

The Channel

TGSF (Educational TV Channel, 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 1999 - 2000 Officers

(Fiscal Year: May 1 - April 30)

- President Leslie Bailey
- Vice President Lulu Blau
- Secretary Roxanne
- Treasurer Janis Ryan
- Education Nancy Cupps / Tianna Marie
- Outreach Telzey Adams
- Social Nicole and Debbie Cook

Membership Report

As of February 15, 2000

Fiscal Year		Number	% of 98-99
1998-1999	Total members	291	100.0
1999-2000	Renewals	201	69.0
1999-2000	New members	45	15.4
1999-2000	Non-renewing	90	30.9
1999-2000	Total members	246	84.5

TGSF (Educational TV Channel) 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

- Editor Ayme Michelle Kantz
- Advertising Jennifer Antoinette; Janis Ryan
- Contributing Photographers Telzey Adams, Jamie Faye & Erfort Fenton, Cindy Martin, Nicole & Debra 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

Hotline & Voice Mail
415-564-3246

FROM THE EDITOR...

Insert Foot A In Mouth B...



I have received significant amounts of email, most bordering on being hateful and certainly threatening, for reprinting an article in last month's Channel (*Dr. Strange Love*, February 2000 issue). During my tenure as Editor of this newsletter I've tried not to

make too many mistakes (usually relating to the odd typo or two), but it looks as if reprinting that article was one of them if my mailbox is any indication. I found it last month in the public domain online at OnQ's Transgender Community Forum. When I first read it I was incredulous - flabbergasted would be a good word. As there was no dissenting opinion or other-side-of-the-coin articles or comments available - absolutely nothing to repudiate it, I assumed this was current stuff and that the Channel should pick it up. As Editor, I'm interested in news - whether it be good, bad or otherwise. Some months when contributions are light, I'm forced to reprint articles from other newsletters or from what I find on the Web. Well this was definitely news to me - the first I had ever heard anything about the whole saga.

A significant percentage of the membership does not have access to the Internet (or are scattered around the nation/globe), so I decided to reprint it as an information piece as a service to them. I've since learned it's more of a DIS-information piece and that by reprinting it apparently have done little service for anybody and really pissed off a whole lot of others.

I know it's a poor excuse, but living in Oklahoma has kept me somewhat out of the loop on events in the Bay Area. Finding that article online only recently was the first I had ever heard of the situation, yet I now understand it's been an ongoing struggle for all involved for a number of years. For those who sent me mail, the reprint represented a perpetuation of disinformation and amounted to nothing less than deliberate maliciousness on my part. Had I known more about everything that has gone down, I would've certainly been more prudent, yet I'll state right here that my motives were certainly NOT those of hate or spite.

So before I go any further, I owe Mildred Brown specifically, and the TGSF membership (et. al.) in general a HUGE apology for reprinting that article. Mildred, if you're reading this, please forgive me. Those who know me know that I wouldn't deliberately harm anyone (and Lord knows I've certainly had cause to in my lifetime). Any further pain or anguish I, personally, have caused you (or anyone else reading this) was purely unintentional and for that I am truly very, very sorry. I know there's little else I can do, but for more perspectives on the matter, I direct all of you to our Reader's Respond pages where members check in with comments that hopefully will put this complicated and tragic story to rest. Let me also reiterate here that the contents of this newsletter are opinions of the contributors/authors and are not necessarily those of TGSF (and you'll find that statement printed in every issue in the masthead immediately to your left).

Unsocial Socials Again...

A friend of mine in the Bay Area checked in with me this month offering the following observation - this time not concerning the perceived "cliquishness" of the Socials, but how the space itself is affecting our ability to interact.

Continued on Page 3

WWW.TGSF.ORG
NEW SITE! GET ONLINE!



PRESIDENT'S POTPOURRI

by Leslie Bailey

Madame president would like to thank all who worked so hard to make the Cotillion such a success and all of you who attended and brought your enthusiasm and joy to the event. I believe that we are on the cusp of moving to a new level of influence and participation in social and civic life. With our inclusion on the S.F. Transgender Task Force and the involvement of S.F. supervisor Mark Leno as one of our judges we are definitely moving forward.

The exciting thing is that every time any of us steps out in public and confidently goes about our business, talks to and educates any interested group or persons or competently carries out our responsibilities and jobs, we advance the cause of inclusion and understanding. So all of you give yourselves a rather large "bravo".

Changing subjects, I would like to comment briefly on the Knight initiative. I can no longer find it possible to understand the logic of people in the twenty-first century who would deny to gays and lesbians their rights to loving and stable partnerships. If the argument is that same-sex marriages hurt family values, I would simply point out the obvious.

Since same-sex families are in the minority and barely tolerated by the proponents of the Knight initiative, then the perceived degeneration of family values must be seen as a predominantly straight-world problem. I suggest that is where we ought to spend most our time looking for solutions to societal problems. To those who clutch the Bible and feel justified in denouncing gay and lesbian couples I would point out the following. The number of passages that refer to homosexuality are very few as compared to those that deal with charity, fidelity and love.

I suggest that we concentrate on more important issues. I have read the Bible cover-to-cover several times (I recommend the New Jerusalem translation) and I love it not only as a theological document but also as a work that is concerned with the history, traditions, sociology and politics of a people that considered themselves pre-eminent. I think that as thinking beings we have a partnership responsibility to keep it modern and vibrant. Lastly, how logical is it to criticize gays and lesbians for promiscuity and at the same time deny them the recognition of permanent partnerships.

These are my opinions and I take sole responsibility for them. TGSF is by charter not a political group, but I can urge each of us to take an active role in this important issue whatever your view point.

Barbara F. Anderson

Ph.D., L.C.S.W.

Clinical Sexologist
Certified Sex Therapist

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From the Editor...

Continued from Page 2

"...We don't feel comfortable, and it is almost impossible to socialize at the current venue for the monthly socials, the Blue Muse, because everyone is seated at dinner tables nearly the entire evening. So you either have to have dinner, or even if not, no one mixes, and newbies hardly ever come as they may take in the scene and there is nowhere physically to go and meet or talk to anyone. At least Eichelberger's (which I feel is the best place we've ever had, with the Chez in second place) had a very lively mixed crowd with FTM's and gay men, as well as the TG crowd, on the nights we had socials. You could go downstairs and mingle and there was much more room than at the Blue Muse. So until they find a different or bigger or 2-story or 2-room space, we only go to the occasional mid-month or out on our own. I think there's many like us who want to get together but the space makes it impossible."

This has been a problem for TGSF for ages, and so many variables come into play. TGSF needs a private space that the group has control of early enough in the evening so preparations can be made for the meeting and any activity. Eichelber's wasn't willing to let us have control of the upper room until 10pm so they could garner dinner revenue from their regulars, and at the time ETVC wasn't able to offer them a fixed guarantee on dinner business. That's a liability issue that could put a hefty dent in the treasury if not enough members attend the Social.

We also need access to food and/or drink, an entertainment area and equipment, proximity to MUNI or BART, and don't get me started on parking in the City. Consider also the nature of the establishment or the neighborhood it's located in (safety and discretion issues), the available hours/nights they're willing to let us have (weekend nights are pretty hard to get consistently, and be honest - don'tca just hate getting all dressed up to party on week night?). Is there is a rental fee involved (and if so, are they willing to offset the expense with a reciprocal ad in the newsletter, etc.)?

It's an imposing set of challenges that gets bandied about time and again at practically every ExCom meeting. So again I call out to you dear reader, if you have alternative TG-friendly spaces in San Francisco to recommend that would empower our Socials to be what they're meant to be, please contact our Social Committee (Nicole & Debbie Cook). I know they would welcome viable suggestions.

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.

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.

ExCOM MEETING MINUTES

The monthly meeting of TGSF's Executive Committee was held in Albany, Calif., on February 6, 2000, at 3:00 p.m. In attendance were President Bailey, Vice President Blau, Secretary Camino, Treasurer Ryan, Outreach Co-Chairs Adams and Stephanie Ann, Social Co-Chairs Cook and Cook, and Education CoChair Cupps. Also present were guests Jennifer and Lynnea. Education Co-Chair Marie was absent. The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.



Communications and Announcements:

It was first noted that a Certificate of Honor was presented at the Cotillion, by San Francisco Supervisor Mark Leno, to TGSF, for being of help to the community of San Francisco. Janis wants to recognize Leslielu Productions (Leslie and Lulu) for a successful Cotillion, the contestants for getting up and sharing their personal lives and the many volunteers who worked tirelessly. This would not have turned out the way it did.

Janis mentioned the Harvey Milk Institute will be holding transgender awareness class, May 1-15, 2000 (three Mondays). The Imperial Star Empire, in tribute to Black History Month, will present "Dreamgirls" and find out the true meaning of "Divatism," February 13, 2000, at the Bench and Bar, 120 11th St., Oakland, Calif. Roxanne mentioned the Berkeley Reparatory Theater production of "Civil Sex," a portrayal of bring gay and black in America, closes on February 11, 2000. Roxanne also noted an announcement of the ending of MUNI "F" Line streetcar service to the Transbay Terminal, on Friday, March 3, 2000. The Northern California Railroad Club planes an event that night.

Old Business: Treasurer Ryan went over the results of the January Special Election. She noted, due to a late pick up at the P.O. Box, four ballots were not counted. This amount would have had no effect on the results since all measures passed by large margins. A motion was made by Debbie and seconded by Nancy Cupps to make the election results official and approve the election. It was passed by a unanimous vote. Nicole asked when the duties mentioned in the Bylaws changes would come about. Lulu also asked about these duties. Janis said the measure just involved wording and the intent was to provide a framework in shaping officer duties. Nicole said the issue of only the Treasurer having the membership list should be addressed. Janis agreed that the issue needs attention. Leslie said the group should now focus on Standing Rules and get them done. Nicole said membership list rules should be addressed by a certain date.

