanked the Cooks (especially Debbie) very much for taking care of the newsletter mailing while she was out of town.

Treasurer: Again Leslie reported for the absent Lisa. The Treasury had about \$12,500.

Continued on Pg. 5


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Meeting Minutes...

Continued from Page 4

Education: Attendance for Dr. Ousterhout's presentation on September 12th was half of what Nancy hoped for despite extensive advertising. Equipment and room rental expenses plus advertising exceeded donations and resulted in a net loss of about \$100. Nancy expected a better turnout at the October 17th seminar featuring Dr. Meltzer. For the November seminar, Nancy planned to feature wig care and hair styling. She was looking for a stylist who could provide advice on how to style men's hair so that it could easily be restyled in a feminine way, and was seeking names of stylists she could contact.

Outreach: Amy Woolridge had returned to organize the Pacific Center and was having a potluck. Sandra had referred to the Imperial Court System a request for a Latina TG for Balboa Teen Help Line. Sandra dispersed copies of Valerie and Toni's letter, and her Outreach engagements.

Social: The Cooks had been very busy. They had distributed tickets, obtained the liquor license, and acquired material for Halloween Party, besides collecting and mailing the newsletter for the absent Secretary. Juana wanted to know how many hotels profited by having members stay at them and she wanted this information to be given to the hotels. In other words, she wanted ETVC to start exerting leverage on establishments that profit from ETVC. Nicole considered having a cleavage contest in November since August's legs contest had been so much fun. Veronica thought there definitely should be hormone-free categories (and she wouldn't be against drug testing, either). November's mid-month would be on Wednesday the 11th and the end-month social would be on the 19th because of Thanksgiving. And December's socials were scheduled for the 9th and 17th.

New Business: The Miss SGA contest would be on November 7 at Joseph's. Toni and Valerie were to attend a counseling conference in San Diego. They wanted to include their survey in the newsletter mailing. They would cover any extra postage. Veronica suggested that the results be published in the newsletter to encourage member participation. Leslie moved that the survey would be included in the mailing, Sandra seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. Lulu led a discussion about door charges. She thought they should be publicized. Sandra wanted to call them contributions. Lulu also wanted the newsletter to cover functions outside ETVC. And she wanted the Cotillion information to be put on the web. Leslie, Evette and Sandra agreed to work the Halloween Party door. Nancy was to work the door at the November social. Lulu will work the door at the December social.

Next ExCom Meetings: Leslie's on November 8 at 3:00. And Lulu's on December 6 at 3:00. At approximately 8:00, Nancy moved to adjourn the meeting, Nicole seconded and motion was unanimously passed.

Gender Services

Wilhelmina Beins, MA
Gender Transition Consultant

(415) 381-9480

TRANNYFEST!

Transgender and Transgenre Cinema Film Festival

We're back! Come see gender celebrated at the second annual Tranny Fest: Transgender & Transgenre Cinema Film Festival, this year co-presented by Frameline, Film Arts Foundation, Good Vibrations, Community United Against Violence, Tenderloin AIDS Resource Center, and over twenty other Bay Area organizations.

Tranny Fest showcases films and videos on the sweet complexity, diversity and sex appeal of Transgender and Transsexual lives. Last year Tranny Fest premiered over 30 films and drew more than 2,000 movie-goers. With its "Feel the Love" romantic cinema theme, this year's Tranny Fest promises to be a one-day mega-gender celluloid extravaganza organized by Festival Directors, Producer/Director, Christopher Lee and Producer/Arts Attorney, Alison Austin.

True to its multiracial, multicultural and multi-genre vision, Tranny Fest showcases films which portray the rich mix of transgender lives in every conceivable genre and style. Lee and Austin guarantee that Tranny Fest '98 will live up to its reputation as a "finger-snapping, groin-bumping, tear-jerking, heartwarming, gut-bustin' mix of experimental, documentary, drama and pornographic films." This year's cinematic program includes films and videos screening in five different programs. These programs include: the fabulous Machiko Saito's *Femme TV*, Ray Rea's *Special*, Christopher Lee's hot and sexy porno, *Alley of the Tranny Boys*, Shoshana Rosenfeld's *Scent uva Butch*, Shamiran Samano's two brilliant films, *PLAY* and *EAST*, Leslie's *Mah's Estrofemme*, a video chronicle of the notorious punk dyke band *Tribe 8*, as well as Marla Leech's retro clip show *Tranny TV*, and Mirha-Soleil Ross' *Gendertrouble*, plus many more. At Tranny Fest, Transsexual and Transgendered filmmakers take center stage. They reclaim the celluloid medium with integrity, and seduce, flirt with, and beguile us with their courageous images of strength, beauty and self-definition. If you attend one independent film festival this year, make it Tranny Fest; come "Feel The Love" Saturday, November 21, at The Victoria Theater. Advance all-show passes, \$35.00, will be available at Good Vibrations, San Francisco and Berkeley.

Many of Tranny Fest's directors, producers, and stars will grace the Tranny Fest Schmooze Fest reception held Thursday, November 19, 6:30-9pm at The Chat House, 139 8th Street (at Minna St.). A Tranny Fest panel discussion with both filmmakers and movie stars entitled, "With Our Own Eyes" will be held at Good Vibrations, 1210 Valencia St. (at 23rd St.) on Friday night, November 20, 8:30-10pm. The "official" post Tranny Fest dance party will be at Club Jaded, at the Transmission Theater, 314 - 11th St. (at Folsom).

Christopher Lee and Alison Austin, Festival Directors
Elise Hurwitz, Technical Director
Yosenio V. Lewis, Key Coordinator
Ahimsa Timoteo Bodhrán, Volunteer Coordinator
Courtney Atinsky, Associate Coordinator
Wickie Stamps, Publicity/Media Coordinator

Where and When:

Saturday, November 21, 1998, noon to midnight
Victoria Theatre, 2961 16th Street (at Mission)
Contact: 415-339-TOOL (8665)
Website: <http://members.aol.com/trannyfest>
Email: TrannyFest@aol.com

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 8:00 PM

THE 1998 MISS SGA PAGEANT

Well it is time once again for the Miss SGA pageant in Sacramento. Joseph's will host this years event. Tickets are \$3.00 for members and \$5.00 for non-members. Want to be a contestant? Here is your chance to strut your stuff on stage. You can join SGA as late as the day of the event and still be a contestant. Joseph's is located at 1454 Del Paso Ave. (at Arden) in Sacramento.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 3:00PM

NOVEMBER EXCOM MEETING

The November ExCom meeting will be at Leslie's residence, in Berkeley. Everyone is welcome and even encouraged to attend. we will be discussing the tasks that need to be done in the near future, and assigning those tasks to the attendees. Email or call me (Nicole) and I will arrange for you to get directions. nicole@tgforum.com or (707) 824-0860.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 8:00PM

MID-MONTH SOCIAL

Well we did something different last month, and I am going to have to go with something off the shelf this month (the Halloween Party planning is keeping me from checking out any new venues). Since we haven't been to Kimo's in a while, it is time to visit again. Kimo's is at 1351 Polk street. There is a parking structure across the street and one block South of Kimo's. Remember if you want something to eat, the Grubstake around the corner has received the TG enthusiastic rating. Debbie and I will probably have dinner at The Grubstake around 7:30 and be at Kimo's by 8:30.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 8:00PM

TGSF/ETVC LIBRARY / POKER NIGHT

Call Nancy Anne at (415) 469-5445 for information and directions. Peruse our extensive archives or join in the game!

