

Cotillion 2001 - Baille!

TGSF • The Channel
TransGender San Francisco
(formerly ETVC)



TGSF TransGender San Francisco is a group for all members of the Transgendered Community. Transgender is used as an umbrella term that includes female and male cross dressers, transvestites, drag queens or kings, female or male impersonators, intersexed individuals, pre-operative, post-operative and non-operative transsexuals, masculine females, feminine males, all persons whose perceived gender or anatomical sex may be incongruent with their gender expression, and all persons exhibiting gender characteristics and identities which are perceived to be androgynous.

The Channel

TGSF (TransGender San Francisco, a California 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 programs, membership, article submission guidelines and classified ads, please write to TGSF Secretary, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486.

ExCom 2000 - 2001 Officers

(Fiscal Year: May 1 - April 30)

President Nicole Cook
 Vice President Aiyana Eveningstar
 Secretary Debbie Cook
 Acting Treasurer Debbie Cook
 Education Stephanie Ann Blythe / Jennifer Antoinette
 Outreach Telzey Adams / Kalani Makanani
 Social Tianna "Diva" DeVil / Serena Anderson

Membership Report

As of February 15, 2001

Membership 242
 Total Fiscal Year 1999-2000 Membership 246
 New Memberships This Year 40

TGSF (TransGender San Francisco) is a CA non-profit corporation. Donations to TGSF are TAX DEDUCTIBLE on both Federal and California income tax returns. Talk to your tax advisor for details.

The Channel, the TGSF Newsletter, is published monthly. Submissions should arrive at TGSF by the 15th day of the month preceding publication. Contents reflect the opinions of the contributors and are not necessarily those of TGSF. Other organizations may reprint or reproduce uncopyrighted portions of the newsletter for their members, provided TGSF is acknowledged as the source of the material. Copyrighted materials may be reproduced only with written permission from TGSF.

Newsletter Staff

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 Contributing Photographers, this issue: Nicole & Debbie Cook

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 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, Advertising Dept., PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486. Please support our advertisers, and tell them you saw their ad in The Channel!

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FROM THE EDITOR...

Rant, Rant, Rant...



Hey, it's my column, I can if I want to. So I've been back in the area about five months, and I've just about got my spiffy apartment all decorated and appointed the way I like. All my stuff up on the walls, shelf paper neatly laid, wall anchors drilled and shelves hung, things put away, boxes broken down

and discarded, furniture arranged in a feng-shui kind of way - settling in nicely. And wouldn't you know it, I get a lease renewal notice on my door the other day, graciously offering me the opportunity to continue staying on if I'd only be so kind as to agree to pay an additional 9% a month.

When I signed on here it was at a rent that was exorbitant (I thought so anyway, after all I'd only been gone a year and a half), but it was doable on my new salary - I could get the bills paid and keep the cat fed. But this rate hike is pricing me right out of here - it's unsupportable ("market projections" my ass!) and bordering on blackmail. Although I've begged them for a one-year lease - even at the new rate! (which would be financial suicide), they won't give me one. And no assurances I won't get another "offer" in October, an untenable situation at best. And the City of Emeryville doesn't care about the resident turnover rate - their coffers are being filled nicely by numerous deep corporate pockets. Well I refuse to participate! <Bilabial fricative here!>

So I'm trying to wrap my brain around the concept of ordering boxes again, and packing it all up - again, and hauling it down three flights of stairs and beyond...again! Arrrgh! Gives me a headache just thinking about it.

Don't Think, Just Do...

I suppose it's another one of Life's little challenges for me. But it is an opportunity for me to lower my cost of living. At least for this upcoming venture, I enjoy the luxury of time to search more thoroughly, not having to take the first thing that comes along, as was the case when I arrived last September. On the plus side, the timing as far as finances are concerned couldn't be better (moving is, of course, hideously and laboriously expensive). I made absolutely no money in the mid-west last year, so Uncle Sam owes me big time. Filed my taxes early and the refunds should start hitting the 'ol checking account by the time I need to drop first, last and a security on my future home. Please pause for a moment and cross your fingers, make sincere genuflecting motions or bow three times to the East for me, ok?

Be that as it may, I can't help but think all this moving around is a metaphor for my existence. Flitting from place to place, touching down to seemingly set roots only to lift off and move on again. It smacks of indecisiveness, uncertainty, a flaw in character; a Poster Girl for Black Sheep everywhere. Have the decisions I've made really been poor ones after all? Delusions of grandeur? Reality dodge? An uninformed and illogical emotional reaction to the situations I find myself in?

Fiddle De Dee!

I refuse to believe it. Life is about Choice, and Change, and in how each of us learns to Respond to Challenge instead of React to it. Be they slings and arrows or unexpected windfalls, the shit that happens to us day to day, month to month, and year to year is all irrelevant. True happiness (IMHO) is in how we choose to respond to Life that benefits not just ourselves (for down that path lays the way of greed and selfishness), but also for those around us, those

Continued on Page 3



YOUR CHIEF SERVANT

By Nicole Cook

I hope everyone had a great time at the Cotillion. I know the group that was with us for the entire four day event had a number of enjoyable experiences. I wanted to talk a bit about one of those experiences. The wine tasting trip that we had on Friday (the day before the Cotillion) really turned out to be fun.

What made it a good trip was the great people we met at the first two wineries that we visited.

Jannis AKA "The Duchess" at the Martini & Prati winery was our first hostess and it was clear from the moment we got there that she was enjoying our company. This was one of the best wine tours I have ever been on. In addition to the wine tasting in the tasting room, our tour included walking around the storage facility (a quite impressive array of huge redwood barrels) drinking from barrels as we go. By the time we reached the end of the tour I was wondering if I would still be standing at the end of the day. There was alot to see at this winery and the absolutely fabulous hostess makes it a great place to visit. If you want to visit, Martini & Prati is just West of Santa Rosa off the 116 at 2191 Laguna Road. Their number is (707) 823-2404. Be sure to ask for Jannis (or the Duchess).

Our next stop was at Topolos. Here our host was David (aka the Queen. As I hear it, it was David that gave Jannis her title). David was equally as enthusiastic about showing us a good time at their winery. This winery was not as big as the last one but our tour included a walk into one of the vineyards and a bit of tasting in their packaging facility. This winery has a rather unique structure in the back that can be used in conjunction with the restaurant for weddings. Once again we were able to taste a wide variety of wines (but not quite as much as we did at Martini & Prati). In any case, David's enthusiasm for making our visit enjoyable, really added to what now was becoming a great event. If you would like to visit Topolo's they are also just West of Santa Rosa. Topolos is on the 116 (or Gravenstein Highway) at 5700 Gravenstein Highway near Forestville.

Our trip proceeded on to the Korbel winery. The winery itself was a bit too big for the personal touch we received at the last two stops, however, we arranged to have lunch at the deli at Korbel and that experience turned out to work well also. We had a few other wineries on our list but we ran out of time. As it was, I think we returned to San Francisco with about four cases and four jugs of wine.

There is one other item to mention. Our driver. The only way to have a good wine trip experience is to find someone who is going to drive and not drink any wine. This is sometimes a difficult task. We were fortunate to have the current Miss SGA, Liz as our driver. Thanks Liz !!

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From the Editor...

Continued from Page 2

close to us and those we pass in the street. Sounds a bit preachy, I know - but it's really simple and quite true: love who you are to be happy. If you're happy, show it! Then be willing to share who you are with another, and watch it all come back to you tenfold. Positive waves, man. Good vibrations. In the immortal words of Bill and Ted, be excellent to each other.

And Party On, Dudette!

Wow! Cool Cotillion, eh? Our heartiest congratulations to Savannah, Miss TGSF 2001. That woman sure knows how to shimmy! Shine on Girl! Lot of Cotillion photos this issue, perhaps at the expense of some TG news you can probably access elsewhere (if you haven't already). But I did want to point out that it's not too late to participate in contacting the Board of Supervisors and other powers that be in the City of San Francisco, showing your support for their recent ground-breaking decision to offer health care benefits to their transgendered employees. But the Board is getting flooded with a lot of negative response from its constituents. Recent commentary on the issue and contact information begins on Page 8. Please send a letter to these people today! And send a warm thank you to Mark Leno and his staff!