Minutes: (Note: actually discussed in the Secretary's report.) Secretary Camino mentioned that the December 1999 minutes had been corrected and e-mailed the ExCom for review. She stated that a draft of the December minutes was sent to Editor in error and in confusion over the due date for that month. With notations for correct spelling for Julie Freeman, Halloween and honorarium, Nicole moved for the December Minutes to be approved, Janis seconded the motion and they were unanimously approved.

President: President Bailey opened her report by noting that that the election of new ExCom officers is coming up soon and asked about the time line. Comments from Nicole and Janis noted the election is at the April 27 End-Of-Month Social and with 60 days notice of the election in the Bylaws, the March End-Of-Month Social would be the nomination of candidates. Newly elected officers would be in place at the May End-Of-Month Social. Leslie said that leaves two ExCom meetings left in the current term and she wants the ExCom Meeting after the election to be a transition of

the new officers and that both new and leaving officers should attend. Leslie wanted the next two ExCom Meetings set. They will be held on March 5 and April 2. Leslie said now is the time to be making revisions to the Standing Rules and proposals should be written out and presented at the next ExCom.

Leslie mentioned the request by Peter King of Associated Press, requesting information on the progress of transgender rights. Leslie and others attended a meeting Thursday with the Oakland Police Department, in response to an incident involving a transgender person. The OPD plans to have a liaison person to deal with transgender issues. Leslie said that TGSF needs to get busy with the San Francisco Transgender Taskforce. Leslie closed her report by noting the Imperial Court Coronation is February 26, 2000 and one or two tables will be reserved. Nicole said that food for the table should be organized, possibly catered.

Vice President: Vice President Blau said we had "a great Cotillion." The Brunch for contestants and Cotillion staff will be February 20, 2000, 11:00 a.m., at the Blue Muse. The judges and as many people who participated in making the show a success will be contacted. Lulu said she could not thank everyone enough for the effort put into this year's Cotillion. Janis thanked Leslie and Lulu for doing the show. Lulu said, to those among the contestants who were not finalist, that they were all winners.

TGSF gained a lot of credibility and there was lots of energy. Empress Jose contacted Lulu to say how great the show was and is. Lulu wants a post mortem meeting sometime in March. Leslie asked Janis for a Cotillion financial report by next month. Lulu mentioned the flyer for the Coronation and the gravesite service the next morning. She wants all Cotillion contestants to attend this event. Lulu thanked Roxanne for bringing to the attention of the ExCom the death of Toni Choate in the Alaska Airlines flight 261 crash.

In closing her report, Lulu said she had put a lot of work into this and past Cotillions and other activities and that there were things she needed to take care of. This means she will not run for reelection to the ExCom. Lulu mentioned there are others in the wings that want to take part in the direction of the Cotillion.

Secretary: Secretary Camino handed over to Janis an exchange publication request and a renewal notice from FTM international. Roxanne asked if TGSF pays for the FTM publication or if it is an exchange. Janis will look into it. Roxanne mentioned that the name change to Transgender San Francisco identifies the group as a support and education organization for transgender persons experiencing all phases of physical and emotional change. Roxanne wondered if there was a response mechanism in place for someone in critical or desperate need of support. Roxanne was not asking if the organization was trained to counsel or take action but if there was a referral process in place, such as a number with hot line volunteers. Leslie thought there was some referral process or contact number. Telzey is going to look into it.

Treasurer: Secretary Ryan has been mostly involved with Cotillion business. There is currently \$11,328.41 in the bank. Janis added another \$10,000 to the account, of which \$9000.00 was cash. There is still Cotillion bills outstanding. Expenses were over budget.

Outreach: Stephanie Ann mentioned Stormy Leather would conduct classes on B and D at their Howard Street location. There is a request for a transgender speaker at Humboldt State University. Nicole said she would do it.

Education: Education CoChair Cupps has the facilities form for City College of San Francisco. Nancy said she has some good speakers lined up that need a large space. Nancy will focus on topics that will draw a large audience and mentioned she not be seeking re-election.

Continued on Page 5

May 4-7, 2000

4TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON CDING

Sex Educators, Therapists, Counselors, Clergy, and Transgendered Individuals Will Assemble in Philadelphia, PA

Wayne, PA- November 12, 1999 - The 4th Congress is being presented May 4-7 of this coming year in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania by The Renaissance Transgender Association, Inc. in cooperation with The Center For Sexuality & Religion, and The International Foundation For Gender Education. The First Congress occurred at California State University at Northridge in 1995. The Second Congress, in 1997, was hosted by Renaissance in suburban Philadelphia. In 1998 the Third Congress was presented at Exeter College of Oxford University by Press For Change, a U.K. organization that campaigns for respect and equality for all trans people. Now this prestigious event returns to Philadelphia.

Before the Third Congress had even occurred the Board of Renaissance made the decision to host the 4th International Congress in Philadelphia. The event will be at The Warwick Hotel in Center City Philadelphia, just off Rittenhouse Square.

The theme of the 4th Congress is Gender Variance-Beyond 2000. The Congress will devote special attention to Relationships Between Gender Identity and Spirituality, Sexuality, and Legal issues, as well as the Evolution of Gender. The opening plenary speaker will be Doctor Walter O. Bockting of the University of Minnesota. Dr. Bockting is the Coordinator of Transgender Services for the University's Medical School. Dr. Bockting will speak on HIV/STD prevention in the context of comprehensive sexuality education for transgendered persons and their partners. Dr. Bockting is a member of the Board of Directors of The Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association.

Phyllis Randolph Frye, Esq. is a respected attorney who was founder and Executive Director of the International Conference on Transgender law and Employment Policy. Ms. Frye will address the changing relationship between transgendered individuals and the legal system, both now and into the next century. The third plenary will be on transgender issues in relation to spirituality and religion. The Rev. Dr. William R. Stayton, past President of the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors & Therapists, and currently Program Coordinator of the graduate program in Human Sexuality Education at Widener University, will address these issues. In addition to the three plenary sessions the Congress will present three days of workshops, panels, and papers on transgender issues. For more information contact Renaissance at 610-975-9119, or email congress@ren.org. You may also visit the 4th Congress website for more information, or to sign up online at <http://www.ren.org/4thCongress.html>.

Editorial Contact: Angela Gardner, (610) 075-9119, angela@ren.org

Meeting Minutes...

Continued from Page 4

Social: Social CoChair Nicole Cook noted that the End-Of-Month Socials would all be at the Blue Muse through the end of the term. The February Mid-Month Social is the 12th, at the Power Exchange. As to what to expect at this venue, it has been well covered in the newsletter. The March Mid-Month Social will be at the Sacramento Gender Association Talent Night, at Joseph's.

Comment Period of Visitors: There were no comments from visitors.

New Business: Nicole wants to post Standing Rules for the ExCom on the web site as the election nears and needs them completed.

In reference to the San Francisco Weekly article, written about Cotillion 2000, Nicole said the statement: "TG is a straight world phenomenon" can be misinterpreted. Nicole will respond in a new SF Weekly article. Nicole wants some wording in the newsletter header that TGSF is open to all, including Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual. Leslie said she wants to read over the proposed article, think about the statement made and the possible response. Janis mentioned that any response that is made include a thank you for the media coverage.

Janis indicated that approximately 100 members had renewed their membership by paying the full annual amount during the period from May 1999 to the present. She recommended that these people have their memberships extended to a full twelve months in accordance with the change to the bylaws that passed, and presented a chart showing when the memberships would expire. With a motion made by Janis and seconded by Nancy, the measure was carried unanimously.

Janis mentioned each new Miss TGSF receives a free one-year membership. Janis said this process should be that TGSF writes out a membership and check in the name of the Miss TGSF. The new Miss TGSF would be notified of a one-year credit of membership by payment of the TGSF ExCom. Nicole mentioned that this process is spelled out in the Standing Rules. Janis wanted the process official by a vote of the ExCom. Leslie said and Lulu agreed the issue should be closed and to just pay the membership.

In closing, Leslie wanted to make sure, for those who cannot travel far, that the event calendar noted the Transbay meeting in March, as an alternative to the Mid-Month Social, in Sacramento.

Next ExCom Meeting: The next ExCom meeting will be held on Sunday, March 5, 2000, at 3:00 p.m., with the location to be announced. At approximately 6:15 p.m., Nicole moved to adjourn the meeting; Nancy seconded and the motion was unanimously passed.

March's Birthdays...

03__	Stacie Marie	0319	Mina Schwartz
0301	Dusty Prentiss	0320	Donna Freeman
0302	Radene Reed	0320	Marcie
0303	Geri Handa	0321	Kalani Makanani
0307	Shelley	0321	Jackie Conner
0309	Aiyana Evening Star	0322	Joan Sheldon
0311	Lucy Ann Jones	0322	Kathy Ann
0311	Erika Carter	0322	Joyce
0313	Joan Roughgarden	0323	Shelly Cohen
0313	Deann	0325	Evette Roque La Ray
0314	Roxanna Rochette	0327	Brenda Didi Mau

0327 Telzey Adams

Many Happy Returns of the Day!

Saturday / March 4th / 8pm

THE MARCH MID MONTH - THE SGA TALENT SHOW

Once a year I like to hold one of our events in another TG friendly city. That way those of you who are worried about someone seeing you and recognizing you can attend without having to worry about accidentally having someone who does not know about your feminine side seeing you. This is that event. The SGA talent show will be held at Joseph's (always a nice place to go) 1454 Del Paso Blvd. Sacramento. For those of you that went last year and were uncomfortable with the way the MC was pumping the audience for donations, I can assure you that it will not happen this year. I (Miss SGA) will be producing the event. Come and plan to have fun, show up early and have something to eat from Joseph's excellent menu.