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 8:00PM

END OF MONTH SOCIAL

Well we don't want to have a end of month on Thanksgiving so we are going to plan the event a week earlier. The event for the night will be another contest. We had so much fun with the legs contest that I thought we would just pick another body part and try it again. So on November 19th we will have the TGSF Cleavage contest. There will be prizes for this contest so you will want to wear that sexy low cut dress you have been meaning to try on. The event will be at the 131 Supper Club (formerly Charpes). The 131 Supper Club is located at 131 Gough street.

Attention Pub Crawlers!

Looking for something exciting to do in The City? Nicole is looking for Social Coordinators. The job entails each coordinator to organize a club excursion once a month. How hard can that be? I will even help you set it up and attend them. The group will be from 4 to 10 members interested in trying new night spots or visiting old favorites. If you want to be a Coordinator or a member of the excursion group email me nicole@tgforum.com or talk to me at the socials.



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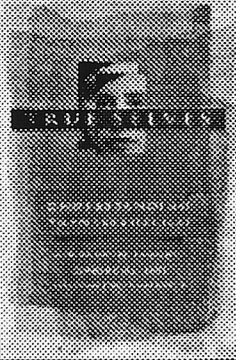
COFFEE '99



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Calendar of Events - November 1998

OTHER GROUPS

Pacific Center for Human Growth

A counseling oriented growth center sponsors all-inclusive gender support groups on every Friday at 8:00pm, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. 510-841-6224

Rainbow Gender Association (RGA)

Meets 1st and 3rd Friday of the month 8:00pm at the New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Drive, San Jose. Write to RGA, PO Box 700730, San Jose, CA 95170 or call 408-984-4044.

Sacramento Gender Association (SGA)

Blue Rose Chapter meets 8:00pm the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month in Sacramento. Write PO Box 215456, Sacramento, CA 95821-1456 or call 916-482-7SGA (7742) for meeting locations.

Diablo Valley Girls (DVG)

Meets 1st and 3rd Monday of every month. 8:00pm at Just Rewards Nightclub, 2520 Camino Diablo in Walnut Creek. Write to DVG, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885 or call 925-937-8432.

DVG Rap Group (RCC)

Meets 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month, 7:00pm at Rainbow Community Center, 2637 Pleasant Hill Road (@ Taylor Blvd.) in Pleasant Hill. For more information call 925-937-8432.

FTM

A support group for Female-to-Male cross dressers and transsexuals; Holds open Informational Meetings and closed Support Meetings. Write FTM International, Inc., 1360 Mission Street, Suite 200, San Francisco, CA 94103 or call 415-553-5987.

TGIF (TransGenderism Is Fun)

A social group for transgenders. Meets one Saturday each month at a private home in Santa Rosa for a potluck social from 4:00pm until early evening. Space is limited - Reservations Recommended! Call Diane or Anne at 707-544-1540.

Silicon Valley Gender Association (SVGA)

A new transgender support group meets at the Billy De Frank Community Center in San Jose on the 2nd and 4th Friday of every month from 7:00pm to 9:00pm. For more information, call 408-293-2429.

Far West Women (FWW)

A support group for TGs affiliated with the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Alliance in Humboldt County. Meets every 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month at 8:00pm in the GLBTA Center at Fourth and "D" Streets in Eureka. For information call the Center at 707-445-9760.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 8:00 PM DVG	3	4	5 7:00 PM DVG (RCC)	6 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM RGA	7 8:00 PM Miss SGA Pagent
8 3:00 PM TGSE ExCom Meeting	9	10	11 8:00 PM TGSE: Mid-Month @ Kimo's	12	13 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:30 PM TGSE: Library / Poker Night	14 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
15	16 8:00 PM DVG	17	18	19 7:00 PM DVG (RCC) 8:00 PM TGSE EOM Social	20 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM RGA	21
22	23	24	25	26 Happy Thanksgiving!	27 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap	28 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
29	30					

ETVC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Full Year Membership June 1 - May 31

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NOV	15	20
DEC	12.5	17
JAN	10	13
FEB	7.5	10
MAR	5	7
APR	2.5	3

Our Readers Respond...

DEAR EDITOR,

I think the world of Cindy Martin and her publishing empire, which is a wonderful service to TG people everywhere and the host to TGSF's own web site. But I'm hurt and puzzled by her name calling. In my opinion, Cindy is needlessly paranoid about my intentions, and unfortunately mixed up about the difference between the beneficiary of a gift and the victim of a crime.

Cindy wrote to the Channel last month in reference to my offer to contribute \$2000 to our organization, contingent on finally concluding the oft-discussed name change to TGSF. For that, Cindy implies I'm guilty of "blackmail". This is inaccurate and unfair. I made my offer in the interest of promoting TGSF's inclusiveness and its ability to reach out to newbie folks who may be just coming to grips with their TG selves for the first time. I felt that a name change was an important part of being effective in this goal, because our old name was confusing, limiting, and off-putting to those who might not identify as TV.

So I made my gift subject to a condition being met — that the name be changed. This is not at all uncommon in charitable contributions, especially larger ones. It's the donor's right to ask that the gift be used for a specific purpose, or in a specified manner. If the request is deemed too constraining, the charity can always decline the donation.

"Blackmail" simply doesn't describe this situation. Blackmail is when money is extorted from a victim under threat or duress. Not even close! I GAVE to the club; I did not take away. There is neither crime nor victim. Cindy also says I "in effect offered a bribe". Huh? A bribe is a payment made to influence a decision, usually for personal gain.

But here we are not talking about paying \$2000 to get a \$20,000 sweetheart contract. There was no tangible benefit to me. All I got for my money was the satisfaction of doing a good deed. The club got some badly needed operating cash, and maybe a little encouragement to move in a positive direction by adopting a friendlier name. No coercion was involved. Not that it even matters, but it would be a real stretch to assume that my gift "bought" even a single vote. The membership of our group is far too independent-minded to be so easily swayed. It's a hallmark, I think, of being transgendered.

Sincerely,
Janet Bowman

November's Birthday Girls...

1103	Miss Q Jaquith	1119	Leah Segmen
1106	Andrea Drane	1120	Lola Hurley
1106	Valerie Valeska	1125	Dale Carlson
1108	Heather Robertson	1125	Gary Anspach
1108	Michele Peterson	1125	Lee Powell
1111	Ann Grogan	1125	Michael Lakin
1112	Veronica Natarajan	1126	Angela Hope
1113	Jazz Starr	1128	Randall Stone
1114	Andrea Bianchi	1130	Carol Alexander
1115	Marcia Chapdelaine	1130	Esther Shaw
1116	Mia Ballen	1130	Stacey Dwyer

Many Happy Returns of the Day, Ladies!

Now Available!

1998 RESOURCE GUIDE

Well you have been hearing about it and now it is available! The 1998 ETVC Resource Guide is available at cost to all ETVC members. You can bring \$3.00 to the next social or we can mail it to you for \$3.00 + \$1.50 postage. If you are a service listed in the guide you can get copies for \$5.00 each plus postage. The Resource Guide will be available to everyone else for \$10.00 each.