Miss TGSF 2001, Savannah

ExCOM MEETING MINUTES

The monthly meeting of TGSF's Executive Committee was held in Berkeley at the Pacific Center on February 11, 2001 at 4:00 p.m. In attendance were President Nicole Cook, Vice President Aiyana Eveningstar, Secretary and acting Treasurer Debbie Cook, Education Co-Chair Stephanie Ann Blythe, Social Co-Chair Serena Anderson, Outreach Co-Chair Kalani Makalani and Outreach Co-Chair Telzey Adams. Social Co-Chair Tianna DeVil and Education Co-Chair Jennifer Antoinette were absent.

Janis Ryan was a guest.

The meeting was called to order at 4:18 p.m.

President: Nicole indicated that in general, the revenues from the Cotillion almost exactly match the expenses from the Cotillion. Unfortunately, this did not include the donations. As a result, it looks like we will be overbudgeted by the amount of our donations. Things could be better when we see the two remaining bills, but we're pretty sure where we are at on the bills.

One thing that helped us keep as close to the budget as we did were the revenues generated from the events surrounding the Cotillion. After subtracting costs, we made approximately \$340 from those events. Nicole is eager to see those events expanded next year because she believes that those events are the key to ensuring that the Cotillion breaks even.

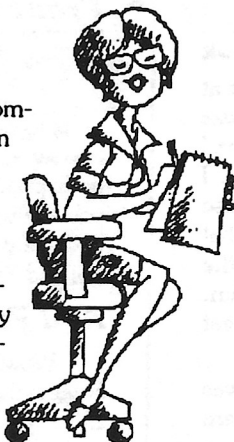
In order to have maintained our proposed \$1,500 worth of donations, we would have needed to sell approximately 28 additional seats. If the remaining two payments turn out to be less than we expected, we will increase our donations accordingly.

We sold 328 tickets to the cotillion. Aiyana mentioned that with the Cotillion falling on the same night as a court event, that could have caused the number of tickets sold to go down.

We have 3 outstanding tax issues. The 2001 taxes will be due in September 2001 for the year ending June 1, 2001 and we plan to have it ready to turn in to the IRS at the turnover of the next ExCom so that the next board doesn't have to do it again until 2002. The September 2000 taxes, to our knowledge, was never submitted and we are working on that as well. The 1998 was the one turned in late and has a \$480 penalty. We have been talking with the IRS and to a tax person. We are confident that we can get that overturned. Nicole asked Janis about prior records since she was last year's Treasurer. We are essentially asking the IRS to give us copies of what we have turned in because we don't know where we stand at the moment. Janis mentioned that she should have an electronic backup of 1999's taxes and can help us in getting that to us if our former Treasurer Deborah cannot locate them.

Nicole is working on a revision to the standing rules. It's how to produce a Cotillion. It contains copies of all the contracts, all things we need to turn in and the time frame of things. This will be added to all of the ExCom notebooks so it will be known how to do this. Any contributions to the book would be helpful so we can get it finished.

Anyone who has their ExCom notebooks should please return them to the Secretary so they can be updated and returned. They will have the current bylaws as well as the current taxes and CCC filing dates, any legal documents, updated standing rules, current resource guide, insurance documents and anything else that would be pertinent information to the future ExCom's.



Nicole has done some additional work with regards to the potential funding of the TGSF Educational Program. The Secretary of the new TLGB Community Center has been contacted with regards to setting up a fund between TGSF and the San Francisco City College who will be running the classes being taught in the new Community Center. We can then fund TG students who wish to attend classes in the Community Center and they can receive college credits from San Francisco City College.

We would like to have pictures taken of TGSF giving the donations to the organizations that we have selected to receive them from the profits of the Cotillion. We would like to place the photos in the Channel. It would enhance that fact that we do give charitable contributions.

The insurance may not be as bad as we thought it would be for the Cotillion. It was mentioned in the past that we had to pay extra for the rider that needed to be written up specifically for the Cotillion. We didn't have to pay extra this year. We should still shop around for insurance because it was so expensive to renew, but it wasn't as bad as originally thought.

Vice President: There was much applause for the production of this year's Cotillion. There were some flaws, but those will be discussed at the post-mortem Cotillion meeting. Nicole mentioned not being able to find the box of Cotillion brochures that were under the ticket table at the front of the venue when the show was over. We thought someone took the whole box home with them. Serena mentioned that Rachael Janelle picked up the box and took it with her.

Next Sunday could be a good day to hold the meeting, but it will be worked on in the near future. That way, Dear Diva can be included in the meeting. Nicole volunteered to check into a nearby restaurant for the meeting.

We should consider the 2002 Cotillion planning meeting. Getting together to get a concept would allow us to get flyers out earlier. Aiyana thinks she will be able to give us a date for the next Cotillion in the next couple of weeks once she can get an answer from the venue. Once we have a date, we can start building the website and going forward with things. We should have a March meeting as a starting meeting for the next Cotillion.

It would be good to have some basic flyers before Cal Dreamin' so that we can get the word out much, much earlier than before.

We would like to get some good tables at the San Francisco Coronation. We have plenty of people to fill a table, but we should reserve another table just in case. Aiyana mentions that the seats are \$50. It was agreed upon and Aiyana will talk with Marlena about getting good seats.

We should consider putting an ad in the Coronation program since we had at least 2 court ads in our Cotillion brochure.

We are also going to do food this year, so we will be asking for a donation to the food for the tables.

Secretary: Membership is at 243 which is up by 5 from last year, but we are down 10 below 2 years ago. We are considering a web deal. . . be a member from afar to see if we can get the membership up a little.

Last month's meeting minutes were approved, although Aiyana keeps receiving a garbled format. Debbie admits she forgot about Aiyana having a Mac and not being able to read attachments send via PC. She will paste the minutes into the body of the email for her so she can get the minutes along with everyone else.

Meeting Minutes...

Continued from Page 4

Editor: The newsletter went out on time, and we were stuffing from the reception suite during the Cotillion weekend. We are on budget for the newsletter with no attachments added.

Publicist: There were no advertising renewals this month.

Treasurer: We currently have \$2,714.98 in the bank account. Nicole asked Aiyana to please return any unused checks that were given to her before the Cotillion to make payments on needed items. Acting Treasurer Debbie will now finish making the final outstanding Cotillion payments.

Nicole and Debbie sat down and did a correlating Cotillion budget to the General Journal to make sure payments matched 1 for 1. This decreases any surprises that could show up later on when finishing the Cotillion budget.

Co-Social Chair: Serena and Darcy are going to go out on a missing to find a good mid-month place. If nothing comes to mind, Café Mars will be the place. It was mentioned by Tianna not long ago that a fashion show should be in order again for the end-of-month. Serena will talk with Tianna about it and try to firm something up.

Serena mentioned the pre-Cotillion show on Thursday night and how well it went. Everyone came in and were very professional in their performances. There were about 50% lip-sync and 50% live entertainment. Serena mentioned that it might be a good idea to have some munchies for the performers at the night of the pre-Cotillion show next year. It would be a nice "thank-you" to the performers.

Outreach Chair 1: Kalani reports that there were 5 people who attended the Speaker Orientation class. We gained 1 new speaker which is great, but we will try to plan another one in the future. Sometime closer to when the fall classes start at the colleges.

There is a speaker request in May for Stanford University where the speakers will be talking to the whole Stanford Medical School. This month and next month are requests from DeAnza College.

Outreach Chair 2: Telzey noticed that Nicole and Debbie has cut back their time on the TGSF phone line. We do get some phone calls, but the type of calls are sometimes surprising. Telzey mentioned she will be taking photos at the SF Coronation so we don't have to find a replacement photographer for that.

Education Chair 1: Stephanie Ann mentions a possible seminar with Joyce Patterson-Rogers who works with a company called Harper & Greer which is a fashion company of some type. Also, there is a plastic surgeon in Santa Rosa that Stephanie Ann is trying to get as a seminar set up with. His pricing is much lower than that of Dr. Ousterhout and his work isn't bad either.