Sunday / March 5th / 3:00pm

EXCOM MEETING

One of the best ways to volunteer for a short term task is to attend the ExCom and see where the help is needed. This is the time to come to the ExCom meeting and get involved. Come see how your organization works. . .come be heard!! If you are considering coming, please call Nicole and Debbie at (707) 824-0860 and we will be happy to give you directions.

Wednesday / March 8th / 7:00pm

TRANSBAY SOCIAL

For those of you don't want to leave town, don't not forget that Wednesday 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.

Thursday / March 30th / 8pm

END OF MONTH SOCIAL

The End of Month Social will be held at our usual meeting place, The Blue Muse 409 Gough Street in San Francisco. Park in any of the local parking lots on either side of the restaurant. This meeting will be in between the meeting where new officers were nominated and the meeting where we will vote on the new Excom, so it would be a good chance for you to talk to the nominees.

Late breaking news!

The Cotillion TV spot on Cable channel 29 "City Beat with Chablis" will feature Michelle Garcia, Dear Diva, and Supervisor Mark Leno on **Thursday, March 2nd at 9:00 PM.**

Coming this May!

TAKE A CHANCE ON ESPRIT 2000

For all you girls who are thinking about a trip to the great Pacific Northwest in 2000, May is time to come. Esprit is going to be a full week adventure this year, starting on Monday, May 15 and running through Sunday, May 21.

We are serious about having a fun time every day, with special events every night. One of the most fun events is going to be on Wednesday, May 17. On that night, the Red Lion ballroom will become the Esprit Fantasy Casino, with a professional staff and a real casino set up for our use.

This is going to be a great evening, and will set the tone for the rest of the week to follow (and yes, you will need yet one more evening dress for this [darn]). The event will have some great prizes, including a three-day jaunt to Vegas to try out your newly honed skills. It will also leave time for the nightly trek to the Red Lion Bar down below to mingle with the celebrity watchers (we are the celebrities).

You can reach me at DEBRADQCD@AOL.COM, or at PO Box 1152, Duvall, WA 98019. Even if you can't join us, your ideas will be appreciated.

EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOP SERIES 2000

AIDS Project East Bay (APEB) presents Employment Workshop Series 2000 - A free weekly presentation of employment opportunities provided by local business leaders for transgenders and other member of the community.

March 6: Kim Calhoun and Lynette D. Walker of ACT 1 Personnel Services will present a brief agency history covering most popular interview questions, do's and don't's of interviews, and will include questions and answers from participants.

March 13: Kim Calhoun and Lynette D. Walker of ACT 1 Personnel Services will present an Interview Roleplay and Resume Review session. ACT 1 Personnel Services will be accepting applications and resumes with their agency. Please bring an up-to-date resume and get ready to be employed!

March 20: Joe Wallace, Community Activist, will present job opportunities with companies in the Bay Area who are currently hiring.

Refreshments will be provided. Monday nights, 7-9 pm at APEB, 1800 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland

HEY!

\$10 Bucks Per Issue Gets You An Ad Like This...!

Tall, feminine, graceful closet CD seeks Big Sister to help with shopping and makeup tips. I live alone so it's helpful if you can come here, but I can certainly travel. SF Area. Call (415) 000-0000.

Up to 40 words only \$10.00. Send text of ad and Check or Money Order to TGSF's PO Box, ATTN: Editor. Reach out and come out!

Calendar of Events - March 2000

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. 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 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 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 7:00 PM DVG (RCC)	3 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM RGA	4 8:00 PM TGsf: MidMonth- SGA Talent Show
5 3:00 PM TGsf: ExCom Meeting	6 8:00 PM DVG	7	8 7:00 PM TransBay	9	10 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap	11 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
12	13	14	15	16 7:00 PM DVG (RCC)	17 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM RGA	18
19	20 8:00 PM DVG	21	22	23	24 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap	25 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
26	27	28	29	30 8:00 PM TGsf: End Of Month Social	31 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap	

TGSF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership is for twelve months following payment of annual dues.

Please Print / Check all that apply:

New Member Renewal Member # _____ with Family Member

Member Birthdate (Month/Date): ____ / ____ Family Member Birthdate (Month/Date): ____ / ____

Preferred Name: _____

Mailing Name: _____

Family Member's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

How did you hear about TGSF? _____

Your Email address: _____

I am enclosing a Check or Money order for:

- \$30.00 Full Year Membership
 - \$40.00 Full Year Family Membership
- (Note only one copy of the Channel will be sent to this address).

Send Check or Money Order to
TGSF
PO Box 426486
San Francisco, CA
94142-6486

Our Readers Respond...

DEAR TGSF:

I am extremely disappointed to see the article about Millie Brown and Toni Choate published in our newsletter.

It is a very one-sided presentation of a complex situation that was obviously orchestrated by Toni Choate's lawyers in an attempt to ruin the reputation of one of the finest people I know.

All of us in the South Bay that have heard the details support Millie and universally discount Toni's version of events.

We recently held a testimonial dinner for Millie with over 40 in attendance.

Unless one is willing to make a complete, independent investigation of the facts, and to seek out all views, one should not reprint a sensational, scandalous account of this tragic circumstance.

Jamie Faye Fenton

TONI CHOATE: A TRAGIC END

**By Elizabeth Waters
Special to TG Forum**

Sometimes, sad stories have happy endings. Sometimes they don't. The sad story of Toni Choate, a transgendered woman from the San Francisco Bay Area, is one of the latter. Toni and her 17-year-old daughter, Jacqueline, were among the 88 people who died in the crash of Alaska Airlines Flight 261.

When Flight 261 plunged into the Pacific Ocean near Santa Barbara February 2, Toni and Jacki were just returning from a special holiday in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Ironically, Toni had booked the trip as a High School graduation present for her daughter, who was planning to attend college and hoped eventually to go to medical school.

Toni was born Larry Douglas Choate in Visalia, California, in 1951. She led an unhappy life, haunted by her feeling that she had been born the wrong sex. As an adult, she began living full time as a woman and preparing for Gender Reassignment Surgery, hoping to rectify nature's mistake. In the late 1990s, she had the surgery to complete her transition.

Friends say even after her gender change, Toni's life was marred by psychological problems, substance abuse and suicide attempts. "The consensus in the transgendered community was that Tony was very unstable," said a friend who was close to Toni in 1994. "She had a long history of drug and alcohol abuse. She was living in her car at one point. She got no support from her family in the transition . . . She was a very, very unhappy person."

Plagued by internal demons and a number of unsuccessful relationships, Toni's problems reached a boiling point in 1997. That year she was arrested after a severe bout of depression in which she shot up the bedroom of her gender counselor (who was not home at the time) before turning the gun on herself in a final unsuccessful attempt at suicide.

She spent time in county jail as a result of the episode, and later filed a bitter lawsuit against the counselor. The litigation was settled out of court last year under terms that have been sealed under a court-ordered confidentiality agreement.

Since her release from jail, Toni had returned to work as a supervisor in the construction industry. Her daughter had come to live with her in Santa Cruz, a seaside community south of San Francisco.

Friends and acquaintances say Toni's death is doubly tragic because she had taken control of her life in recent years and was doing well. "Toni had a huge heart," her close friend, Dillon King of Santa Cruz, told the San Jose Mercury News after the crash. "She bubbled. When she smiled, she just twinkled like a Jack-O-Lantern. She loved her daughter more than anything."

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Our Readers Respond...

DEAR TGSF:

One of the most painful aspects of being transgendered is dealing with the misinformation and wrong-headed innuendo in our society that calls us perverted, sinful, dangerous, and subversive. How many of us have lost our jobs based on false information? How many of us have been denied access to our children based on unsubstantiated allegations? How many of us cannot participate fully in society because people are afraid of us because we have been misrepresented? How many of us have seen suicide as the only way out when faced with lies about us that people will not let us counter. So, when our own support group perpetuates unsubstantiated and deliberately harmful allegations against the character of any person, we should be ashamed.

The recent reprint of the Metro article in Channel regarding Toni Choate and Dr. Millie Brown was hurtful and damaging not only to Millie but also to the community to which we belong. While true information is important, this article was full of allegations presented largely as fact by a paper that was interested in the sensationalism of the case. The article was based exclusively on unproven charges made by Toni, who was known to be "troubled"—she spent 10 months in jail for shooting up Millie's bedroom—in a press conference and subsequent solicited interviews called deliberately to damage Millie's reputation without jury.

Here are the only things that are known to be true. (1) Toni made accusations; (2) Toni was known to have a unhealthy (I'd use stronger language, but then, I'm not a therapist) level of fixation on Millie that had included violence; (3) Millie was Toni's gender therapist, and later provided some more direct assistance in the form of a spare room and work to a soul in trouble when Toni was put out of house and home—a truly generous act, but typical of how Millie cared for her charges; (4) Millie has stated officially through her lawyers that there is no substance in the allegations and that they are not true; (5) after two and a half years not one other person has come forward out of the thousands Millie has worked with to claim similar charges or support Toni's charges—not one—in spite of Toni scouring for such a corroborating individual; and (6) a settlement was reached between the parties which states that there is no attribution of wrong doing or acceptance of the charges. The settlement also does not allow the parties to discuss the elements of the case, ever, so Millie remains silent. (7) Toni initiated a relentless public assault on Millie's integrity in the press when she could not respond beyond saying it didn't happen. This was emotionally debilitating for Millie, and together with the financial drain of fighting this action, and the continued fear of physical violence from Toni (there were multiple threats to Millie's life), whether real or imagined, made it proper to settle the suit.