The 1998 ETVC Resource Guide is your one source for virtually all the Transgender Resources in the Greater Bay Area (From San Jose to Sacramento to Santa Rosa to San Francisco). The Guide covers where to go to have a good time on the town, where to shop, where to get services like Make-up, Electrolysis and Beauty Salons, as well as where to stay in the San Francisco area (and Russian River Resort Area). You can also locate professional services such as Doctors, Psychologists, Lawyers, Voice Therapists and others. The Guide also contains information on other Gender Information and Education Groups. If you are going to visit the San Francisco area - This is the guide to have!

If you would like a guide by mail you can send a check for \$4.50 (per copy) to: ETVC, Resource Guide, P.O. Box 426486, San Francisco, CA. 94142-6486. Please be sure to indicate on the check that it is for the Resource Guide.

NEW ONLINE SO LIST!

New online mailing list for wives and SOs of crossdressers and men who consider themselves to be transgendered; no topic off limits. Attitudes range from complete acceptance to really struggling. Open to women only—no crossdressers please! Women need a place where they can feel safe to discuss these issues. Write to Jenni at www.aluckywife@aol.com and explain a little about your situation.

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END OF MONTH MAKEOVER SPECIAL

Nicole and Chelsi at the September End of Month Social get the works from Valerie (*Make-Up Forever*).

Story on Page 10.



SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER SOCIALS IN REVIEW

By Nicole Cook

Well I did not get around to as many socials as usual, I have had to concentrate on earning money for a while. But I have decided to use this opportunity to close the gap between the time the events take place and the time I report on them.

Debbie and I proceeded the September mid month with a visit to the Transbay Social at Quetzal's a sort of coffee shop restaurant just down the road from Kimo's. There were between 20 to 30 members of the TG community there, a few I recognized from ETVC, however most were new faces. We had dinner and talked with a number of the attendees. Transbay holds their meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 6:00pm (When our midmonth is on Wednesday, It is usually on the same day at 8:00, so you might want to start your night out early and attend both socials). Gwen is organizing the events you can email her at GwenSmith@aol.com. After the Transbay meeting we headed for the mid-month at the Coco Club. The Coco club is a quaint little basement club. While we were there, a TG who I guess is a regular there was quite friendly to our members. She was part of a birthday party/show for another one of the patron's. We had fun while we were here and this is a place I would feel comfortable going to any time.

Our End of Month Social in September was once again suppose to be at Charpes but ended up at the Blue Muse due to scheduling problems with Charpes' redesigning efforts. This time the Blue Muse was the setting for a make-up show put on by Valerie and Mark from *Make-up Forever*. Chelsi and I were models for the night and allowed these make-up artists to work their magic on our faces. For those of you that were there you can see what a difference the Make-up made. Several of the girls went over to the Macy's in Walnut Creek (the address and phone number is in the Resource Guide) the following Saturday, Valerie and Mark had arranged for time to do facials on anyone that was interested.

It was not until October 10th that we made another trip to Sacramento to attend a SGA social. Several of the regular members were there, and I did see a few new faces. About the time we were ready to go the Arch Dutchess of the Sacramento Court came in (Krystel). It looks like several of the SGA members are planning to join us at the Halloween party.

October 13th was the date of the multi-venue experience. Which turned out to work quite well, I will have to try something like this again. We started off with dinner at the Line-up, about 7 girls showed up for this part of the evening. Two of the girls headed home after the Line-up and the rest headed for Cafe Mars. Once at Cafe Mars we were joined by several other girls including Lulu and Jamie. We socialized here for an hour or so. Gradually at first members eager to get to the finale slipped out of Cafe Mars and headed for Trannyshack. Trannyshack is without doubt a unique experience. When we got there was room to dance and room at the bar, by 11:30 it was packed. By midnight it resembled a rock concert, where a person on one end of the room could shift her hips and have the effect felt on the other side of the room. I had been awake since 5:30am that morning so it was all I could do to just hang on to the bar. But Trannyshack is on my list for places to visit when I don't have to go to work the next day. We were joined by Many other girls at Trannyshack. Some from TGSF and some I had never seen before. If you have never been to Trannyshack, make a point of going, it is a great experience !



SANDRA REACHES OUT

by Sandra Brewer

As you read in the last issue, the first step in changing our name to TGSF has been completed. Much work remains in filing the necessary legal forms, and in getting the word out. The vast majority of us feel the new name more accurately describes who we are and what we stand for. I know it will make our job easier when we are asked by outsiders to explain what the name stands for. Also, I hope in the long run this will help us attract new members and reverse the current trend of declining membership.

With eighteen panels projected this semester, our outreach speakers bureau is about as active as last year. I am anticipating a slight increase in the number of honorariums our organization will receive for our participation in these events which are already rewarding in their own right.

One question sometimes asked to our transgender panels is how the panelists view religion. Few of us refute the belief that we are all children of God. God made (and loves) us all in various shapes, sizes, and colors. Other variations include our gender differences in whatever form. Many of the differences between men and women, and a few where the gender mechanics break down are well-known to most of our audience. If God is perfection, these variations cannot be viewed as mistakes, but only as part of the grand scheme. To reject them on religious grounds is contrary to God's nature. Churches that condone this practice contradict their own principles, and should not be taken seriously. This has been true throughout history as hundreds of world religions that often contradict each other have claimed their particular belief is the only way to view life and afterlife in this world. Fortunately many churches today realize the need to support us all.

On October 5th, the A&E Channel aired the one-hour Investigative Reports documentary 'Transgender Revolution'; this was similar to the July 20th Time magazine article 'Trans Across America'. Watch for 'The Brandon Teena Story'; this is another documentary being released to theaters. It covers the hate-crime murder of a FTM in Nebraska. On October 11th, an episode titled 'Back on the Track' on ABC's 20/20 featured very masculine 25-year veteran racecar driver JT Hayes' journey to become Terri O'Connell. Terri, now an attractive female is already back on the track; her dream is to drive in the Indianapolis 500 Race. Considering the mentality of many in the racing business, this has to be a real uphill battle.

Finally, on September 27th the British BBS soap opera 'Coronation Street' featured Haley's rejection of Roy's marriage proposal. Though played by a genetic female, Haley is a post-operative MTF who is still considered legally male under English law. This program seen in Canada as well as Britain may help call attention to this glaring example of a law that needs to be changed as it already has been in all but a few states in the US.

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Bless you for caring and thank you!

Gender Skybox

MY BASEBALL ROAD TRIP

by Erin Souza

Hello again gender fans, from your long lost skybox columnist. Free from the shackles of the presidency (thank you Leslie), I return to my former observation post long enough to pack my bags and embark on my most ambitious vacation to date.

Previous baseball travels have included the Bay Area ballparks along with Anaheim, San Diego and the spring training sites in Arizona. Lacking both the time and the money for the grand tour of all thirty major league parks in one trip, I plan a smaller scale trip to the northeast. I research the web for train routes, game tickets, connecting city transit, etc. and determine my itinerary: Toronto, Montreal and Baltimore, with a stop in Cooperstown to visit the Baseball Hall of Fame. Amtrak and United offer an air/rail vacation package that lets me fly to Toronto, make three connecting rail trips and fly home from Baltimore. They even arrange lodging and sightseeing in three of the cities. The closest stop to Cooperstown is Utica, New York, where I book my own motel and a Trailways trip to Cooperstown.