Nicole mentioned that if we were to set up a seminar on TG History, would people come. Serena mentioned that there are classes like that held at the Harvey Milk Institute on TG History as well as a class called "All About Trans" which is about TG rights. We should look into that we may want to coordinate with them and place that into the newsletter. Since they are classes, they could be several meetings long, but we should still look into it and advertise it. They run consistently each month or so.

Education Chair 2: Jennifer was absent.

Guests: In response to a discussion in a previous newsletter, Janis provided a copy of the Bylaws from the Treasurers records of the last term to the current Secretary which will assist the current Secretary in verifying the working on one of the measures voted in last year.

Janis will again try to get information to us regarding the taxes in 1999 which will be greatly appreciated by President Nicole and Secretary Debbie.

Adjournment: At 5:35 p.m., Nicole makes a motion to close the meeting, Aiyana seconded the motion, the motion was passed.

Next ExCom Meeting is on Sunday, March 11th, at 3:30 p.m. at the Pacific Center in Berkeley.

Special Topics Meeting: General announcements of upcoming events which did not get into the agenda were discussed. One discussed is the Trans Open House on March 24th from 1 pm to 4 pm at the Lighthouse Community Center.

SGA Talent Show

Sacramento Gender Association will be holding their annual talent show on March 10, 2001 upstairs at The Townhouse, 1517 21st Street in Sacramento. The doors open at 8:00pm, show starts at 9:00pm. Price is \$3.00 members, \$5.00 non-members.

If you are interested in performing or even volunteering to help out, please leave a message for Miss SGA 2001, Liz D. on the SGA hotline at (916) 364-7212.

If you haven't attended this one, you really should. As many of you that had attended last year know, it was a really terrific show and promises to be even better than the last!! Be there or be left out.

Also that night will be the new 2001 board elections. If you are a current member of the board, please get out there and vote!! The new board will be announced at the conclusion of the show.

New Members since February Issue:

Monica

*Who, by the way, looked faabulous
as a Cotillion Contestant*

Welcome!

SUPPORT GROUP FOR TRANS FOLKS 510-527-5662 ▼ valigl@aol.com

MEETS MONDAYS, 1:30 - 3:00PM

Open to MTF, FTM, third-gendered, undecided, at any stage of transition. A safe place to receive support from peers and explore a variety of issues. Can fulfill the therapy requirement of the current standards of care.



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Co-facilitators: VALERIE IGL, licensed Marriage and Family Therapist,
and REID VANDERBURGH, MA in Counseling Psychology student and FTM.

Saturday / March 10th / 8:00pm

SGA TALENT SHOW

See ad elsewhere in this issue for more information on this fun event in the State's Capitol! Volunteers are still needed!

Sunday / March 11th / 4:00pm

EXCOM MEETING

The monthly meeting of the ExCom will be held at the Pacific Center. We are always in need of volunteers. If you are interested, please contact your Secretary or come to a meeting!!

The Pacific Center is located at 2712 Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley. If you need more information, please feel free to contact your Secretary Debbie Cook at (707) 824-0860 or by email at moodydeb@yahoo.com.

Wednesday / March 14th / 7:00pm

TRANSBAY SOCIAL

Don't forget that 2nd Wednesday of the month is the day that the TransBay group meets at Quetzals. Quetzals is located at 1234 Polk, between Sutter and Bush (right down the street from Kimo's). Park in the large parking structure and walk around the corner to where the coffee shop is located. This event starts at 7:00pm.

Wednesday / March 14th / 8:00pm

TGSF MID MONTH SOCIAL

We are returning to Cafe Mars! So we will once again grace 'Mars' with our presence for our March Mid-month. This has been a favorite in the past and apparently is still a pleasing rendezvous to some. It's a good place to have a meal and a few cocktails with friends. The conversation is what you make of it. You'll also find it an opportunity to mingle with some of the local clientele. Do some outreach girls! If you've been there before, I need tell you no more.

Saturday / March 24th / 1:00pm

LIGHTHOUSE COMMUNITY CENTER TG OPEN HOUSE

See the announcement on Page 10 for more details!

Thursday / March 29th / 8:00pm

TGSF END OF MONTH SOCIAL

The End of Month social will be held at one of our hangouts we visit on and off, The Blue Muse. There is no special event planned this month, but do come, have a drink and carry on some wonderful conversation with the lovely gals that gather for dinner or just to relax. Ayme recommends the rack of lamb.

The Blue Muse is located at 409 Gough Street in San Francisco. Park in any of the local parking lots on either side of the restaurant.

March's Birthdays...

3/1	Dusty Prentiss	3/21	Jackie Conner
3/3	Geri Handa	3/21	Katherine Kramer
3/7	Shelley	3/21	Nicole Kucera
3/8	Susan Flowers	3/21	Kalani Makanani
3/9	Aiyana Eveningstar	3/22	Joan Sheldon
3/11	Lucy Ann Jones	3/22	Joyce Patterson-Rogers
3/11	Lichen	3/22	Kathy Ann Johnson
3/11	Erika Carter	3/23	Shelly Cohen
3/13	Joan Roughgarden	3/26	Staci Marie
3/14	Roxanna Rochette	3/27	Brenda Didi Mau
3/19	Mina Schwartz	3/27	Telzey Adams
3/20	Donna Freeman		

Many Happy Returns of the Day!

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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Calendar of Events - March 2001

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. 510-548-8283

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. Mail: 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 162907, Sacramento, CA 95816 or call 916-364-7212 for meeting locations. Website: www.sga-tg.org; email: sga@transgender.org

Diablo Valley Girls (DVG)
Meets 1st and 3rd Monday of every month. 8:00pm at Club 1220, 1220 Pine Street 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, 2118 Willow Pass Road, Suite 500 in Concord. For more information call 925-937-8432.

FTM
A support group for Female-to-Male CDs and TSs; 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
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 GLBT 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.

Santa Cruz Trans (SCT)
Bi-weekly social/support group for gender-gifted persons serving Santa Cruz and Central Coast. 1st and 3rd Thursdays every month at The Diversity Center, 1328 Commerce Lane, Santa Cruz, CA 95060; (831) 425-5422; 7:00pm

The Mid-Peninsula Transgender Group (MPTG)
A support group for the LGBT community that meets at 7:30 pm on the first Wednesday of each month at the Women's Health Boutique, 1115 South B Street, San Mateo - (408) 619-2908.

Central City Hospitality House (CCHH)
288 Turk Street, SF. 415-749-2167. Facilitated TG discussion group every Monday, 5:00pm - 6:30pm.

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

					1 7:00 PM DVG (RCC) 7:00 PM SCT	2 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM RGA	3
4	5 5:00 PM CCHH 8:00 PM DVG	6	7 7:30 PM MPTG	8	9 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM TGSF: Game Night!	10 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA 8:00 PM SGA Talent Show	
11 4:00 PM TGSF: ExCom Meeting	12 5:00 PM CCHH	13	14 7:00 PM TransBay 8:00 PM TGSF: MidMonth Social	15 7:00 PM DVG (RCC) 7:00 PM SCT	16 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM RGA	17	
18	19 5:00 PM CCHH 8:00 PM DVG	20	21	22	23 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap	24 1:00 PM Lighthouse Open House 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA	
25	26 5:00 PM CCHH	27	28	29 8:00 PM TGSF: End of Month Social	30 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap	31	

TGSF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership Year runs from May 1st - April 30th; \$30 Single Membership; \$40 Family.

Please Print / Check all that apply:

New Member | Renewal Member #: _____ | with Family Member | What Year did you first join TGSF? _____

Preferred Name: _____ Birthdate (Month/Day): _____ / _____

Mailing Name: _____

Family Member's Name: _____ Birthdate (Month/Day): _____ / _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

Optional: Telephone: (_____) _____ What Name should we ask for if we need to call you? _____

Your Email address: _____ Website URL: _____

Would you like a link from the TGSF Website to your URL? Yes No

Send Check or Money Order to: TGSF, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486, or hand to any Board Member at a TGSF Social.

May we use photos of you taken at TGSF events in our newsletter or website? Yes No

Our Readers Respond

A PLEA FROM MARK LENO'S STAFF!