Anyone who knows Millie knows that the allegations are all but impossible, and many of the allegations and so-called evidence are obvious poppycock. Further, how many of us have been through lawsuits where we have been told to keep quiet, been vilified, and seen our finances drained—how many of us have settled to salvage our lives or our children's lives, in spite of the injustice of it all?

Toni's death, together with that of her daughter, is a tragedy. We should certainly mourn her passing—she struggled with the same debilitating dysphoria that many of us do, and we understand the pain and confusion that can cause. It is not our purpose to vilify Toni in spite of the pain she caused; we don't understand why she attacked Millie, and we will never find out. We wish her and her family peace.

That said, it was Toni's publicly stated goal to destroy Millie. Instead, we should celebrate Millie Brown, who has in a hundred

ways created a world for us to live in. Millie has saved well over a thousand lives—mine own included—and enriched hundreds more. She has fought for 22 years for the day to day acceptance that we take so much for granted, like being able to get our driver's licenses changed, finding safe havens, being able to go to the bathroom when we need to, and being able to explain to our loved ones who we are. And it is Millie who has set the standard of care for her colleagues by showing how loving, supporting, encouraging, and assisting directly can ease the hardships of transition and guide us to love the world again as we flower into our true selves.

Millie is among the few therapists in this country who come close to understanding our dysphoria. We make our own decisions in transition, but she is there to help and love us, to let us know it will be okay. We cannot afford to lose her caring, her knowledge, her authority—certainly not on the basis of a deliberate hate campaign and unproven allegations.

Now that this sad chapter is over, I urge us to find our way toward healing. This issue has been poisoning us all for the last two or three years and it is time to stop. With Toni's untimely death, we had hoped that it would die away quickly, but the reprint of the article in the Channel has unfortunately kept it alive. It is my hope, and that of the South Bay transgendered community, and we hope TGSF, that we will learn from this unfortunate re-print, and find ways to ensure that we spread hope and acceptance, understanding and light around us, to ourselves and to the community we live in. We must do this, as Millie has done for so long, so that those who come next will be able to live more freely and happily than we.

Jennifer Wolcott, San Jose.
jwolcott@eldil.com



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1999 RESOURCE GUIDE

The 1998-99 TGSF Resource Guide is now available at cost to all TGSF 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 1999 TGSF 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: TGSF, 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.



JANUARY - FEBRUARY SOCIALS IN REVIEW

By Nicole and Debbie

Well this month was the exact opposite of last month; it seemed like we were at an event every day. The first event we went to was the Reno Ducal Ball on January 15th. This was quite an experience. It was the first time I actually walked at an event as Miss SGA. We were tired when we arrived and took a nap, this caused us to miss the hospitality suite (where we hand in our protocols, what they say about you when you walk) however Tina Louise arranged for us to hand them in late. When we walked, we were the only two people that walked during the segment for non-court organizations. The entertainment was good and we saw several familiar faces. We ended up leaving early since we had to be back in San Francisco the next day for the Cotillion interview and snow was in the forecast for the mountains.

The next event we attended was the TGSF Cotillion. I will keep this description short since I wrote a multi-page article on my Cotillion experience. Let's just say it was absolutely fantastic. It was one of the most enjoyable experiences I have had. I know the contestants had fun and I am told the audience had fun also. If you want to know more about the practices, the interview or any other aspect of the Cotillion experience be sure to read my article.

On February 12th we were really in for a day of events. I teach on Saturday so we started at the College of Marin. We then proceeded to the SGA social in Sacramento where we signed people up for duties at the SGA talent review and found out who was going to the San Francisco Coronation. There were around 15 people in attendance including a few people I have not seen before. Most of the group went into the restaurant to eat around 8:00pm. While we did get most of the positions filled for the SGA Talent review I still have some openings, so if you want to help let me know (707) 824-0860.

Then sometime between 9:30pm and 10pm we were off to the TGSF mid-month social at the Power Exchange in San Francisco. Until this point the day had been pretty tame. As we entered San Francisco it was raining. We headed to the club near the corner of Market and Van Ness and we were able to find a parking spot not too far away. We parked and headed for the club under the same umbrella. We entered the club and we went right in for free (all TG people get in free here - except during special events). The inside of this club is like a maze. The first place we entered was like a bar, but it was a soft drink bar, they do not serve alcohol here. We looked over by the bar and there were about 6 TGSF members already there. A look around this room revealed that the focal point of the room was a dual pole dancing stage and there was a girl up there doing a dance when we entered. We were only there about a minute or so before we were off to find Didi who had been spotted downstairs in the dungeon. We pass two additional rooms on this floor, one contained a series of jail cells, and there was someone strapped to one of them. The other room was the mummy room which has a few little rooms open to use by any patrons of this rather unique establishment. We descended to the dungeon and I must admit I will remember some of the things I saw for awhile. Probably the most remarkable show was the 2 girls being given a pain treatment by a guy with a bag full of assorted whips & riding crops. But it was not the whips that were the most memorable, it was the use of an electrode to administer shocks and then the use of a flammable substance which was painted on the girl's back and lit on fire with the electrode. When lit the flame would follow the path of the liquid up and back and be put out by the guy administering the shock. The down stairs had about 12 different rooms in it, each offering a different set of props. While most of the "entertainment" seemed to be impromptu a few of

them seemed too professional to be just happening. At one point we walked by an array of video monitors and we could see Didi on one of the monitors giving a show of her own. One thing that was amazing about this club, they honored the no cigarette smoking inside law, everyone smoked outside. I was surprised to see so many TGSF members present. There must have been 20 or more TGSF members there making it one of the most successful mid months this year. I can see why this is on the "must see" list for people who are visiting the area. I admit I have never been to a venue like this one before.

HERE'S YOUR OPPORTUNITY!

by Nancy Cupps, Education Committee Co-Chair

Have you been looking for a way to become more involved with TGSF? Would you like to get to know more people? Do you have some new ideas? Would you like to do something to help the members of TGSF and the TG community? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, here's your opportunity!

Four years ago I organized my first Educational Seminar, and was nominated to become Education Chair for the 1996/1997 year. Juanna Smith and I served as co-chairs for 3 years; Tianna Marie has been my co-chair for the past year. They were both wonderful people to work with. When I was first elected, I never imagined I would stay in office for four years. I have enjoyed expressing my opinions at TGSF Executive Committee (ExCom) meetings and hosting a wide variety of educational seminars. It made me feel good to know people appreciated the seminars I helped to organize.

Over the years I've had the chance to get to know several members very well; much more so than if I had not been on the Education Committee. As a result, my circle of friends has grown wider over the past four years.

During the past two years my career has become more demanding. My business and personal travel schedule has prevented me from participating in several ExCom meetings, and has also limited the number of seminars I was able to host. I feel it is time for me to step aside and let someone with fresh new ideas have a chance to take on the role of Education Chair for 2000/2001 and beyond. I will not be running for any position in the upcoming election. Nominations for new officers and committee chairs will be made at the End of Month Social on March 30th. Please contact any member of the current ExCom to let them know you are interested. I will be in Manhattan NYC that day.

The role of Education Chair is probably the easiest way for someone to become actively involved with the TGSF ExCom. Eight to twelve hours of your time per month is all that is required to attend the monthly ExCom meeting, and coordinate and host seminars. With so much information available on the internet these days, it no longer seems to make sense to hold seminars every month. You might decide to have only six seminars per year. Seminars on topics such as SRS, hormone therapy, and makeup can be conducted annually, for example.

To make the transition as easy as possible for you, I will supply a list of past seminars and contact information for speakers I have collected over the years. This is much more than I inherited when I first became education co-chair, and it will make your job easy. Furthermore, I am willing to assist you in organizing and hosting your first seminar or two. I am currently trying to arrange two major seminars of interest to our TS membership and community that will likely be scheduled several months from now.

Don't be shy. Here's your opportunity to make a difference, not only in your life, but to help your organization and your community. Please consider taking on the role of Education Chair or one of the other ExCom positions. The election will be held at the End of Month Social on April 27th. Thank you.

ELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Submitted by Roxanne, Secretary
Janis Ryan, Treasurer
Stephanie Ann, Outreach Co-chair

A special election to make amendments to the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of Educational TV Channel was held at the regular End of Month Social on January 27, 2000. In accordance with the Bylaws, notice of this election and the text of the proposed changes had been mailed to all members on November 24, 1999, and a statement of the existing and proposed articles and ballots were mailed to all members on December 20, 1999.

A total of 88 ballots was cast and judged valid by the Election Committee. The Committee was not able to collect ballots from the Post Office Box on the day of the election, and four ballots were the boxes on the following day, which were not opened or counted since they would not have changed the results of the election.

In order to approve changes to the Bylaws, an affirmative vote of 60% of the members voting is required, which equals 53 votes. All five of the proposed changes were adopted, as tabulated below. The Election Committee presented this report to the Executive Committee Meeting on February 6, 2000, and it was adopted.

Additionally it was approved that any member who had paid dues for an entire year on or after May 1, 1999 would have the membership expire 12 months later in accordance with the change to the membership term that was adopted.

Standing Rules. I will again bring up the remaining proposals at the next ExCom meeting.

The one change that you will notice with this newsletter is the expiration code on the mailing label. Formerly the label had the code for the membership year, which was 99 for most people. Now it has the month and year that your membership expires, which for most of us is 04/00. Those of you who renewed your membership by paying a full year's dues *after* it had expired will have your membership extended to a full 12 months from when you rejoined. Rest assured that the database used to generate this is Y2K compatible! And also rest assured that I have taken adequate steps to back up and maintain this database.

Propositions 1 and 2 were needed to formally change the name of our group from Educational TV Channel to TransGender San Francisco, both with the Articles of Incorporation filed with the Secretary of State and our Bylaws.