Traveling on short notice, I do not have time to get a passport but my birth certificate suffices for crossing the U.S./Canada border. It is in my former name so I include a copy of my court ordered name change and a letter from my therapist, in case customs question my gender status. (They do not.) With tickets and documents secured, I depart SFO on September 5.

Toronto is a very friendly and clean city; even the panhandlers are polite. The efficient subway takes me to Union Station, adjacent to CN Tower and Skydome. CN Tower, the worlds tallest at 1815 feet, has observation decks at 1100 and 1485 feet, a revolving restaurant and glass elevators along its outside. The lower decks' glass floor looks down on Skydome far below. Even with binoculars, this is not the best view for baseball, so I leave the tower to see Skydome from the inside.

The roof is open for the game between the Blue Jays and Red Sox on a hot, humid afternoon. The futuristic look of the artificial turf, blue seats and retractable dome gives credence to pitcher Bret Saberhagen's quote, "It's like something out of 2001." Instead of singing *Take Me Out To the Ball Game* at the seventh inning stretch, fans do aerobics to the *Okay Blue Jays* song. Such defiance of tradition would cause a riot in real baseball cities like Chicago. The Jays extend their win streak to ten games with a come-from-behind victory.

After seeing the best electrical storm of my life, I return to Skydome accompanied by my boss' girlfriend Lenie, a Toronto resident. We watch the Jays pound the Cleveland Indians, 15 to 3. We later meet Lenie's friend Ping and her family for dinner at their home.

I tour nearby Niagara Falls on my last day in Toronto and miss the telecast of Mark McGwire's record-breaking sixty-second home run. When I arrive in Utica, my dad phones to tell me that Hall of Fame officials will unveil McGwire's bat, ball and uniform the next day. Timing is everything as the baseball deities smile upon me.

An hour bus ride through the wooded hills of upstate New York brings me to Cooperstown, on the shore of Lake Otsego. With its white wooden churches, band shell by the lake, and buildings dating back to the Revolutionary War, the town seems like something out of an old Jimmy Stewart movie. The Hall of Fame is a simple brick building, three stories high.

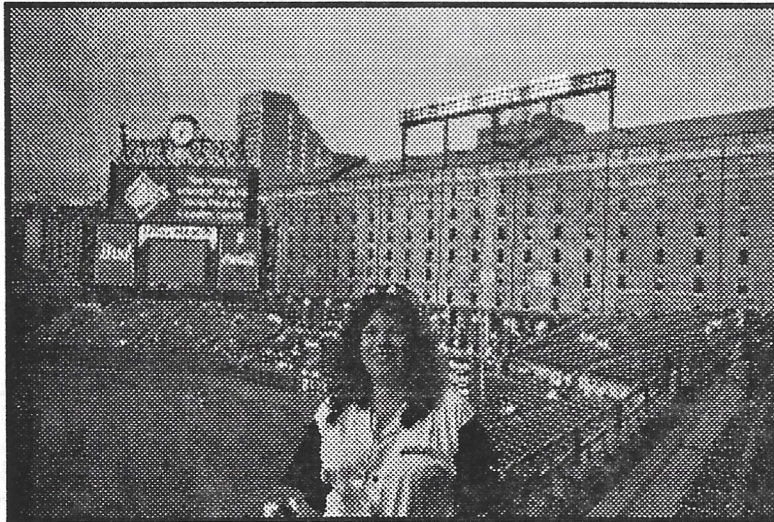
The newly assembled "March on Maris" exhibit is in the foyer. An old-fashioned scoreboard shows the daily home run total for Roger Maris in 1961, and tracks Ken Griffey Jr., Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa through each game of 1998. The 144th game beside McGwire's name has a bright yellow 62 under it. Camera crews push us real fans to the sides as officials unveil the artifacts from Maris, McGwire and Sosa. The media descends for a closer look; I opt to return later after seeing the rest of the museum.

While viewing displays of seasons and World Series past, a gentleman from Philadelphia notices my Oakland A's cap and we swap stories of the championship teams of the 1970's. Throughout the museum's three floors, I see other strangers share memories of their teams. Not since the womb have I felt so at home.

The trip to Montreal takes eleven hours thanks to an hour for customs and a three-hour layover in Schenectady, an old German word that means "town that's hard to spell and pronounce." Though the train station and Montreal's metro share the same terminal, it is a large terminal with several levels. Everyone around is speaking French. Fortunately, as I would learn throughout my visit, many citizens also speak English and are happy to help out. The metro is fast, clean and (thanks to its rubber wheels) comfortable. It speeds me to my hotel in a matter of minutes.

Montreal is more beautiful than her English-speaking cousin Toronto is. I recommend the bus tour that includes the Old Port, Olympic Park, Mount Royal and the Basilica de Notre Dame. Fine art and architecture abound in this city of cathedrals and museums.

Though older than Skydome, Olympic Stadium also resembles something from a science fiction movie. It too has a large tower next to it that looms over the opening in the stadium roof. Despite the Expos' losing record, their fans are livelier than Toronto's. The stadium gives public address announcements, scoreboard statistics and concession menus in both French and English. Expos right fielder Vladimir Guerrero sets a new team record with his 38th coup de circuit (home run) of the season in Montreal's win over the New York Mets.



Erin at Oriole Park, Baltimore

Continued on Page 13

PROTESTS ACROSS COUNTRY

Written by Leslie Feinberg

Reprinted from Workers World newspaper

"Which side are you on?" asks a popular old union song. The side of workers and oppressed peoples? Or the reactionary camp of the bosses? Those battle lines are being redrawn today in a political struggle raging around the hate-driven killing of a gentle, proud-to-be-gay young student in Wyoming.

If the sheer magnitude of the support of millions of people of all sexualities across the United States and around the world were all that was required to bring young Matthew Shepard back from the brink of death, he would surely be alive today. But Shepard—the victim of barbaric torture—suffered such grave brain damage that he died in the early hours of Oct. 12 in a hospital in Fort Collins, Colo., his loving parents at his bedside.

Five days earlier, Shepard had been lured from a bar by two men who told him they were also gay. Later they reportedly bound him to a ranch fence, burned his body and bludgeoned him into unconsciousness with the butt of a .357 magnum pistol. Two bicyclists accidentally discovered Shepard's near-frozen body, still hanging from the fence, 18 hours later. Russell A. Henderson and Aaron J. McKinney are now charged with kidnapping, first-degree murder and aggravated robbery. Kristen Leann Price and Chastity Vera Pasley have been charged as accessories to murder because they reportedly helped McKinney and Henderson hide bloody evidence.

Matt Shepard died without ever having regained consciousness. Yet his death has raised to new heights the social consciousness of broad layers of the population about how the systemic oppression of gay men, lesbian women and bisexual and trans people exacts its toll in flesh and blood

On The Side Of Justice & Equality

While Shepard clung to life on technological support systems, people from all walks of life held vigils and protests. On Oct. 10, University of Wyoming students joined the end of the homecoming parade with a hand-made yellow banner bearing Shepard's name. Thousands of parade onlookers applauded and some 500 left the sidelines to swell the contingent. One thousand people turned out later that night for a campus rally scheduled to kick off the beginning of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Awareness Week.