By Nathan Purkiss

The Board of Supervisors has gotten an onslaught of e-mail and phone calls - virtually all of them in opposition - regarding the Health Service System Board decision to include Transgender care. I also read a negative letter in the Examiner today and we have been getting a ton of press coverage - I expect not all of it will be positive.

I need your help. We need members of the community to organize an e-mail and letter writing campaign to lobby the Supervisors and the Mayor, as well as to get some positive letters in the media. Mark is trying to control the media spin, but we need your help. We believe that we have all the votes we need at the Board, as well as the Mayor on board, but that could possibly change if we get a constant barrage of opposition and very little support.

Please get in contact with every supporter you can to back our historic benefits package. We could possibly lose this if we don't get some positive feedback over the next few weeks.

Here is the appropriate contact information:

Press:

San Francisco Chronicle
Editorials
901 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94103-2988
415-777-1111
letters@sfchronicle.com.

San Francisco Examiner
Editorials
988 Market St.
San Francisco, CA, 94102
415.359.2600
letters@sfxaminer.com

Mayor:

Willie L. Brown, Jr., Mayor
City Hall, Room 200, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 554-6141; (415) 252-3107 (TDD)
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all located at C:ityHall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place,
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Gavin Newsom - District 2
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Gavin_Newsom@ci.sf.ca.us

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Leland_Yee@ci.sf.ca.us

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(415) 554-7670 - voice
(415) 554-7674 - fax
Sophie_Maxwell@ci.sf.ca.us

Matt Gonzalez - District 5
(415) 554-7630 - voice
(415) 554-7634 - fax
Matt_Gonzalez@ci.sf.ca.us

Gerardo Sandoval - District 11
(415) 554-6975 - voice
(415) 554-69?? - fax
Gerardo_Sandoval@ci.sf.ca.us

NATHAN AND OTHERS,

Here are my thoughts on the subject. I hope they are helpful.

1. The HSSB has had over two and half years to consider this action. We first presented these issues to the full HSSB in December 1997. This was not undertaken lightly. The majority of the HSSB were clear from the outset that they took seriously their responsibility to act without discrimination, as well as, to be fully fiscally responsible to the City's employees and retirees. The transgender benefit was not undertaken until there was certainty that the benefit could be offered in a manner that was fiduciarily responsible. The consulting actuaries for the City, Towers/Perrin and Associates, have stated that it was their job to attach the highest possible estimate of costs to the City. The President of HSSB and the Chair of the HSSB Rates and Benefits Committee both concluded the Transgender benefit would have substantially less fiscal impact than would the Board's decision to continue a comparably liberal policy regarding pharmacy deductibles for all employees in Plan One.

2. The benefit is a pilot program. The pilot calls for a joint coordinating committee to be established. The committee will be chaired by the Chair of the Rates and Benefit Committee and will include medical practitioners, consulting actuaries and members of the public. The committee will have responsibility for setting up a preferred provider network of experienced and knowledgeable medical practitioners; establishing reimbursement rates and implementing the benefit. Additionally the committee will in two years report back to the HSSB with a formal report detailing 1) the health care outcomes achieved by implementation of the benefit; 2) the administrative challenges of implementing the benefit; and 3) the costs to the City of the benefit.

3. The benefit covers only those procedures found to be medically necessary as determined by the treatment guidelines of the internationally recognized panel of medical experts — The Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association. It does not cover everything that an individual may desire, or even everything someone may have a prescription for. The benefit does not cover elective procedures. It does not cover cosmetic procedures.

4. Should covered health care be subject to a popularity contest? Shall covered health care be limited to only those procedures a majority of individuals may require? If every controversial procedure is to be subjected to popular vote, what other currently covered procedures should be subject to a popular vote? Should a majority of non-smokers be polled in the affirmative before all are required to subsidize the health care costs of smokers? Are we not familiar with the unequal and limited access to reproductive medi-

Continued on Page 9

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Our Readers Respond

To Nathan, et. al...

Continued from Page 8

cine and legal abortion that poor women have because of the political opposition to funding for reproductive health care? Transgender health care is the same issue.

5. Is there an alternative to politicizing health care benefits? Clearly there is; and it is the standard with which the HSSB approached the Transgender benefit issue:

- 1) The covered benefit must fiscally responsible.
- 2) The covered benefit must be recognized as a non-elective and medically necessary treatment by the recognized panel of clinical experts for the medical condition.
- 3) The covered benefit must be both clinically safe and effective. If it were your life, your loved one at risk, would you want your health care insurance to apply these standards? Or; should a vote be taken to see if the necessary treatment (or the patient) is politically correct?

6. Yes; someone has to be first. Once again, in this country that someone is the City and County of San Francisco. Such attitudes are why with every generation, this City is renewed by some of the best and brightest minds and spirits from every corner of our country. Even so, the benefit now enacted here was long ago enacted by most of Europe and the Canadian provinces.

7. Lastly and personally; the report by Cynthia Laird in the February 15, 2001 edition of the Bay Area Reporter may give a misleading impression of my position. Yes, it is true "That there is work to be done"; but that applies to the full implementation of this benefit. I am sensitive to the concerns of many that the cap on this benefit unequally impacts those accessing female to male Transgender health care. Nonetheless, I testified in full support of the benefit as proposed by the HSSB. I described their overall benefit package as "fair and reasonable". Prior to the vote of the HSSB, I encouraged those concerned with the benefit cap to give the program an opportunity to be implemented and develop. Insuring that there is, in fact, equal access to care is important work for the HSSB's Transgender benefit committee.

Lisa Middleton

A LETTER TO THE EXAMINER EDITOR

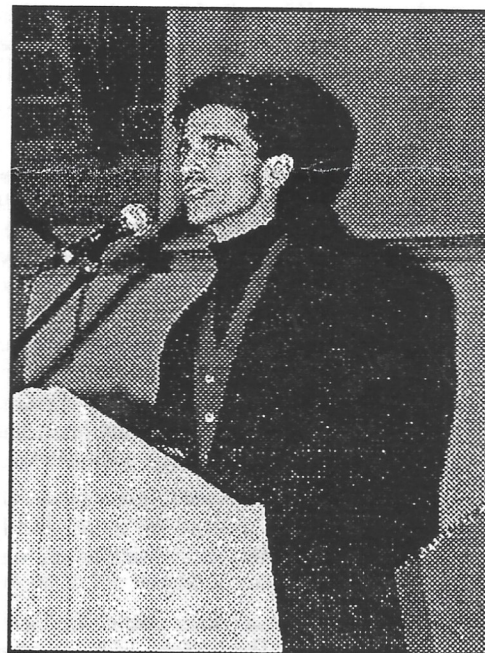
Published SF Examiner, February 22, 2001
(follows is the original, unedited text).

Someone once told me he disapproved of "The Transsexual Lifestyle." I thought, "Gee, what is there in my lifestyle to disapprove of? I wake up, shower, breakfast and go to work. I work, take lunch, and work some more. Then I drive home, cook and eat dinner, perhaps call my children, friends or ex-wife, work at my computer, or, if it's Monday, watch Ally McBeal. Then I go to bed. And sleep. What is there to disapprove of? That my life is boring?"

I think my critic, and our critics, imagine something far different when they refer to "The Transsexual Lifestyle." Something sensational, lewd or pitifully comic. Something they imagine, but not reality.

The fact is that we transsexuals are just like anyone else, but with this difference: a birth defect, gender dysphoria, that may render us incapable of living at peace within our own skins or being fully productive members of society until we are able to correct our disability with gender surgery.

Jane Bolig



Supervisor Mark Leno,
addresses the 2001 Cotillion audience.

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Special Events & Announcements

Saturday March 10 (7:00pm)

GENDER ART

A Performance by Transgendered Artists. Come witness and enjoy transgendered artists in our communities express their art in an event that celebrates another color of the rainbow we know as diversity. Come hear voices, view visions, and honor art that challenge what is normally known as gender, and much, much more. Saturday March 10, 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm. Pro Arts Gallery, 461 Ninth Street (near Broadway) Downtown Oakland. For more information contact Patricia Kevena Fili at (510) 663-7958. Free to the public. This event is sponsored by AIDS Project East Bay and the Butterfly Project.