Proposition 3 changed the term of membership from a fixed period from May 1 to April 30 of each year to 12 months beginning with the payment of annual dues. So whenever you pay your annual dues, you will receive 12 monthly newsletters, and you are now permitted to pre-pay your dues for additional years as well.

Propositions 4 and 5 explicitly stated certain duties for the President, Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer, and make clear that the ExCom is the Board of Directors of our corporation. When I joined the ExCom there was no Standing Rule describing the duties for either the President or Vice-president, and those for the Secretary and Treasurer were not complete. In researching the requirements of the California Corporations Code, I discovered

that the duties of the President, Secretary, and Treasurer of any corporation like ours are stated there, and can only be modified in the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws, not in the Standing Rules.

The intention of the wording that I proposed is to formalize what everyone assumes anyway. The ExCom is responsible for adopting budgets and establishing the policy of the group. The officers have the duty to carry this out. It is necessary that we and the people that we do business with know such things as who is authorized to sign contracts, whose signatures are required on checks, and other matters. For example, the President

and I have signed substantial contracts and written checks on behalf of the group to bring about the Cotillion. Also, since membership in our group is based on the payment of dues, it is necessary for the Treasurer and Secretary to cooperate in maintaining the membership list. The details of these functions still need to be specified in the Standing Rules.

I have great confidence in the membership of this organization, and your ability to understand these propositions. This is *your* organization. Those of us on the ExCom are only here because of your votes, and everything that we do is subject to your approval. It is only by pooling our combined experiences and talents, and respecting the other members of our group, that we can continue to be the premiere organization for transgendered people and their friends in northern California.

OFFICIAL BALLOT TALLY

SPECIAL MEETING JANUARY 27, 2000

Number	Proposition	Yes	No	Blank	Invalid	% total ballots	% votes cast
1	Change "Educational TV Channel" to "TransGender San Francisco" in the Articles of Incorporation	80	6	2	0	90.9%	93.0%
2	Change "Educational TV Channel" to "TransGender San Francisco" and "ETVC" to "TGSF" in the Bylaws	80	6	2	0	90.9%	93.0%
3	Change membership year to 12 months after a member pays annual dues.	66	21	1	0	75.0%	75.9%
4	Specific certain duties for the President, Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer in the Bylaws.	67	20	1	0	76.1%	77.0%
5	State in the Bylaws that the Executive Committee (ExCom) constitutes the Board of Directors of TGSF pursuant to California law?	81	5	2	0	92.0%	94.2%

SPECIAL ELECTION RESULTS

Comments by Janis Ryan

First of all, thanks to all of you who voted in the recent special election. The members of the Election Committee, Roxanne and Stephanie Ann and myself, worked hard to bring about this election. A total of 88 ballots were returned on time to be counted, which is about 36% of the total membership.

All of the ballot propositions passed resoundingly, with yes votes of over 90% on Propositions 1, 2 and 5 and over 75% on Propositions 3 and 4. These and other proposals had been presented to the ExCom over a four-month period, and with the constructive help of many of the members the final wording was reached, and it was decided that others were better stated in the

THANK YOU FOR THE JOANNA CARON AWARD

By Cheryl Sheppard

I would like to take the opportunity to say thank you to the Cotillion Committee for honoring me with the Joanna Caron Award. I was very surprised and unprepared to express my appreciation from the stage of the Cotillion, but now that I have had a moment to catch my breath from the flurry of tabulating the contestant scores, I would like to put in writing what I would have said that night. You like me, you really like me... oops wrong trophy.

Actually I was speechless and surprised to receive this award. Being out of words is indeed a rare phenomenon for me. I really didn't tune into what was being said on stage by Leslie Bailey and Lulu Blau until a second before my name was announced. Sitting at the judges table I was going over in my mind the final details of the contestant scoring process to make sure that my co-Judge Coordinators and I were prepared for the winners announcements. Let me say that it is with great humility and gratitude that I accept this award. There are so many worthy Cotillion volunteers it must have been difficult for the Cotillion Committee to choose just one person. I would have given out at least half a dozen or more, if it would have been up to me to decide. I am not sure if this award was a payoff for the accumulation of past Cotillions or a bribe to do it again next year. Leslie, Lulu, comments? Being a Judge coordinator you don't get to see all of the show because you are passing out forms to the Judges, or have your head buried in a laptop tabulating the contestant scores, but it is a wonderful experience. You get to work with great people, like Stephanie Ann Blythe and Terri Lee who worked with me as Judge Coordinators this year. Stephanie Ann also word-processed the scoring forms that were used by the Judges. Thank you for a job well done and for giving up part of your evening to help the TGSF Cotillion. Being a Coordinator also allows you to assemble a panel of judges and to meet a cast of great contestants. This year, as in every year, we had a stellar cast of judging officials; Dr. Carol Queen in her sexy see through dress (great body), Chablis in her ever blondness and great sense of humor, Jeanette Vonier looking elegant and stylish (she should be in front of the camera rather than behind), and finally Supervisor Mark Leno who canceled several commitments of his busy schedule to be with us (a handsome guy too.) Special thanks should also be said for Jasmine Starr, who created the contestant and judge's handbook, which is the guide to the judging process. She was not able to be a Judge Coordinator this year but her contribution in the past has been significant.

Being part of the Cotillion crew is my way of paying back what I have received from TGSF; namely lots of love and support. I encourage all of you to take a moment to think about this gift that you have received and to recognize that like a Boomerang you can't keep the love given to you unless you are willing to give it away, again and again. Sometimes it doesn't come back, but if you are willing to reach out to a newcomer, help in a small way at a social, volunteer for a committee or help with the Cotillion, your act of kindness and love will be returned to you many times over. This is your organization, your community and has an environment that allows us to find the truth within ourselves. For most of the MTF Transgender members the journey to truth should be finding and developing the nurturing or giving part of our beings. The journey of discovery ends on the inside but starts on the outside, in the way we dress, look and the way we act toward each other. So start your journey to the inside by being the best person you can be on the outside. Help each other and you will help yourself. Love each other and in turn you will come to love yourself. Thank you for the opportunity to be your friend and to be part of this community. The Joanna Caron Award means a great deal to me, but not as much as you.



Me Poesie...

Ease

In the Storm of Life
I find a Quiet Eye;
A Tempest of Doubts
Whirls Round
The Magical Calm.

Five times, the Three Goddesses of Grace:
Blooming (Thalia)
Brilliance (Aglia) and
Joy (Euphrosyne) —
Dance their Ecstatic Elegance
Within a Holy Cyclone.

They Sing!
"Free Thy Self, and Soothe Others the Same -
Free of Sorrow, Suffering and Blame."

Swimmingly Smooth -
Flowing, Giddy, Laughter Comforts Anguished Souls;
Cool, Living-Loving Water Blesses Wisdom with Beauty.

Shining with Your Grace,
I take Ease in Your Eyes.

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Nancy Ann Martine Steps Down

POKER HOSTESS ENDS REIGN

By Cheryl Sheppard

On February 11, Nancy Ann Martine sat at the card table for the last time as hostess of poker night and library social. Although she was feeling very poorly she raised the bet and dealt the last cards face down. With good-natured laughing and small talk the pot was split and deal passed to the next player. With the arrival of more friends who had come to see her, she stepped away from the card table and into her bedroom where she continued to greet well-wishers as they stopped by during the evening. Nancy Ann is very, very ill and does not have the energy or strength to hold the poker socials and library night at her apartment. This brings us to another milestone in the annals of TGSF. For over 15 years Ginny Knuth and Nancy Ann Martine were two of the larger than life TG personalities in the Bay Area. Anyone who has heard Nancy Ann's laugh will instantly know what I mean when I say it was distinctive and unforgettable. Her dear Ginny left us two years ago and Nancy Ann has bravely tried to keep her sprits up, but good fortune has not smiled on her as we had all hoped for. She misses Ginny and the good times they had together.

A modest crowd of TGSF members stopped by to say hi and wish her the best. Some of the regular poker players were there; Vanessa, Chris Y., and Penny from Oakland. In addition Gerri and Joann Handa, Janis Ryan, Stephanie Ann Blythe, Terri Lee from Sacramento and myself came by to say hello.

The ritual has been the same for many years, cards, jokes and small talk about what is going on in the Transgender community. The card action constitutes a group of poker games that would give serious big time gamblers a headache. read They also play baseball which is seven card stud with the high diamond in the hole splitting with the high card hand, is one of the popular ones along with Nancy Ann's favorite, San Francisco, which is the high heart in the hole. They also play baseball seven card stud with 3s and 9s wild and an extra card if you get a four turned up. This is all wrapped around the modest stakes gaming of nickel, dime and quarter betting. So no one goes home rich or poor, but everyone is assured of a good time with good company. As the evening moves on to Pasquale's, In-Between, No-Peaky, Black Maria, and Low Ball, the standard bill of fare is consumed by the players. As much as the card games are a TGSF tradition, so is the food. When you arrived at a card game, and Friday night was no exception, you are greeted by cheese slices neatly placed on a tray along with crackers, several types of chips, salsa and two dips to start off the evening. There is also usually a bag of chocolate kisses, which get great attention, and in the fridge is diet and regular Pepsi, a Nancy Ann standard. Later in the evening the hot dogs would be put on and fruit, potato and macaroni salads would be served. Well, with Nancy Ann in bed we got it all done, except we forgot the potato and macaroni salads. Other than that everything was the way it has always been with the exception of Nancy Ann, she was not up to her mischievous good-natured self. Normally she is always good for a naughty joke, some of which are a bit non-PC, and a quick come-back to the small talk that marks the events of the evening card game, but not this night.

I always thought it a strange contrast, an anachronism, to be playing poker late into the night in a skirt and heels. Most of us MTFs have come to this point in our lives where we are seeking to balance or refine the woman in us. Finding the helping, nurturing, sensitive, maternal drive and female perspective in life is what we strive for, not a return to being one of the guys in the bars. And yet, many of our members over the years, ventured to the Poker Night to enjoy a good belly laugh and put on their poker faces on top of their feminine faces while taking their chances on the cards.