Many hundreds more gathered in nearby Fort Collins, Colo., and in Casper, Wyo., on Oct. 10 and 11. Kathy Saulton, who took part in the Casper vigil outside the courthouse, told Workers World: "There are not many Black people in our town, but they were there. And the Mexican American people were there. "There were older people. There were straight people. It was so cold, but there were young couples holding their babies. People understand that hate crosses into everything."

In the days following the announcement of Shepard's death, the outpouring of outrage at this barbarously anti-gay killing spilled into streets and campuses from coast to coast in even greater numbers. Thousands converged on the Colorado State Capitol in Denver on Oct. 12. Hundreds marched in West Hollywood, Los Angeles.

University of Maryland students rallying against a viciously anti-gay column in the student newspaper linked their struggle to Shepard's death. Hundreds assembled at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill—where Shepard had lived before moving to Wyoming several months earlier.

The giant lesbian/gay-rights rainbow flag in San Francisco's Castro District flew at half-mast, and other protests were scheduled in cities large and small throughout the United States.

Shepard's parents thanked the public for the wave of support they received. They reported getting 2,000 e-mails from around the world in just the 24 hours before their son died. The hospital was flooded with so many calls and e-mails that administrators had to set up a special website to post updated information about Matthew Shepard's condition. It began receiving 30,000 visits an hour.

Before his death, Shepard's mother explained that as an adult her son weighed only 105 pounds and was 5 feet 2 inches tall. "Matthew's life has often been a struggle in one way or another," she explained. "He was born prematurely, and he struggled to survive as an infant." And he left the world prematurely, as well, she added. "He is physically short in stature," she said, "but we believe he is a giant when it comes to respecting the worth of others." After his death, this mother of a gay son advised parents, "Go home, give your kids a hug and don't let a day go by without telling them you love them."

Spin Doctors Of Reaction

The big-business-monopolized media have given right-wing ideologues a lot of air time and a lot of print to spew their anti-gay indoctrination. But in addition, even the media's actual reporting of the torture-murder itself has been sensational and vile. The first line of an article about the bashing of Matt Shepard in the Rocky Mountain News read, "Lashed to a rough-hewn fence, stripped of his patent leather shoes, and begging for his life" Is this coverage of feral brutality, or is it salacious incitement? And who says Shepard pleaded with his killers? Whether true or not, that claim could only have come from the boasting bashers themselves.

Almost all the media reports have stressed that Shepard was vulnerable as a target because he was "openly" gay on campus. But since he was sitting in a bar mixed with straight and gay people, and his attackers did not know him, what's the point of stressing that he was out on campus? To leave readers with this advice: Get back in the closet. This anti-gay message is hammered home in other ways, as well. For example, the media have given a lot of play to a legal defense ploy by Henderson and McKinney.

Continued on Page 13

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Protests Across Country...

Continued from Page 12

The Oct. 9 New York Times quoted Shepard's friend Walter T. Boulden explaining that on Oct. 6, Shepard dropped in at the Fireside—a club in Laramie frequented by gay and straight people. Boulden said: "He was sitting at the bar, having a beer, when two men came up and talked to him. He indicated that he was gay, and they said they were gay, too."

But on Oct. 12, the day Shepard died, the media gave wide coverage to a claim by McKinney's father that the young gay student had made a pass at his two assailants and so they decided to rob Shepard later in order to "embarrass" him.

Bill McKinney said, "Had this been a heterosexual these two boys decided to take out and rob, this never would have made the national news." If it were true that Shepard had flirted with one of the men, so what? Only in a rabidly anti-gay society could that be considered grounds for murder. And petty robbery of a gay man or lesbian would have passed unnoticed in the national news. It was the grisly torture and murder of this gay youth by these "boys" that created headlines.

McKinney's and Henderson's support apparatus tries to obfuscate the bigotry that set them in motion. But on Oct. 13, the news broke that after leaving Shepard to die, the two bigots attacked two Latinos—Emiliano Morales III and Jeremy Herrera. McKinney hit Morales in the head with a gun butt. Morales needed 21 staples to close the wound in his scalp. Herrera beat off McKinney with a stick.

Willing Pawns On A Right-Wing Chess Board

As devoid of humanity as McKinney and Henderson became, they are not aberrations. Much has been made of how sparsely populated Wyoming is. How rugged the people, as well as the terrain. How socially backward. As though anyone who is gay or lesbian or bi or transgender or transsexual and lives in Wyoming should expect to get hurt.

But how about Greenwich Village or Brooklyn, N.Y.? There's been a staggering rise in anti-gay and anti-trans violence in New York—including some 13 murders in a year and a half and about one reported assault a day.

On Oct. 13, a thousand people took part in an anti-gay demonstration in New York, led by the Catholic Church, to denounce a play that portrays Jesus as a gay man.

Kansas-based anti-gay zealot the "reverend" Fred Phelps and his followers have threatened to picket Shepard's funeral in Casper on Oct. 17.

Continued on Page 15

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Gender Skybox...

Continued from Page 11

The sixteen-hour trip from Montreal to Baltimore includes an unscheduled layover in Springfield Massachusetts brought about by track repair. Take away the lovely scenery and Amtrak is the MUNI of interstate rail. Thankfully, Baltimore's railroad and subway platforms are much closer to each other than those in Montreal.

After the beauty of Montreal, Baltimore cannot help being a letdown. Still, the Inner Harbor area has its charm. Brick buildings with painted screen doors are city trademarks. I tour the National Aquarium, the B&O Railroad Museum and the Babe Ruth birthplace and Oriole museum but miss the boat to Fort McHenry, where Francis Scott Key wrote *The Star Spangled Banner*. My lone celebrity sighting is of actor Yaphet Kotto, leaving the police station set of the TV series *Homicide*.

Oriole Park at Camden Yards is probably the major's best looking new park. With the warehouse and plaza behind right field, the giant "SUN" clock in center field, and the old-fashioned brick and ironwork, it has the look of a classic ballpark but with modern amenities - luxury boxes, stadium restaurants and sports bars. While I saw the Blue Jays win two games and broke even at one win/one loss for the Expos, I am 0 for Baltimore. The Orioles lose to the Rangers and Red Sox on successive nights. I miss history again when, three days after I return home, Orioles third baseman Cal Ripken ends his consecutive game streak at 2632 games, his first day off since May of 1982.

After visiting four cities in twelve days, I still have a week and a half to rest before returning to work, so of course I take in more baseball. For the second year in a row, Dale Carlson and I do the transbay double-header in which we attend both a Giants and an A's game on a rare day when both clubs are home. The Giants beat the Pirates in the day game, while the A's lose to the Angels that night.

While I watch the post-season unfold on TV, I am already dreaming about future road trips. To use a baseball cliché, "Wait 'til next year."