Saturday March 24 (1:00pm)

TRANSGENDER OPEN HOUSE

Community forum presented by Alameda T's, the transgender support group of the Lighthouse Community Center. Alameda T's cordially invite the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and questioning community to an afternoon devoted to transgender dialogue. Gender is one of the core aspects of homophobia, and the les-bi-gay community knows this all too well. While the "T" in LGBTQ is ever present, the understanding of the unique struggles of transgendered men and women is sometimes lacking in the larger queer community. Please join us for an afternoon of transgender exploration, speak with transgender individuals, and expect to be challenged during our Transgender Panel Presentation from 1:30 to 2:30. Bring questions, curiosity, and an open mind. Refreshments will be served. For more information call (510) 790-2887. Saturday March 24 at the Lighthouse Community Center, 1217 A Street, Hayward.

FTM Services at New Leaf in SF

16-WEEK THERAPY GROUP FOR FTM'S

We use a lot of different names to describe ourselves—FTM, F2M, MTM, butch, tranny, gender dysphoric, androgynous, female-to-male crossdresser, transman, girlboy, boi, fagdyke, transgendered, transsexual, passing woman, preop transsexual, postop, no-ho no-op. What all of these identities have in common is a noticeable level of discomfort with living in a female identity, and a desire to explore other options. Whether you are just beginning to get in touch with these feelings, or you've been taking testosterone or even had surgery and are living full-time in a male identity, you are welcome in this group.

The process of questioning one's gender identity or transitioning into a male identity can be exhilarating. It can also be stressful. If we already have other issues (child abuse, addiction, depression, etc.), these problems can be more difficult to handle. A lot of questions come up in transition—coming out to friends and family, dealing with employers, changing pronouns and maybe your name, body image and dress, how to handle romance and sexuality, and what this means in light of our spiritual, religious, or ethical values. While we are changing, we often find that the important people in our lives go through a lot of changes as well.

This group will be a safe place to meet others who share your issues and have a new perspective on them, and hopefully gain more clarity. FTMs of all sexual orientations are welcome to join the group.

For more information, contact Patrick Califia-Rice, MFTI, at (415) 626-7000, ext. 423. Patrick is an FTM clinician at New Leaf, a community-based organization that provides mental health services to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered communities. New Leaf charges on a sliding scale. The agency is located at 1853 Market Street (at Guerrero) in San Francisco.

ARE YOU A VETERAN?

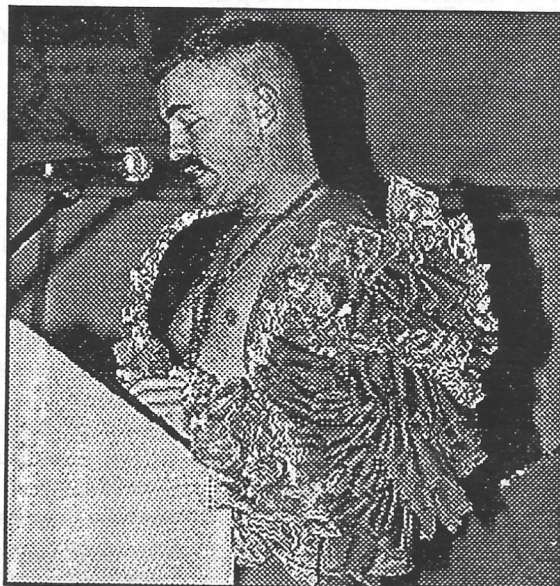
Are you aware that there is a gender discussion group every Monday afternoon at the Ft. Miley Veteran's Center in San Francisco? The group is open to all TS, TV, and TG's who are qualified veterans. If you are interested and wish further information, contact Lorraine Hall at: Quiche4520@aol.com or call 510-523-9952.

CAR DONATION PROGRAM

You may have noticed a rather generous donation this month from Jamie Faye Fenton, and you may be thinking wow if Jamie has that much money to throw around maybe I should hit her up for a loan.

But before you try you need to know something. What Jamie did was donate an old car that was not running to an organization that converts the remaining useful elements of the car into cash and provides a check to the charity or non-profit specified by the person who donates the car. This process takes a while. It was several months between the time Jamie gave them her car and the time we received the check. But the process works.

So if you have a car just sitting out there on the lawn, here is your chance to get rid of it. The contact for the company called "Car Program LLC" is Phillip Kirton. You can reach Phillip by phone at 800-513-6560 or by email at carprogram@hotmail.com. This is a good way to get rid of an old car and at the same time make a donation to TGSF.



Lenny Brober, Fabulous MC! - Cotillion 2001

Shirley Faire

WHAT'S IN A (MIDDLE) NAME?

I don't have a middle name. I used to have one, but when I changed my name I gave it up.

It's hard enough choosing a first name. A lot of us just sort of cop out. Charlie to Shirley. Don to Donna. John to Joanne. Maybe we just liked the sound of our male name. Or maybe we're unimaginative. Or timid: Adding or altering a letter takes us to new places without straying too far from home.

Unless our born name is Michael. Michaels seem more willing to adventure, and I don't know why. I just never met a Michael, or Mike (think "Mike Hammer"), who wasn't independent and self-assured. A Joe can become a Jo. A Bill can become a Billie. But Michael to Michelle? It happens, but more often Michaels choose female names that respond to that same syncopatic drummer they follow all through their lives. If George Forman was named Michael Forman he'd have beat Mohammed Ali for sure. "MIKE FOREMAN KO'S ALI!" Then he'd name all his sons Michael, and that my friends would have been a force to reckon with. But I digress.

Many of us, no matter how close or far we stray from our born names, embellish the spelling of our adopted one. "J's" are replaced by "Gh's" "ey" endings are replaced by "ie", and vice-versa. Or we stuff in superfluous vowels and consonants. Our adopted middle name only compounds the infraction into a misdemeanor, if not outright felony, like tearing off a mattress tag and using it as a weapon.

"Hey," I hear you saying, "just don't choose a frilly name. No problem." Oh, yeah? Then how come the only people in the news with middle names are convicted murderers? I take on a middle name, the next thing I know, here come the cops: "Ms. Shirley Bea Faire, we'd like to ask you a few questions." Next thing you know it's ten years later and I'm explaining to Mike Wallace how I was framed just because I had a middle name. And he ain't buying it!

OK, OK, that's not really the reason. Here it is: When I was living as an XY person I had a middle name which in my innocent childhood I was taught to love and respect. It was an honored family name doing double duty as tribute to the sacred memory of one of our Founding Fathers. But it was also, as I learned while filling out my marriage license, a funny name. My wife saw it and laughed, and didn't stop laughing for days. Once she started, I woke up to the fact that cartoonists and stand-up comics and sitcom writers thought it was a funny name, too. Only the most doofus, clueless characters wore my middle name.

Then we had children, who became her audience and her echo. "Pick up your toys," I would say to my four year-old, who would narrow his eyes and with slow contempt utter that middle name, then kick toys in my face.

I stopped signing my middle name. I removed it from my driver license and all other documents whenever and wherever I could. Still, it kept coming back to me like Marley's Ghost returning every Christmas Eve. Even today, I no longer receive mail in my old first name without the dreaded middle one attached. If I just keep changing my address, perhaps the post office will run out of those damned yellow stickers and I won't be hounded, hounded, don't you see.

How can you even ask why I don't have a middle name? Choose the wrong middle name and it pursues you that like a Hound of Hell in the Night. Just when you think you've eluded the beast, it emerges from the murk on the trail ahead.

As I think about it, my whole transition was about finding a way to escape the curse of a middle name. Living as a woman, legal name change, SRS, all of it, just to get away from that, that middle name. It almost worked.

This is the fourth of a series of articles by Janis Ryan in which she shares her observations and experiences as a crossdresser who frequently goes out in public *en femme*. Your comments are welcome. Janis can be contacted by email at janisr@tgforum.com

MEN DON'T MAKE PASSES...

by Janis Ryan

... at women with glasses. That is a saying that I heard while growing up. It relates to the assumption that men are attracted to women entirely by their physical appearance. I found out recently that this is not always true.

Janis' MLK Day

On January 15, Martin Luther King Day, I went out shopping for a new computer. I was dressed in an orange sweater and orange corduroy pants. I was wearing a pair of women's glasses that I had gotten after my last eye exam at a store that featured two frames for \$99. The other pair that I got that day was my typical silver wire-rim frames.