Our game Friday went on for a decent length of time, but the well-wishers kept arriving and soon our attention turned away from cards to caring about the food, each other and Nancy Ann. Terri Lee inspected the TGSF Library and check out three books. I browsed over a few of the many book titles in our collection in-between bites of my obligatory hot dog and thought of the several books that I have read from the collection. I remember at one time I was the audiotape coordinator for the club and we still have many tapes in the collection. This organization is very lucky to have, as part of the club archives, such a wonderful collection of Gender related books and articles. However, like the Poker Night, they too will be looking for a good home very soon. Somewhere where they can be accessed by the members, by appointment or scheduled time and be borrowed for pleasure reading or research. The library also contains a number of audio and video tapes as well as the hard cover and paper back collection of fiction and non-fiction gender material. If you or anyone you know would be willing to sponsor a home for this 10 box collection of books, please contact or write one of the officers in TGSF and discuss this issue. You can find their E-mail addresses in the newsletter. Also if anyone is interested in hosting the poker night (if you don't like poker you could just as easily make it a game night) on a regular or alternating basis please write to of the TGSF officers. Demonstrate how to get in touch with that sharing and giving women inside, by giving and sharing with the other members of TGSF. Volunteer to do something for others. Just think of all the women in your life you have admired and noticed how they gave of themselves. Be like Nancy Ann, be like them, and you will become one of them.

At the end of the evening, our small but caring group performed their duties and cleaned up the mess, put away the food and washed the dishes. One by one we paid our respects to Nancy Ann and wished her a good night. If any of you are interested in sending Nancy Ann a card to cheer her up, please do so now. Send your cards to Nancy Ann Martine, #37 Castillo St. San Francisco, CA, 94134. I know she would appreciate your thoughts.

In Memoriam

Nancy Ann Martine, long time ETVIC officer and volunteer, passed away on February 20, 2000, at the age of 68. Her loving family was by her side when she succumbed to the final stages of terminal illness. A native of San Francisco who served our country in the U.S. Air Force, she is survived by her two siblings, five children and nine grandchildren.

Nancy Ann leaves behind many friends in both the local gay and transgender communities. She joined ETVIC shortly after its formation and, along with her loving partner Ginny Knuth, was instrumental in the club's growth. She served for many years as the club's treasurer in addition to her many other volunteer roles in club activities. With Ginny she also served the San Francisco Imperial Court and was instrumental in building a bridge between the two organizations.

As hostess to monthly poker games, she opened her home as well as her heart to newcomers who preferred a more relaxed meeting place than public venues. She even supplied a spare room for changing purposes. She complimented her warmth and generosity with a bawdy sense of humor and bellowing laugh that none of us can ever forget. She will be deeply missed.

As per the family's request donations may be sent to the scholarship fund named for her late brother:

The Brother Kyran Scholarship Fund, St. Mary's College, CA 94575

LEAVING MY HEART IN SAN FRANCISCO

by Kelly

For the average American, a trip to San Francisco can be an exotic fantasy. If you are TG however, it can seem like paradise. I have been fortunate to have made several trips to the City by the Bay and each time I reluctantly return east, but with hope that someday, every city will be as open and accepting as this beautiful place. In my travels, I have made friends in town, and so when the time came for the TGSF Cotillion at the end of January, I maneuvered my way into being invited to attend.

For those not in the know, TGSF is the new name for the group formerly known as ETVC. They are the largest group in Northern California, no doubt due to their accepting environment and a vigorous educational and social program within the group. Like TGEA, TGSF is open to all forms of gender expression and I have always been impressed with the intelligence and grace of its members. A common quip which reflects the sophistication of the membership goes: if you need to resolve a computer software problem, attend a TGSF meeting, the person who wrote the code is probably in attendance and will be able to give you a definitive answer.

I had to arrive late on Friday night from work, meaning I was in guy mode, but my friend Andrea has the ability to see right through that facade and welcomed Kelly warmly. Waking up on Saturday however was all Kelly, and would remain so for the rest of the weekend. Though the anticipation of the Cotillion made getting through the morning and afternoon tough, it was a pleasure being able to go about town without the least bit of stigma about being TG. Andrea and I took public transportation to Union Square where we browsed an open air Art Fair and then I watched envious as Andrea indulged in some rather fashionable footwear shopping. The sales clerk had no problem fitting Andrea and I just sat by stunned by his attention. We found our way to lunch and did a little more shopping.

We got back to Andrea's place by mid afternoon so I could iron my gown and get ready for the evening. I chose to wear the Burgundy dress from the Deb & Deb wedding and was glad to have the opportunity to get a second wearing of it. There were some second thoughts on the shoes I chose to wear, but I was able to borrow a new set from Andrea which were fashionable uncomfortable, but not painful. I didn't get quite the attention with trying on these shoes as Andrea got earlier in the day, but at least I was now more color coordinated. All assembled, we headed out to the San Francisco Design Center for our night out. The design center features a grand foyer with a large stage, which fit the requirements for the night. As expected there were all type of people there, from the "Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence" who generously volunteered to do the stage work, to the most glamorous of Drag Queens. Particularly notable were the TG supporters, which included SF City Supervisor Leno who was a Cotillion judge. I met former acquaintances from my last visit to ETVC, and there were of course a lot of new faces as well, including Sally from Arlington!

At our table I was introduced to Marcia Chapdelaine who transitioned while working as the CEO of the Sam Mateo County Visitors and Convention Bureau. Marcia was a lot of fun and kept things rolling for us. If you are interested, you might want to drop by her web page at: <http://www.moss-fritch.com/marcia.htm> and read more about this fascinating lady. I also had the opportunity to meet Joan Roughgarden, who is a professor of evolutionary biology and ecology at Stanford University as well as Cindy Martin who is one of the founders of Transgender Forum. Being amongst such exceptional women made me realize that there are an increasing number of TG success stories in the world. The accomplishments of these women are all the more impressive when the



fact that they each dealt with defining their own gender identity without the help of what is commonly a Trans-Phobic society is considered.

As the production started, it was apparent that this was a well-choreographed event. This was in part due to the direction of "Dear Diva" who quietly ran the show from behind the curtain. After the night was over, I was especially pleased to meet Diva, having been a fan of her column which runs in the Metro Weekly (MW). The contest for Miss ETVC consisted of an Active Wear competition which showed some of the simple every day elegance of the contestants as well as some of the ingenuity, Jamie Fay Fenton, (another of TGForum's founders) for one displayed her Active Wear Rocket Pack and seemed ready to shoot right through the roof. Jamie ultimately won miss congeniality, but her sparkling personality and terrific sense of humor shown brightly through the entire event. After active wear came the talent competition with acts ranging from lip synching to an excellent Spanish Guitar rendition.

Between events in the competition for Miss TGSF, we were treated to a variety of acts featuring the reigning monarchs of the Imperial Court, Emperor TJ and Empress Sheba, as well as Brian Keith (formerly of Finnochio's) and Donna Sachet (a stunning Drag Queen). I skipped the opportunity to be introduced as a Debutante, but enjoyed the 70+ who were introduced between Cotillion events and given a special Bay Area welcome. The competition ended with the evening gown event. Each of the contestants was exquisite. Though I'm sure that it was a difficult choice, in the end, I was pleased with the Judge's selection of Michelle Garcia as Miss TGSF. Michelle was the talented guitarist, and won the competition in a simply gorgeous gown. After the coronation, I had the opportunity to visit with the new Miss TGSF who was genuinely sweet and will be an excellent representative of the TG community.

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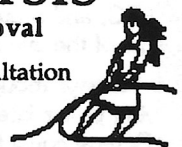


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COTILLION CONTESTANT #9

By Lynnea Stuart

Insane! Ridiculous! Those were my first reactions when people kept telling me I should compete in the Cotillion. After all, I had never performed on stage other than Karaoke and pole dancing. I had never developed a taste for competition. How would I stand a chance against a TS more advanced than me anyhow?

But TGSF needed contestants. At last I relented and said, "Okay, but if I can't do it I can't do it!" As it turned out I could and it became a milestone in my life.

It was a fantastic experience. I actually proved to myself that I could take the stage and put on a show people enjoy. I owe Dear Diva and Lulu for this because they took the time to teach ignorant me how to make that work.

In spite of stories that made me cringe, how girls became enemies by competing, we didn't have that. We were all determined to be there for one another. For us who didn't go on to the finals we learned that those crushing feelings aren't because we didn't get a title because most of us didn't expect a title at all. It's a natural, inevitable reaction when you develop that bond with the other contestants after weeks of practicing together and you want to go on with them but you know you can't because your role has ended. I saw it in Diva when she became choked up in the last rehearsal. I even saw it among the finalists who clung to one another in a circle holding hands knowing that the separation lines would be shortly drawn among them as well. They were veterans of competition. They knew.

Would I compete again? I don't know. I was not sorry to do the program. But it depends on what happens around that time. When I consented, I thought I would do it only once to understand how on earth to help a Cotillion in another capacity. But then if TGSF is screaming for contestants...well... I might end up saying to myself, "Lynnea, you idiot! What do you think you're doing?"



Left My Heart in SF...

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During the evening I had a second meeting in the ladies room (the first being at lunch) and again was shocked at the acceptance. Normally I feel as if I need to apologize for using the ladies room and try to be very low key and get in and out of the facilities without arousing too much attention. Unfortunately, women's rooms being as they are, I was inevitably caught up in a waiting line. Contrary to my expectations, I was warmly accepted as a peer. The women I met would always pull me into the conversation and I never felt any stigma. I finished the night realizing that I no longer feel cross dressed when I am out as Kelly. Even Cinderella had to leave the Ball, and so to with Andrea and I. It was a memorable evening and I will carry those memories with me daily.