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Choices...

by Jane Bollig

(Part V in a continuing series)

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

Hair Removal Technician:

Today you have more choices for hair removal treatments than existed just a few years ago. In addition to electrolysis, at least a half dozen new forms of laser hair removal are available, as well as something brand new called "epilight." Not all beards and skin types are amenable to laser or epilight, but I have never heard of anyone not able to benefit from skilled electrolysis.

Laser and epilight practitioners are sprouting up all over. Because some skin types may be burned by these technologies, and some beards do not respond well, they customarily charge \$300 to treat a "test spot." The charge is non-refundable, but usually is applied to the cost of the entire contract, which may be for up to one year. Although laser is many times faster than electrolysis, no treatment can clear your beard before it has exhausted its regrowth cycles; but if yours is a beard and skin that respond favorably, and you have the money, laser or epilight might be just the ticket.

Electrolysis requires commitment. Depending upon beard density, regrowth cycles and pain tolerance, you will probably need 100-300 hours to clear your face, and god knows how many more (if necessary) for hands, arms, legs, chest, belly and scrotum (prior to penile inversion SRS). That's a lot of time to be in a lot of pain. At \$40 to \$50 an hour, it will cost you \$4,000 - \$15,000. An adept practitioner will leave you smooth-faced, a bumbler can leave you horribly scarred. All electrolysis hurts; it can feel like a toothache in your skin—imagine 100 hours in a dentist's chair. So many hours. So much money. So much pain. Therefore, as important as her/his technical skill is your electrologist's personality. Do you converse easily with her? Is she empathic? Unlike your therapist, it's good to become friends with your electrologist.

My first electrologist was recommended by a woman friend who had been a client. One hour of treatment cost \$55 an hour and left my face swollen for two weeks. My second electrologist used galvanic treatment exclusively, which cause sustained, unrelenting pain. The practitioner carried a heavy scent of cigarette smoke and was impersonable. My third electrologist was personable, compassionate and effective, but we had a falling out over other matters. My fourth electrologist was also personable, but a devotee of a kind of "scorched earth" approach to the face. I met my fifth electrologist, Judy Porat, at a conference in Berkeley having nothing to do with electrology, and felt immediately drawn to her warmth and good sense. After a glowing recommendation from another "T," I made my first of many, many appointments. I've been working with Judy for almost a year and a half. Although my beard is not heavy, my low pain tolerance (even under Percodan), has prevented us from working faster. I usually see her twice a month for three or four hour sessions. We talk so easily that the time flies by. When looking for an electrologist, Judy advises that you avoid "anybody who doesn't use disposable probes." In addition, "your electrologist should be involved in a professional association of some kind [and] continuing education. Be wary if the office feels unclean, and trust your judgment with the person and environment."

Plastic Surgeon

Sex reassignment isn't the only gender surgery. There are others you might want to consider before full time living, such

as a tracheal shave, rhinoplasty, face lift and hair transplants. Good surgeons are scattered all over the country. But how do you learn if one is good or not when he's hundreds or thousands of miles away? Here, I'm at a handicap. From what I've been told, you can get a lot of information from doctors on their web sites, and from their former patients in chat groups and on their web sites. I'm seldom on-line, so I can't really say. I prefer to see and talk with people who've been there and done it. How do they look? What do they say? Often, you can meet surgeons at conventions such as California Dreamin'. I selected my surgeon, Toby Meltzer (of Portland Oregon), after his October 1996 lecture at an ETVCS Seminar. In January 1997 he performed a rhinoplasty and tracheal shave on me. I'm scheduled for a face lift in June 1998.

Fashion and Poise Consultants

Your woman within may pour out of you like a fountain. On the other hand, she may gurgle and belch like a backed up drain. If years of conditioning as a male has muddied the pure waters of femininity, you could do well to invest several hundred dollars or so with an expert such as Wilhelmina Beins, a "Feminine Image and Gender Transition Consultant."

Voice Therapy

We don't hear ourselves as others do. Our voice as it resonates in our head may sound soft and feminine; what others hear is often quite different. We can easily check our visual presentation in the mirror; but the voice doesn't allow convenient reflection. For that, we need to lug out the tape recorder. Even so, although, like a mirror, it can show what's wrong, it can't tell us how to make it right, or how to speak in feminine ranges without damaging the vocal cords. For that, we need a speech therapist, who will not

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Protests Across Country...

Continued from Page 13

A float mocking the gay-bashing of Shepard was part of the Colorado State University homecoming parade in Fort Collins on Oct. 10—just a few blocks from the hospital where the youth lay dying. The float was co-sponsored by Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity and Alpha Chi Omega sorority. The float consisted of a scarecrow tied to a fence. The words "I'm gay" were spraypainted on the face and "Up my ass" was emblazoned on the back. The two bicyclists who first discovered Shepard tied to the fence had told authorities that his body was so disfigured that they thought at first he was a scarecrow.

Two pro-gay mobilizations were slated for Oct. 13 in Fort Collins to demonstrate how many people—straight and gay—are sickened by this fanatical bigotry.

Who Will Lead The Way Out Of The Morass?

All these expressions of bigotry and reaction are part of a larger social crisis that affects big urban areas as well as rural regions. It's a war with many fronts. Those who earnestly want to combat the oppression of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans people must steel themselves to be the fiercest fighters at every barricade.

The murder of Matt Shepard is inextricably linked to the horrific June lynching of James Byrd Jr. in Jasper, Texas. It's part and parcel of the 1994 mutilation and killing of Brandon Teena, a young transgender man in Humboldt, Neb. It's connected with a thousand threads to the scores of African American churches that have been burned at a rate not seen since the counter-revolutionary overthrow of Black Reconstruction more than a century ago. To the racist campaign against undocumented immigrant workers and the rise of "English-only" legislation. To the demonization of women and children on welfare. To the bombings of 185 women's health clinics in the United States.

All this is a product of a capitalist political culture that tries to keep the majority laboring class divided along fault lines of oppression. As the shadow of financial crisis looms, those who benefit most from this profit system will increasingly try to direct mass frustration and anger away from themselves and their system in order to maintain the reins of power.

It comes as no coincidence that this systematic repression and scapegoating has been ratcheted up during the period of bi-partisan war on the living standards of millions. Union busting, layoffs, temp work, abolishing welfare and pushing people into workfare. Tuition up, financial aid down. Social programs gutted. Such a Draconian economic assault on masses of people mandates divisive social attacks.

Who Will Lead Humankind Out Of This Capitalist Morass?

The courts are certainly not an arbiter of justice. The Supreme Court—the highest judicial bench in the land—ruled on Oct. 13 that the city of Cincinnati not only has the right to discriminate against lesbians and gay men, but also to ban any measure to outlaw such discrimination.

The Republicans march to the drums of reaction. Wyoming Gov. Jim Geringer denounced the "media circus" around the murder of Shepard and used the air time to push his anti-abortion agenda.

House Speaker Newt Gingrich characterized the murder of Shepard as "horrifying." But that's just lip-service. In a just society, Gingrich and his ilk would be arrested as accessories to anti-gay murder for having played a direct role in fomenting the poisonous political climate.

But can the lesbian, gay, bi and trans movement look to the Democrats for leadership? President "Don't ask, don't tell" Clinton surrendered to the Pentagon brass when they refused to halt anti-gay witch hunts.