I went to a store in downtown Oakland and found a computer on a closeout sale that, after further shopping, I returned to buy on the following day. I stopped in at the Goodwill store and bought a nightgown. Then I went to a very busy beauty salon that I had been to once before, and had my hair colored and styled.

After leaving the salon, I walked to a restaurant nearby and had dinner. I then caught the bus to take me home.

Many years ago I had to drastically limit drinking alcohol for health reasons, and have limited myself to an occasional drink for special occasions. I hadn't yet had my annual glass of champagne to celebrate the New Year, so I decided to stop in at a bar near where I live. I had gone by it many times, but had never been inside it before. I had noticed that people there did in fact go outside to smoke, since I find it very unpleasant to be forced to breathe tobacco smoke as happens in many of the locations where TGSF meetings have been held recently.

When I entered, I found that it was very busy. I found a seat at the end of the bar, near the entrance. When one of the bartenders could get to me, I asked her if they had any champagne. She said that they did have it in individual bottles, and went to get one for me.

At about that time a gentleman entered and asked if he could sit next to me. I agreed, and he ordered a drink for himself. We had a pleasant conversation. He described his work in the computer field. I told him about my background, including the fact that I had grown up in the neighborhood where we were sitting.

As I was finishing my drink, he asked for my phone number, but I declined. He told me that he thought that I was very sexy. I thanked him for his complement, declined his offer to accompany me to my car, which I didn't have anyway, and walked home.

Impossible?

Prior to 1995 I had only made limited excursions out in public *en femme*, mostly driving around at night and hoping that I wouldn't be seen.

I made my public debut at the 1995 Halloween Party in the Castro District in San Francisco, dressed as a Fairy Godmother. Some of the people there caught the double meaning. During the next few years I went out to San Francisco for New Year's Eve as well as Halloween.

Continued on Page 14

Ground-Breaking Announcement!

TG HEALTHCARE!

The City & County of San Francisco's employees, whose health benefits are administered through its Health Services System Board, may now receive transsexual healthcare services through their approved HSSB provider.

These benefits, deemed to be a national precedent, are effective 7/1/01 (for those whose membership in the HSSB plan(s) has been in effect for 12 months) and will be closely monitored/administered with capitation levels observed for the first two years of these medical offerings. The new plan will also include retirees, adult and minor dependents.

San Francisco has a count of 15 self-identified transsexual employees. Over four years of community advisement and advocacy melded advantageously, in a period of less than 30 days, into negotiations for benefit inclusiveness and equal benefits for equal work platforms. Perhaps the newly seated Board Of Supervisors 8:11 ratio of those who have records of supporting transgender/transsexual civil rights might have influenced the HSSB voting Commissioners of it's commitment to fairness.

Representatives from the private health sector, San Francisco's Human Rights Commission, LGBT civil rights legal advocates, and city employees themselves, greatly contributed to this ultimate success and ambitious, if not politically sensitive, approval by the Health Services System Board members.

Contacts:

Jordy Jones, Co-Chair, S.F. Transgender Civil Rights Implementation Task Force; jordy_jones@yahoo.com

Claire Skiffington, Chair, Health Committee, SFTCRITF; Claireleigh@aol.com

Marsha Chapdelaine, Chair, Public Education Committee, SFTCRITF; MJChapdelaine@aol.com

SEX-CHANGE BENEFITS MAY BE APPROVED

By Margie Mason

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) - The city that symbolizes liberalism and sexual openness is about to extend its health insurance to cover sex-change operations for municipal employees.

The Board of Supervisors and Mayor Willie Brown are expected to sign the measure within the next couple of weeks. It will extend up to \$50,000 in benefits to city workers who want to switch their gender.

San Francisco apparently would be the only governmental body in the nation to make sex-change benefits available. The state of Minnesota offered such benefits, but the program was phased out in 1998. The issue was discussed in Oregon, but a commission decided against it in 1999.

"I'm very pleased that we're doing it," board President Tom Ammiano said Friday. "We have a noticeable transgender population in San Francisco, and many are city employees." The benefits would be available starting July 1.

The benefit would cover male-to-female surgery, which costs about \$37,000, as well as female-to-male surgery, which runs about \$77,000. It also would cover hormones and other procedures.

City employee Cecilia Chung, who has had medical problems since sex-change surgery in Thailand two years ago, said she will be the first in line to take advantage of the new insurance.

"I've been trying to get the problem corrected, but it's not covered from my regular health insurance," said Chung, 35, who works for the Department of Public Health.

Transgender advocates said the measure's symbolism is more valuable than the benefits. "I think it's really politically important to do that," said Susan Stryker, executive director of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society of Northern California. "Transgender rights are often considered as a joke: 'What are those wacky San Franciscans going to do next?'" Stryker, who had male-to-female surgery 10 years ago, said San Francisco's transgender community numbers about 15,000.

The term transgender covers a broad range of categories including cross-dressers, transvestites, transsexuals and those born with characteristics of both sexes.

Employees would have to work for the city at least one year before they would be eligible. People wanting sex-change surgery would have to pay 15 percent out of pocket if they use a doctor in the city's health network. If an out-of-network doctor is used, that goes up to 50 percent.

HEY!

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ISO Couple...

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Michaelsfsf@hotmail.com

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EXPANDED HOTLINE HOURS!

Hotline hours have been expanded to include 10pm to 2am. It's a great time for those of you that wait until the kids or other family members are asleep to address your transgendered correspondence. Telzey still answers the phone live from 7pm to 10pm. And now Debbie and Nicole answer the phone live from 10pm to 2am.

Transcending Transgender Support Group

Sponsored by
City of Refuge UCC Outreach Ministries

Facilitators: Janetta Johnson and Portia Denard; Where: City of Refuge, United Church of Christ, 1025 Howard Street, San Francisco CA 94103, (415) 861-6130. When: Every Friday, 6 pm to 7:30 pm. Food and snacks will be provided.

Visible Man

AN END TO EXCLUSIONS

By Jamison Green

We made history again in San Francisco on the afternoon of February 8, 2001.

On that day, thanks to efforts made by San Francisco Human Rights Commission staff and members of the trans community, the Health Service System (HSS) Board, the body that is responsible for negotiating health insurance coverage for San Francisco city and county employees, voted to institute transgender medical care as a covered benefit.

What this means is that San Francisco city and county employees who are transgendered or transsexual may receive psychotherapy under the routine psychotherapy benefit — no more exclusion for being diagnosed as trans!

SF city and county employees who are transsexual may obtain surgical benefits (including FTM mastectomy, hysterectomy/oophorectomy, genital reconstruction, and MTF genital reconstruction) with a 15% copay in-network and 50% copay out-of-network, subject to a maximum benefit of \$50,000. Surgery must be performed by a qualified provider as part of a treatment plan conforming to the HBGDA Standards of Care, or in cases necessitated by injury. Other cosmetic surgery and electrolysis will not be covered. Medical complications will be covered. Surgery benefits will be subject to a requirement of one year of HSS membership, either as an employee, retiree, or dependent. All these benefits become effective in the benefit year beginning July 1, 2001.

Also, the HSS Board called for the formation of a task force to identify qualified providers, examine the disparities that exist in the current implementation, monitor the usage of these benefits, and make recommendations for modifications in benefit provision. All this means that finally a major employer is taking seriously the health and welfare of its transgendered and transsexual employees. And, just as we paved the way for domestic partner coverage years ago, the city and county of San Francisco demonstrates once again that discrimination will not be tolerated.

A Long Road

This is the latest achievement in a decades-long public crusade for transsexual and transgender equality in San Francisco. In the current wave of transactivism, the first victory of political substance occurred in 1993 with the general election passage of what was then known as Proposition L. This change to the city and county administrative regulations, which went into effect in January 1994, provided that transsexual and transgendered people could not be fired from their city and county jobs because of their trans status. In May 1994 the city's Human Rights Commission held landmark public hearings on discrimination against transgendered people, leading to the passage of ordinances prohibiting discrimination against trans people in employment, housing and public accommodation anywhere in San Francisco, which even extended to cover employers who did contractual business with the city and county. These new laws went into effect in January 1995.