On Sunday, it was rainy in town, so we changed our plans and made our way down town for lunch and the movies. I could not detect any reaction from anywhere though I am self-conscious of my gait and speech. Lunch was great and as we left, we waived to the City Supervisor Leno who happened to drop in to the same restaurant. He seemed pleased to be recognized and blew us a kiss. From there we went to the Movies (Galaxy Quest, a comedy) and picked up pictures from the Cotillion. We got back with plenty of time to relax and get ready to visit The Saloon where Andrea occasionally sits in to play drums.

This definitely was the blue-collar section of town, but again, I felt as if we were not attracting any undue attention. We arrived to find the Saloon was a hole-in-the-wall bar, which had a great blues band (Johnny Nitro and the Door Slammers). We were the only TG people in the bar, but we were well accepted. The bar was filled, and there was some dancing, but basically it felt fun to just be out to enjoy the music as normal people. I was introduced to Johnny Nitro and despite his powerful build, was quite warm and friendly. So too the other members of the band. In the second set, Andrea took over the drums and I was spellbound. Here was this sweet and gentle lady pounding out the rhythm to some serious "get down" blues. What a show! In fact, there were many guest performers and it began to resemble a neighborhood jam to me. It was a shame to have to leave early (midnight on a Sunday evening is early if you are really having a great time), but I needed to get back and pack up. Tearing down and facing my role as Steve was more than a little let down, but until that day where I can feel comfortable shedding that male skin, it is a chore that I have to do.

Since returning to my life here in Washington, I have noticed that I am happily haunted. It seems as if everywhere I go, there is the faint echo in my ear of Tony Bennett singing "I left my heart...." (you know the rest!)

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TAKING CENTER STAGE

by Jamie Faye Fenton

I have been involved with the TGSF Cotillion for seven years now. All of my work has been behind the scenes, taking photographs, serving as an assistant producer, and acting as technical director. Each year I saw how much fun the contestants were having, and would ponder becoming a contestant in the next year's show. Sooner or later my fears of public performance would come up, and I would retreat to my supporting roles.

This year was different. I went to the California Dreaming convention in Los Angeles. On a lark, I decided to have a makeover and the results were stunning. At Southern Comfort, I did it again — everyone was amazed that Jamie, a card-carrying gender nerd, has good looks too! Emboldened with confidence, I decided I was going to really enter this time. To ensure that I would not chicken out, I told everyone I knew.

My first problem was finding someone to take over as technical director. Nancy Cupps volunteered for this, and my RGA friend Gelsey signed on as spotlight operator. The next issue was coming up with a talent routine. One morning I woke up with an idea for a comedy sketch. When I showed it to my wife Erfert, she suggested performing with me as my "straight man". We then launched into a research project investigating classic American Vaudeville humor.

With a talent concept and my usual responsibilities transferred, I joined nine of my sisters at the contestant meeting in December at the home of Dear Diva, our show director. A basic rehearsal schedule was established, and we were briefed on our deadlines and responsibilities. Several of the girls were old friends, while the others quickly became new friends. Diva asked each of us which colors we wished to wear during active wear and formal wear, and we standardized on black or red. I signed up for red formal wear.

Rehearsals began in January, one three to four hour session each weekend. They would begin with a coordination meeting, and then the contestants would practice stage movements for the active wear, formal wear, and presentation segments. Often we would play music to pace our motion. Gradually we all learned our movements.

One afternoon Diva conducted what she called a "bombardment circle". Each contestant would stand in the center of circle, and we would go around the circle in turn each saying what we admire about the woman in the middle. This was a wonderful idea; it was not hard to think of nice things to say even for those I had not really come to know yet.

Diva had each of us come in to meet her and go over our talent routine. Erfert and I went in one Sunday and spent an hour learning aspects of timing and developing our characters. We continued to revise our script and practice, practice, practice.

In mid-January, I went off on a search for that red formal dress. To my dismay, this year's holiday color seems to have been black! After four malls and countless stores, eventually I located a simple but attractive red gown at Rin's in San Carlos. Two days later, it is time for the judges interviews at the Blue Muse. I am nervous and tired, but they quickly put me at ease. The questions go by quickly and I am off to the afternoon rehearsal.

One morning I woke up with the idea of building a rocket pack for my active wear costume. I managed to locate a carbon dioxide fire extinguisher, which I mounted on a pack frame along with two fake propellant tanks. I rigged up a lever to fire the extinguisher on cue.

It is now Friday night and time for the dress rehearsal at the design center. During setup, a table collapses, dumping my sound system onto the floor, destroying one of our show master disks with all of the contestant's music on it. Fortunately, I had made a backup.

This, plus several other random emergencies, created a realistic level of stress for the dress rehearsal! Active wear went well, our talent number had only a few minor mistakes, and formal wear went well. My confidence level, and that of my sister contestants, improves.

Saturday — the big day. Erfert and I practice and practice our comedy routine about every 10 minutes or so, at home, on the drive up, and in a quiet corner.

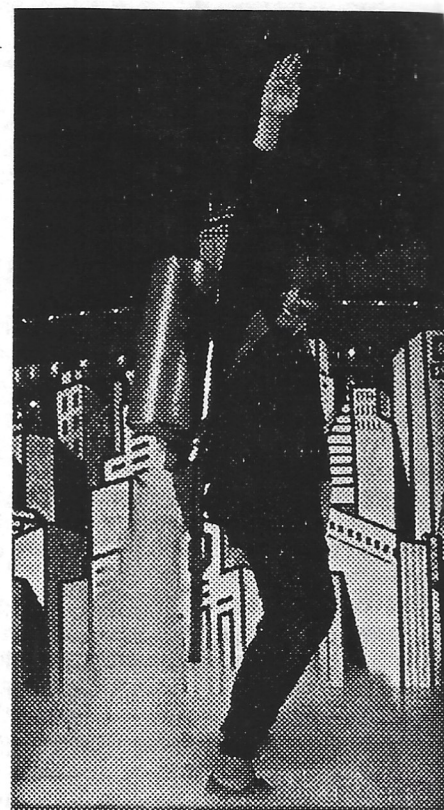
Everyone is getting ready. They bring in some food which we gratefully consume. Carla comes over to do my makeup, arriving moments after the power goes off in the dressing room. We set up in the hall, and in about 15 minutes she works a miracle. I put on my black catsuit, goggles, blinking LED earrings, and boots and wait. Everyone else is scrambling to get into face and into their costumes. The dressing room is cramped so we take turns using the mirror. Well-wishers drop by, and photographers grab "prep shots". Eventually the call to "places" comes and I don the rocket pack.

We mill around nervously, and then the active wear number begins. Tianna goes first, and then it's my turn. About halfway through my walk, I pull the handle on the rocket pack and get only a half second worth of rocket blast. Unfortunately, the trigger mechanism jams, but at least the audience gets the idea. I recover my composure and sashay to my finishing position. Then the other eight contestants come out in order and we all step forward and then exit.

Now it's a mad rush to get out of active wear and into my talent outfit. I put on a leopard print mini-dress, heels, faux pearl bracelets and earrings. My wife and I attach our clip-on microphones and go test them. After Didi Mau finishes her "Tribute to Tempest Storm", Erfert moves to her onstage chair and waits. The announcer introduces her as the famous psychologist "Dr. Joyce Sisters", and I make my entrance as a very ditsy transsexual coming in for a GRS letter. We toss out classic Vaudeville jokes intermixed with some of our own. The audience responds well and we get every line perfect. After about 2 1/2 minutes, we take our bows and exit, greatly relieved.

I now wait with my sisters for each to go on. They all do well. One by one, they stream back in, relieved. We all help each other along in ways large and small, with gifts, hugs, or a last-minute loan of a misplaced item. Slowly we don our formal wear, freshen up our makeup, and adjust our hair. Carla comes in and touches me up.

It's a long wait, it seems like every transgendered woman west of the Mississippi is walking as a debutante! Eventually, the show



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PROPOSITION 22 – WHAT IT MEANS TO THE TRANSGENDERED

by Johanna, SGA Editor

You've heard a lot of talk and seen a lot of ads by now that urge you to vote "No on Knight" or "No on Proposition 22." What exactly is Prop. 22 and what does it mean to the Transgender community? Proposition 22 and the Knight Initiative are the same thing. Sen. Pete Knight of Palmdale is an avowed homophobic and created the Knight Initiative to cause havoc in the LGBT community and turn us into 2nd class citizens.

On the surface his scheme seems pretty straight forward. Prop. 22 reads "Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California." But it contains the legal language to roll back all of the civil rights gains made to protect gay (and transgender) people from employment and housing discrimination and harassment in schools.

Prop. 22 if passed would also eliminate the ability to get health and life insurance coverage through your same sex spouse, if that is your lifestyle. This has already been done in Pennsylvania under a similar law. Same sex marriages would also be void in California eliminating the right of inheritance and even the right to visit a dying spouse in the hospital.

So you say it doesn't apply to you. You're not married or you're happily married to a person of the opposite sex. Think again. Prop. 22 would force a definition of who is a man and who is a woman and that could cause a whale of a lot of problems for transsexuals and transvestites. Case in point. Supposed you're dressed and have to use the bathroom at Joseph's. If you are a male dressed as a female and follow the custom of using the women's room you could be arrested by the police and eventually get a record as a sex offender.

Won't happen you say. Not here. Don't kid yourself. As soon as Prop. 22 takes effect some bigoted Sheriff or Police Chief will form his own squad of sex cops and begin to hunt us down.