Clinton made common cause with Sen. Jesse Helms of North Carolina—a notoriously anti-gay bigot—when the president signed a rotten bill that barred the right to same-sex marriage. Can lesbians and gay men trust a man who testified that he didn't think he had engaged in sex with Monica Lewinsky because "normally" the definition of sex is heterosexual intercourse?

Who will lead the way forward, out of the mire of economic and social injustice? Those who are its victims.

If the shock and fury that millions of people are feeling about the murder of Matthew Shepard is fused by solidarity to the militancy of the lesbian, gay, bi and trans movement, it will advance this struggle for equality and justice to new heights.

And when all who are downtrodden, disenfranchised and devalued in this society rise up together, then a better world will be in birth.

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SOUTHERN COMFORT CONFERENCE

Written by Laura Brown

More than 500 gather for social and political conference, and press the Human Rights Campaign to add transgender rights to its mission. As dozens of attendees at last weekend's Southern Comfort transgender conference waited outside the event's host hotel Friday night for shuttles to Atlanta nightclubs, a group of about five Bible-carrying young people began shouting verses at the hotel's door.

Assessing the situation, Southern Comfort Board Chair Sabrina Marcus broke into song—a rousing rendition of “God Bless America” that soon had the crowd of about 100 transgendered people singing, and the tiny group of protesters fleeing.

Rather than disrupting the eighth annual event, held last weekend at Buckhead's Terrace Garden Inn, the incident exemplified the spirit that organizers said makes Southern Comfort the most popular transgender event in the country.

While they cite “phenomenal growth” and “cutting edge” seminars as hallmarks of last weekend's Southern Comfort Conference, they attribute its overall success to the sense of “home” and empowerment it provides to transgendered attendees from all over the world.

Organizer Terry Murphy described Southern Comfort as “what amounts to a transgender Pride event,” providing the opportunity “to experience the joy of being a transgendered person in a group of transgendered people, where you are completely the majority.” Murphy, a former Southern Voice editor, resigned as a member of the Southern Comfort board of directors on Sunday to accept a position as the event's first year-round executive director.

“I can't tell you what a profound experience [being in the majority for the first time] is,” said Murphy. “As a gay person, when you find the gay community, and you walk into that gay church or gay bar for the first time—you're a fairly young person typically when you have that experience of dropping your otherness at the door and walking into a public space that's full of people exactly like you.

“Southern Comfort is the only place on the planet where transgendered people can have that experience, and even if you are doing something as silly as learning how to get your wig styled that is very personal and political at the same time. It's life changing,” Murphy continued. “Laid on top of that very simple opportunity is the opportunity to learn a lot, not only about personal issues, but about intellectual ideas and political issues.”

Conference co-chair Jennaleigh Love offered similar reasons for her involvement with Southern Comfort, which she attended for the first time four years ago. “A lot of people helped me when I got into this whole gender thing, and I asked myself, ‘What can I do to give back, to save just one person?’” she said.

“Well, I'll take 400 to 500 over one any day, and I want to help people come to grips with who they are and build community. Southern Comfort is home, it's a great community builder, and it's a party. Imagine living your whole life in some little town where you always felt like you were the only one. Finally being one of the majority is a powerful thing.”

Record Attendance

According to Murphy, the “big story” from this year's Southern Comfort Conference was the attendance—515 registered participants, a 60-percent increase from last year's 320. Organizers said the record participation—which included male-to-female and female-to-male, pre-op, post-op, and non-op, transsexuals, transgenderists and heterosexual cross dressers—created organizational headaches while demonstrating the growing strength of the transgender movement.

“The growth this year was amazing—it was difficult to manage, it was just chaos, but we don't want to put a limit on it,” Love said. “We want to help all of the folks who come down, and we heard so many stories of how we did that.”

While exact numbers were not available, Love said a “significant number” of those attending Southern Comfort were female-to-male “transmen”—a segment of the transgendered community that has been less visible in mainstream media, but that is growing in visibility and political power.

Leslie Feinberg, described by Murphy as “the most celebrated living female-to-male queer theorist in the world, maybe ever in history,” delivered Saturday's keynote address.

Maxwell Anderson, a “transman” who serves on the Southern Comfort board, said growing activism in the community has created some tension with male-to-female transgenders “who don't want to take us seriously,” but praised Southern Comfort as one of the most inclusive transgender events.

The record attendance also helped the Southern Comfort Conference raise \$5,600 for charity, Murphy said. The donations included \$2,300 to the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus, which entertained at the conference; \$2,000 to the International Foundation for Gender Education, the world's largest transgender advocacy organization; \$800 to Georgia's “Trans=Action” gender education and advocacy group, which recently changed its name from It's Time, Georgia!; and \$500 to Transgender Officers Protect and Serve.

Taking On HRC Exclusion

According to Love, the theme for seminars at this year's Southern Comfort was “cutting edge stuff that has never been done before,” including seminars bringing together trans men and women, sessions focusing on sexuality, and a tense but productive “transgender townhall meeting” with staff from the Human Rights Campaign.

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SOUTHERN COMFORT:

A TRANSGENDERED PILGRIMAGE

by Veronica Smith

When I returned from Southern Comfort, my wife asked if I had had a good time. I told her that I had indeed had fun, but that going to Southern Comfort was much more significant than merely having a "good time."

"How d'you mean?" she asked.

"For me," I explained, "my first Southern Comfort was an almost mystical confirmation of my transgendered status. Every time I return, I feel as if I reaffirm that status. Think of it as a ritual of affirmation."

"Like going to church?" she prompted.

"In a sense," I told her. "But more like going to Canterbury, Jerusalem or Mecca. Southern Comfort should be a required pilgrimage for every transgenderist."

"You mean for every transgenderist who can afford it," she quipped.

"Most significant experiences cost *something*," I responded, "Everyone who is serious about transgenderism owes it to herself to experience at least one Southern Comfort."

"We'll have to put that in the TG contract," said my loving and supportive but kind of smart aleck wife as she helped me unpack.

"The world would be a lot better off if everyone went to at least one gender convention," I said. "It's like pilgrimage and pilgrimage is good for the soul."

"I'll see if I can find a habit for you to wear next year," the Littler Woman muttered while throwing my hip enhancers in the dirty clothes.

Southern Comfort as pilgrimage? Well, it certainly has some of the obvious elements: travel, ritual and the expectation of the miraculous. It even has penance if you think of the burdensome aspects of travel as penitential acts. And as for ritual, who knows more about private ceremonies than a TG? One of the first things I do at a gender convention is probably what most attendees do: take a perfumed bubble bath and shave the legs. With 400-500 people performing similar ablutions, you've got quite a sudsy baptism going on. Then comes the ritualistic painting of the face and donning all the accoutrements unique to our particular persuasion. And, of course, there are the miracles.

Like invalids tossing away crutches at a holy shrine, pilgrims at Southern Comfort toss aside incapacitating shame and discover they can walk - in heels, dressed the way they've always wanted, proud and tall. Pilgrimage shrines produce transformative experiences and, needless to say, there are lots of mystical transformations at Southern Comfort (besides the magical makeovers by Jim Bridges). Eyes sparkle and laughter comes easy. Excitement and

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Southern Comfort...