Almost immediately after that, those of us who had been active in this effort noted that the city and county were in violation of their own ordinance because of discrimination against trans people in the provision of health care benefits. Exclusions of transsexual treatments often affect all trans people because the exclusion is so broad as to encourage bigoted service providers in denying any health care treatments to trans people, even when the condition is not related to being transgendered or transsexual.



We began petitioning the HSS Board to remove this exclusion in 1996, producing a detailed report on the issue in October 1997 under the auspices of the Human Rights Commission. Still, we could not get a majority of the Board to vote in support of the changes. But now, after months of meetings, discussions, arguments, educational presentations, and several changes in Board membership, the Board approved the benefits package with only one dissenting vote. Now if there are any providers who are tempted to say "We don't provide services to people like you," they have no choice in the matter. Refusal to provide services because of discrimination against transgendered or transsexual city and county employees might even qualify as malpractice!

What It Means

"So what?" you say. "I'm not a city employee; what good is all this going to do for me?" Well, when it comes to insurance it's all about numbers. Over 27,000 employees comprise the insured pool, and the number of known transsexual employees is about 12. Often the arguments against removing exclusions involve statements such as, there are not enough people to warrant providing coverage and (at the same time) if we provide this benefit we'll be overrun with people who want to change sex.

Both these arguments are very bad jokes; the truth is that virtually all the procedures and treatments that trans people require are available and covered for nontrans people. When blanket exclusions are in place it's only when one is identified or diagnosed as trans that one is denied benefits. Now that we have a large inclusive insured pool that we can monitor, in the future we can counter those arguments with statistics, and other insured pools will be able to institute similar benefits without fear. We will prove that the exclusions for medically necessary transgender benefits, including surgical sex reassignment, have been arbitrary and prejudicial all along, and to continue exclusions will only illuminate the bigotry that exclusions represent. One day, we hope, because of this first step, trans people everywhere will be able to get the medical treatment they need and deserve, just like everyone else.

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Continued from Page 11

If anyone had offered to read my fortune on New Year's Eve night 1997, and had told me all of the things that I would do in the coming year, I wouldn't have believed her! I had never been comfortable being by myself in bars or any place where I would have to interact with people that I didn't know.

Going to a meeting, and identifying myself as a crossdresser to a group of strangers, seemed an impossible thing to do. Since 1995 I had seen pictures of people on the Internet, particularly on the TG Forum web site (www.tgforum.com), and had read articles written by some of them. But to actually meet them face to face still seemed an impossible task for me.

Despite that, I finally reached the point that I had to work up the nerve to attend my first meeting of what was then ETVC at the end of February 1998. I had not been able to contact anyone from the group before the meeting, so when I arrived at the restaurant where the meeting was to be held—early—I didn't know what to expect. I had to walk past a long bar filled with regular patrons. There was initially no one to greet me, and I was far too nervous to ask anyone where the meeting was going to be held.

After wandering around the different sections of that restaurant, I finally encountered someone in a red dress with a large wig seated at the bar, and she pointed to the area where the meeting would be held. I later learned that she was Nancy Ann, a long-time member of the group.

When I found the area where the ETVC meeting was to be held, I was recognized by Cindy Martin of TG Forum, to whom I had submitted a picture of me from my first outing on Halloween 1995 (TG Forum Photo Ops, page 11).

Another person who came over to me and made me feel welcome was Diana, who had just been crowned Miss ETVC 1998. She was resplendent in her tiara and white sash. I spent much of that meeting talking with then Vice President Lesley Bailey.

The rest of that year was unbelievable for me. I attended most of the group meetings, went to Carla's in San Jose for makeovers, helped build the float for the Pride Parade and marched in it with the group. I attended *California Dreamin'* and later made trips to Reno and Seattle, where I met many dear friends. I finally was a debutante at Cotillion 1999.

Possible!

I have become fully comfortable going out in public as Janis. The friends, neighbors, and relatives that I have come out to have accepted me. Many of them say that they prefer the outgoing Janis to the withdrawn alter ego that they had known before.

I have had the privilege of helping many people go out in public for the first time *en femme*, and have accompanied several to their first group meetings. And as recently as the last TGSF mid-month social I was there to greet a person coming for the first time.

At the Cotillion this year I saw Diana, whom I hadn't seen since the previous year. She told me that she had just mentioned to someone the fact that she had seen me very nervous at my first meeting in 1998, then running around doing things at Cotillion 2000.

I also talked with Lesley, who was a contestant for Miss TGSF 2001. She told me, to paraphrase slightly, that she felt that I had a lot of guts to do many of the things that I have done.

Conclusion

I still find it difficult to believe how much I have changed since I attended that first meeting three years ago. I know that many of you who are reading this newsletter have not taken that step yourselves. I understand that you, like many of my friends, feel constrained by family and work obligations that prevent you from doing so.

One of the important reasons for the existence of groups like TGSF, DVG, and the similar groups in our area is to make it possible for people to "come out" in a comfortable, supportive environment.

I have tried to show in this article what was possible for me after I finally reached out to others in the Transgender community. I encourage all of you to do the same. Feel free to contact me at janisr@tgforum.com or any of the officers listed in this newsletter and we will be happy to help you make that important first step.



The beautiful Kalani - Cotillion Contestant 2001

Contact TGSF:

- President, Nicole Cook nicole@tgforum.com
- Vice President, Aiyana Eveningstar .. aiyanastar@earthlink.net
- Secretary, Debbie Cook moodydeb@yahoo.com
- Education, Stephanie Ann Blythe steph628@tgforum.com
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- Social, Tianna DeVil tdevil@sirius.com
- Editor, Ayme Kantz MissAyme@aol.com
or tgfseditor@yahoo.com

February 2001

TGSF BALANCE SHEET

Assets

Cash	\$836.16
Event Equipment	
Decorations	\$1,000.00
Food Service	\$200.00
Office Supplies	\$50.00
Total Assets	<u>\$2,086.16</u>

Liabilities

Accounts Payable (Cotillion Expense)	\$1,000.00
Taxes	\$23.00
Insurance	\$0.00
Utilities	\$47.07
Operations	\$23.00
Total Liabilities	\$1,093.07
Equity	\$993.09
Total Liabilities & Equity	<u>\$2,086.16</u>

TGSF Monthly Income Statement

Revenue

Membership	\$40.00
Advertising	\$250.00
Cotillion	\$15,246.12
Donations	\$836.90
Social	\$0.00
Education	\$0.00
Outreach	\$0.00
.....	\$16,373.02

Expenses

Cotillion	\$14,544.66
Halloween Party	\$0.00
Big Shew	\$0.00
Pride Parade	\$0.00
Social	\$69.60
Education	\$0.00
Outreach	\$10.00
Newsletter	\$627.55
Operations	\$47.07
.....	\$15,298.88
Net Income	<u>+ \$1,074.14</u>

Significant Other Support - East Bay

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

Coming in August, 2001

GLOBAL LGBT SUMMIT

This August, 2001 the International Lesbian & Gay Association (ILGA) will convene a first-ever Global Gay Summit here in Oakland, California. The Global Summit will bring together representatives of the world's LGBT organizations for the first global summit of people with same-gender sexual orientations and cross-gender identities.

Leaders and Volunteers will be needed to assist in coordinating everything from programming, logistics, promotion and hospitality. Share your vision of Oakland as host and the world as an LGBT-friendly place. Participate in the planning and production of this important event.

Summit Goals

Use the Summit as a platform to elevate and expand the struggle for civil and human rights for LGBT peoples around the world, and create new, stronger networks among LGBT and supportive organizations.

Create a comprehensive program of scheduled workshops, presentations and discussions designed to enhance understanding and awareness of the myriad issues facing LGBT peoples around the world.

Provide opportunities for individuals to network and build innovative strategies to meet the specific challenges faced by their LGBT communities.

Extend coalitions and alliances with supportive non-LGBT organizations, media, business, labor, faith, civic and political organizations & leaders.

Celebrate our multicultural diversity and artistic talents with a Queer Cultural Arts Festival coinciding with annual pride celebrations in Oakland.