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HRC, the nation's largest gay and lesbian rights organization, has drawn criticism from the transgender community for refusing to include transgender rights in the agency's mission statement or in the proposed federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would ban job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation but not gender identity.

The sometimes heated Saturday afternoon discussion-which brought together leaders of transgender organizations and Tony Esoldo, southern field organizer for HRC-drew an audience of 20 and ultimately proved productive, both sides agreed.

"The vast majority of the audience [was] either trans activists upset with HRC or members of the trans community who are also members of HRC, so it wasn't one-sided," said Murphy, who served as moderator for the forum. "HRC was not pilloried, although a couple of members of the audience expressed the passion with which many in the transgender community regard HRC's refusal to deal with us."

At one point, as the intense discussion degenerated into allegations of unreturned phone calls between Esoldo and panelist Tonye Baretto-Neto, Angela Bridgman of It's Time Kentucky! spoke up to articulate the feelings of many transgendered HRC critics. "I don't know you personally, so I have no reason to doubt your sincerity in what you are talking about," she told Esoldo. "But quite frankly, HRC as an organization has done absolutely nothing whatsoever to give me any reason whatsoever to believe that you want to help us."

Esoldo asked to come to Southern Comfort, and told the forum that many members of HRC need education on transgender issues. He urged transgender activists to work with the organization and be patient, and said HRC had worked with members of the transgender community to have crimes committed on the basis of "perceived gender identity" included in the proposed Hate Crimes Prevention Act. But he reiterated HRC's position that ENDA would have no chance of passage if protection for gender identity were included.

Although his comments were often interrupted by objections from vocal audience members, Esoldo later called the meeting a success. "I thought it was great," he said. "It was difficult, and there are still some misconceptions out there. HRC is on a journey with this, and we need to keep moving, and I think we are. I think being there was good, and I made a lot of good contacts and friends." Murphy said the very political HRC townhall meeting was just one of the seminars at Southern Comfort that reflected the community's diverse interests.

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Transgendered Pilgrimage...

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expectation are in the air. Southern Comfort even transformed the complex in which it took place. Atlanta's Buckhead is a posh convention area, certainly a center of social acceptance. But during Southern Comfort, that center became charged with a special energy supplied by the people who came to celebrate something which normally would keep them from social acceptance. 500 different people sharing something so special in the same place transformed the celebration into a grand rite and changed the convention center into a sacred space.

However, living in a sacred space can be disorienting. Time is spent like nowhere else. You are taken out of the typical work-a-day world and are disconnected from past and future. The day is measured by how long it takes to fix your hair, do your make-up and paint your nails. These are power rituals for the TG, filled with significance. You live this way for several days in a row. It becomes the norm and you are surrounded by hundreds of people who share this norm. Unlike trade conventions where a nametag signifies who you are and what you do, at a gender convention, most people call themselves by names that bear little relationship to the outside world. And they wear make-up and dress dissimilarly from how they usually dress. The fact that almost everyone presents herself stripped of the usual signifiers tends to level any hierarchy. People lose their statuses and there is a general sense of egalitarianism. This sense of equality and the fact that the event is inclusive creates a strong feeling of community. A famous anthropologist once wrote that the achievement of a similar egalitarian communal feeling was a fundamental motivation for pilgrimage. The added aspect of being crossdressed intensifies that feeling.

But the feeling can't last (even in sacred shrines). Differences become noticeable and statuses reassert themselves. After the initial expectation, some become disappointed. Marisa Richmond even commented in her speech that there always were participants who didn't look as if they were having a good time. She urged the more experienced conventioners to help the shy neophytes. But I don't think first-time shyness is the only obstacle for conventioners to enjoy themselves. I also think there is a problem simply with the way men are conditioned to behave. Men (and almost of these ladies have been raised as men) are taught to do, not to experience. I think it's difficult for them to experience passively the delicious sensation of being feminine for an extended period of time in a place where it's safe for them to be as feminine as they want. Instead, it's as if some conventioners need to prove their femininity by hard drinking and all-night partying. While I like to party along with the next girl, rather than drinking to excess to achieve euphoria, there's a euphoria that already exists at a gender conference that can be nursed while there and relished after. And while I started this piece in a joking way, I actually believe that trying to experience a gender conference more like a pilgrimage might help some to enjoy it more fully. There certainly is much to enjoy.

Southern Comfort is the most successful gender conference. Maybe it has something to do with Atlanta's civic pride and Southern hospitality. Its dedicated volunteers seemingly want to offer as much as possible to as many as possible. The caretakers of the event are the most accommodating and intelligent hostesses, but they're not afraid of taking risks. Anthropologists have noted that shrine caretakers usually try to impose their own doctrine upon the ritual and control the pilgrims' competing interpretations and perceptions. What is so impressive with Southern Comfort's organizers is that they welcome controversial expressions and perspectives, as their choice of speakers demonstrates. How many TGs cheerfully going off to a gender convention would have expected they would be urged by Leslie Feinberg to join the "Trans-liberation Movement," a resistance movement linking all disenfranchised persons against

the "systems of oppression" that reinforce class distinctions and deny individuals the ownership of their bodies? How many would have expected that at a conference in the Bible Belt they would hear a speaker compare SRS rights to abortion rights? And how many would have expected that at a convention in a place where race can still be an issue (and apparently was to a few), organizers would have scheduled two dynamic speakers of African descent, Dawn Wilson and Dr. Marisa Richmond? The conventioners might not have expected it, but judging by the standing ovations that all three speakers received, they certainly welcomed it. And that reveals another amazing aspect of Southern Comfort. It always exceeds expectations.

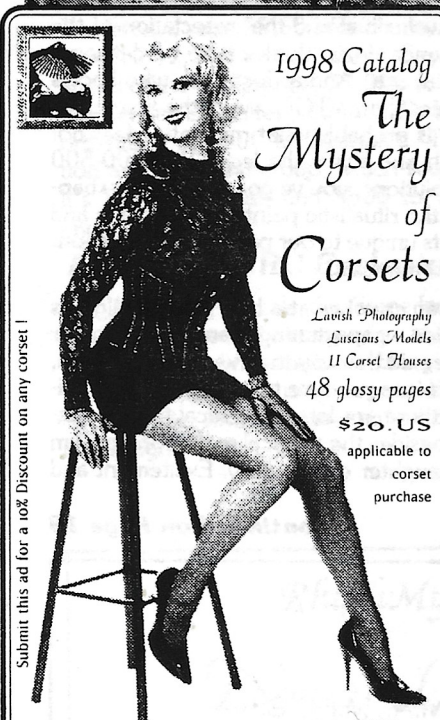
I love going to gender conventions and I always have a "good time" whether I dance all night or just visit with my chosen family. I suppose a psychologist might say that being within a congregation of my transgendered sisters and brothers reinforces my secular psychological structures. But I prefer to think of each such journey as a pilgrimage.

Choices...

Continued from Page 14

only teach vocal technique but attitude. Women talk differently than men in pitch, but also in range, melody, inflection and topic. As Deborah Tannen points out in *You Just Don't Understand*, women's conversation tends to foster and preserve community, whereas men converse to inform and control. Bridging the gender differences may sound simple, but requires plenty of study and practice, and the aid of a good speech therapist.

Part VI will continue in the December Channel.



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