Philosophy

The Summit will strive for inclusiveness, diversity and gender parity in volunteers and participants; will seek as broad a representation as possible from around the world, will seek to be sensitive and responsive to the different cultural, ethnic, political, economic, social and religious perspectives of participants.

The IGLBA

The Belgium-based International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) is the world's largest and most recognized organization dedicated to the cause of equality and justice for LGBT people across the globe. With close to five hundred member organizations in over 80 countries and every continent on Earth, ILGA strive to inform governments and advocate on behalf of lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender (LGBT) peoples everywhere, networking with local LGBT groups and building coalitions with human

Continued on Page 18

Wendell Debele M.S. (T.C.M.) Dipl. L.Ac.



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Appointment Is A San Francisco First
TRANSGENDER WOMAN JOINS RIGHTS
BOARD

Christopher Heredia, Chronicle Staff Writer
Saturday, February 3, 2001

Surrounded by well-wishers at a brief swearing-in ceremony yesterday, Theresa Sparks basked in the attention that came with being another of San Francisco's "firsts."

Holding two colorful bouquets and wearing a gardenia on the lapel of her black suit, Sparks — the city's first transgender appointee to the powerful Human Rights Commission — said she hoped to bring the perspective of a member of an oft-maligned minority group to the panel and be a role model.

"I hope to give our community a voice in the enforcement of discrimination laws in San Francisco," Sparks, 50, said in an interview after the ceremony in Mayor Willie Brown's office.

"Even in San Francisco, transgender people are still stereotyped," she said.

"Transgenders are fine as long as they're street theater. As soon as we move into the apartment next door or use the bathroom, then we become a problem."

The first meeting of her unpaid, four-year term will come next week.

"Finally, we have a part in helping ourselves rather than having to rely on the help of others," Sparks said. "For so long, we've been on the outside looking in."

The 11-member San Francisco Human Rights Commission investigates and mediates discrimination complaints, monitors city contracts for compliance with city nondiscrimination policies and certifies minority- and women-owned businesses in city contracting.



Cotillion Contestant, Monica - every inch a Lady!

"We've tried to reach out to the transgender community that our city commissions reflect the diversity of San Francisco," Brown said. "Theresa helps . . . brings representation that we didn't have."

There are an estimated 15,000 to 18,000 transgender men and women living in San Francisco.

To explain the significance of Sparks' appointment, supporter Jo Ellen Fisher, who is also transgender, rattled off the grim statistics that weigh on her mind every day: Transgender men and women are 16 times more likely to be murdered than the average person in the United States; they face a 70 percent unemployment rate, compared with 4 percent in the general population. And they often have difficulty getting medical care and housing, not to mention the daily sneers and jeers.

"All you have to do is walk 10 feet behind me on any street and you'll know why we need a commissioner," Fisher said.

Sparks owns a consulting firm and worked last fall on the reelection campaign of Supervisor Mark Leno. She grew up in Kansas and has an engineering degree from Kansas State University.

She moved to San Francisco from San Diego in 1997, the same year she began the process of changing her gender identity to female — a transformation supported by all three of her adult children.

Sparks also serves on the city's Transgender Civil Rights Implementation Task Force.

"She deserves the recognition for the hard work she has done. . . . It's an honor to be here," said Michelle Jinich, a male-to-female transgender, who stood along a back wall in the mayor's office, smiling proudly.

Leno, who attended the ceremony, said Sparks' appointment accomplishes one of the Transgender Civil Rights Implementation Task Force first goals: getting more transgender men and women into city jobs and commission slots.

"Theresa brings insight, human understanding and fair-mindedness to the commission," Leno said.

E-mail Christopher Heredia at cheredia@sfchronicle.com.

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ANOTHER MINORITY FLEXES ITS MUSCLE IN SAN FRANCISCO

NY Times, February 24, 2001
By Evelyn Nieves

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 23 — Some days, Theresa Sparks finds it an ordeal simply to walk out her door. How will she look? How will others see her? The same questions dog her everywhere. Entering a public restroom takes internal debate. Walking up to a makeup counter requires a stiff upper lip.

Being a transsexual means facing stares every day. But Ms. Sparks, a 50-year-old environmental consultant who had a sex-change operation last year, has reason to believe that life will get easier — if not soon, then someday, and if not for her, then for others like her. As the newest member of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission, and the first who is transgendered, Ms. Sparks said she planned to fight for the acceptance of people like her in the larger society.

"The mayor took a courageous step in saying it's time that this community be recognized," she said of her appointment.

Indeed, it has been a pretty good couple of weeks for San Francisco's transgendered residents (with an estimated 15,000 to 18,000 transgendered people, San Francisco has the largest such population per capita in the country). Earlier this month, Ms. Sparks was appointed and a city panel announced plans, expected to be approved within weeks, to make San Francisco the first city to provide health insurance to cover sex-change operations for municipal employees.

The term "transgendered" covers a range of people, including heterosexual cross-dressers, homosexual drag queens and transsexuals who believe they were born in the wrong body. There are also those who consider themselves to be both male and female, or intersexed, and those who take hormones and believe that is enough to complete their gender identity without a sex change.

A quarter-century ago, the San Francisco area became a safe haven and magnet for gay men and lesbians looking for a place where they could feel freer to be themselves. Over the last decade, and especially in the last few years, this famously tolerant city has become the place to come to for transgendered people from all over the world.

"We've had people come from Central American countries, sneak into Mexico, make their way across Mexico, illegally cross the border, get on the first freight train, wind up somewhere like Chicago and from there ask how to get to San Francisco because they've heard that's a place where they could be accepted as normal," said Mark Freeman, a nurse practitioner for the San Francisco Department of Health's free clinic, which reserves one afternoon a week exclusively for transgendered patients.

The clinic provides all health services; it even distributes hormones, which normally cost \$100 to \$200 a month or more on the black market, for no charge.

Aside from the clinic, transgendered people in San Francisco have support groups, social clubs and places to shop. In the last election, two transgendered people ran for supervisor from the same district, without their sexual identities becoming an issue. (In a crowded field, they both lost.) The move to provide health benefits for sex-change operations is an acknowledgment that the medical condition known as gender dysphoria, or extreme discomfort with one's sex, is serious enough to warrant an operation, said Mark Leno, a San Francisco supervisor. He acknowledged, however, that there are those who

feel a sex-change operation can never be necessary.

"People think this is, and it's not elective surgery," said Mr. Leno, who organized a civil rights panel for the city's transgendered residents. "If you wanted to have some facial reconstruction surgery done because you think it would make you more appropriate or more attractive to your new sex, that's not included. But there are different procedures that will be covered, up to a \$50,000 lifetime cap."

Still, as Ms. Sparks sees it, the visibility of the transgendered population can actually work against it.

"When people see us they immediately think of the gay pride parade and the drag queens and the street theater, and their natural reaction is, 'I don't think I want someone like that working here,'" she said.

Ms. Sparks said she was familiar with such employment problems. After heading three environmental consulting companies, she said, over the last two years she had applied for more than 100 jobs without success.

"Now that I'm with the Human Rights Commission," she said, "I'll be able to look into job discrimination against transgendered. I know it's a very big problem."



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rights organizations, labor unions and others to exert international pressure upon discriminatory and harmful policies and practices wherever they occur. ILGA has non-governmental organization status with the Council of Europe and is applying for NGO status at the United Nations. This will be the first ILGA-sponsored conference in the western United States and Pacific Rim and it is hoped that this will lead to increased North American and Asian/Pacific participation.

Tentative Schedule

- Sun Aug 26 Pre-conference on Religion
- Mon Aug 27 Pre-conference on Women's and Men's Issues; Orientation / Charing Pool / Welcoming Reception
- Tue Aug 28 Conference and Opening Plenary
- Wed Aug 29 Conference
- Thu Aug 30 Conference
- Fri Aug 31 Conference
- Sat Sep 1 Conference and Closing Plenary
- Sun Sep 2 Oakland Gay Mardi Gras (Pride Festival street party)

Contact

East Bay Pride; (510) 663-3980 Voice / (510) 663-3990 Fax, or by email: eastbaypride@aol.com. Snail mail: PO Box 70406, Oakland, CA 94612

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