Another problem is how do you determine a person's sex. Is the doctor's call when he first sees a newborn the sex you're stuck with for life. Or is it chromosomal sex, you know, the XX and XY thing. The truth is both physical appearance and chromosomal sex are only two of many factors that determine what mix of sex you are.

Transsexuals classically say they are "a woman trapped in a man's body" or vice versa. Transvestites frequently talk about feeling like a woman even though they may cross dress infrequently. Does psychological sex determine who you are? Or is it your sexual preference. Does that mean gay men are women because they like guys? Obviously the whole idea of determining a person's sex from their genitals is absurd! Some people, the intersexed, are born with both sets of genitals. Some are born without any. Who are they?

Under Proposition 22 it could be legally argued that there are many people (including the above) who are unqualified to marry. The truth is that sex scattered all over the place. There are no absolutes. No either one or the other. No pure pinks and no pure blues. Just people who ought to be free to interpret their own sex the way they want to.

Proposition 22 really a legal hate crime. While Pete Knight is responsible for the California version Prop. 22 is a carbon copy of a weapon the religious and extreme political right wing has been using to attack equal protection laws all over the country. Thirty-three states now have either movements or laws in place that will do essentially the same thing, strip the LGBT community of basic civil rights.

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Taking Center Stage...

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resumes and it's "places" for formal wear. A very attractive man escorts me out and I make my turns. My sisters follow — even within the color constraint of black or red, I am impressed with the variety and quality of our outfits.

We then step offstage while the judges total up, the gap being covered by a professional performer. They call us back and announce the five finalists: Kalani, Nicole, Meredith, Tianna, and Michelle.

No Jamie.

I try and be as graceful in my disappointment as possible and join the four others out back doing the same. The finalists are being asked in turn to answer the "final question", worth 25 percent of the score. Michelle gets a curve ball question about "long lines in the ladies room" and hits it right out of the park.

Fuji, the contestant coordinator, taps me on the shoulder and tells me I am needed at the stage-right entrance. Each contestant voted during the intermission for "Miss Congeniality", and I won! So I come out, accept my award, and pose for photos. Needless to say, my mood improves! I join the finalists and last year's winner Serena backstage, who are all holding hands, tensely waiting.

Kalani, Nicole, Meredith, Tianna, and Michelle return to the stage. The rest of us wait in the wings. Nicole is the second runner-up. Tianna is the first runner-up. After more tense waiting, Michelle is our winner! We stream back on stage and join in the applause. Michelle is crowned and takes her coronation walk.

It's a flashbulb orgy as everyone congratulates the winners, and people come up to pose with Michelle's court and with each other. As things die down, I slip away and change. I quickly repair the rocket pack and do a few full-throttle blast-offs on stage, and then visit with my friends. Each one offers compliments, congratulations, and consolation.

Then its time to pack everything up and load-out. I make congratulatory farewell visits to co-producers Lulu Blau and Leslie Bailey, and to director Dear Diva, all of whom outdid themselves. I bid adieu to Gelsey and Nancy, loading equipment on the street, and we drive away.

My wife and I head down I-280 towards home. She had great fun using our digital camera to record the event for Transgender Forum. We talk about what went right and what went wrong and conclude that it was more than worth it: Nine friendships were began or strengthened; I now have a greater confidence in my ability to perform in public and to be beautiful in body and spirit. I come away feeling closer to my wife and to who I am.

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.

by Vicki Gray

March 7 is right around the corner. It's time for all of us to get involved in defeating Proposition 22, the so-called "Defense of Marriage Act" or Knight Initiative. At the very least be sure to go to the polls and vote no on this proposition which is a threat to everyone in the transgendered community.

Proposition 22 purports to ban same-sex marriage. Its definition of marriage as solely between a man and a woman is unnecessary, since that is already the only sort of marriage legally recognized in California. It is, however, unfair, divisive and intrusive. Family values? The Knight Initiative undermines families that include gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered members by attacking the love, commitment and mutual responsibility that make these families strong. If passed, it will be used, as in other states, to deny non-"straight" couples equal rights to health insurance and inheritances as well as the right to visit and make decisions for their sick or injured partners in hospital. It should be clear that, no matter how one feels about same-sex marriage, such discrimination is just plain wrong! The main effect of this mean-spirited initiative is to promote the proposition that our gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered sisters and brothers are somehow inferior and threatening. Tell Knight and his supporters that Californians have had enough of the politics of fear and hate.

But, you may object, this is strictly a gay and lesbian issue that has nothing to do with those of us who are transgendered. You couldn't be more wrong! First, many of us who have stayed with our spouses or pre-transition partners are currently in same-sex marriages, legal or not. We don't need any more barriers placed in our paths. Second, as the most visible members of the LGBT community, we are the most likely to be targeted in the climate of hate engendered by Knight. One of the last words heard by some of our murdered TG sisters has been "Faggot!" Finally, we are but a tiny minority within a minority. If we don't support our gay and lesbian sisters and brothers, why should they support us.

Want to do more than cast your one vote? Contact: Californians for Fairness, 505 Howard Street, San Francisco, CA 94105 • (415) 227-1020 www.NoOnKnight.org

They need your time and money to ensure that Proposition 22 goes down to defeat.

For Alina

THE WHOLE WORLD WASN'T WATCHING

by Joy Vannella Hughes
transcengender@yahoo.com

On January 19, 2000, Alina Marie Barragan, a 19-year-old transgender woman, was murdered in a hate crime in San Jose, California. Ten days later, on January 29, hundreds of transgender people met for the Transgender San Francisco (TGSF) annual co-tillion and beauty pageant. No mention was made of the hate crime, and almost no one there knew about it. How did this happen?

While I never knew Alina in life, I have become personally involved in the events surrounding her death. I first heard about the murder on Tuesday the 25th, from my gender counselor, who had been asked if Alina was one of her patients (she wasn't). She mentioned that an article about it had been published in the San Jose Mercury News. She asked me to send any information I could find about it to her, and I assured her that I was connected to many gender-oriented online resources, and I was sure that the community would be informed through this means.

That night I could find no mention of the crime anywhere. I did a search for the words "transsexual" and "transgender" on the Mercury News website, and came up with no hits. The murder had

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There is one more reason we need to support the No on Knight and No on Prop. 22 campaign. The transgender community is so small that it is really a minority within the larger "gay community". Yes, I know that most of us do not consider ourselves gay and we may even rebel at the thought of being part of the gay community. But from a political standpoint we are viewed as part of the gay community. And it is to all members of this community that we owe a debt of gratitude for the legal protections we have so far.

Gays and lesbians in the short run stand to loose far more than we transgendered if Prop. 22 passes. Many are in same sex relationships and many have children from previous straight marriages. They are in imminent danger of loosing their families, their insurance, their right to non discrimination in housing and employment, and even the "domestic partnership" status set up by the state this year. All that could be wiped out by Proposition 22.

All of us...the gays...the lesbians...the bisexuals...and the transgendered...are in the same boat. We need to stand together and vote against 22. If we don't we and all others in the LGBT community will be thrust back to the Stonewall days of the 60's when the police in New York City raided a bar much like Joseph's just to harass the people inside.

The March 7th vote is for all the marbles. If we don't win this one it could mean the end of our lifestyle and even force the SGA to go underground. Remember, you can't vote if you aren't registered so if you aren't on the books call the county elections office and find out how you can register. This must be done before February 7th to vote in the March 7th election.

There are other ways to help too. The people who are pushing the Knight Initiative/Prop. 22 have about ten times as much money for television ads as the No on Knight/No on 22 opponents. If you can donate to the cause please call 916 447-3205 and they'll tell you how. Volunteers are needed too! That same number will put you in touch with someone who can help you there. Remember, this is the big one. If we loose in this round we could be set back 50 years. Please Vote No on Proposition 22!!!!

been reported, it turns out, but the body hadn't been positively identified. The Merc reported the body to be that of a "man", and made no mention of Alina's gender identity.

The following day (Wednesday the 26th), I received mail from the Gender Advocacy and Information Network (GAIN, an excellent news resource that can be found at <http://www.gender.org/gain/index.html>). The mail included a dozen or so news items, and number 7 on the list described the murder, gave Alina's name, and mentioned a "Grieving Process" to occur at the Billy DeFrank Center, San Jose's LGBT center where Alina was a volunteer. I also received a message through the UC Santa Cruz Queer News mailing list, which included an Action Alert which I have copied below. I forwarded the message to my counselor, family, and friends, and to the SantaCruzTrans list (a support group where I serve as listowner). I did not realize that most of the Bay Area gender community was still in the dark.

I had reason to be afraid, because it could easily have been me. While I am a 34-year-old male to female person, I have been told that I appear to be in my early to mid twenties. Last New Year's Eve I felt my vulnerability, when I was surrounded by several

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young men in downtown Santa Cruz and forcibly kissed. A year ago, after she found out I had attended a gender support group, my wife pinned me to the floor, and moments later threatened me by holding a heavy statue over my head—our four-year-old daughter was sitting on my lap. While the local Women's Crisis Support Center took my call, there was no shelter to be found for me, and I spent about two months sleeping on my own floor, facing constant abuse. Last summer, I still didn't pass all that well, and despite ten years of experience as a C++ programmer, I couldn't find a job in Silicon Valley. I briefly became homeless, and found shelter not with the gender community, but with old friends. And, more recently, my soon-to-be-ex-wife has threatened to have her friends beat me up, and has tried to keep me from having contact with my daughter.

I attended the grieving process on Thursday the 27th. There were around 50 people in attendance, including Alina's family, volunteers from the Billy DeFrank Center, and about half a dozen male-to-female transsexuals. Rev. Denis Moore of the San Jose Metropolitan Community Church gave the service. Friends and family spoke from their hearts about Alina, and presented poetry and songs composed in her honor. Rev. Moore prayed for her in the words of St. Francis of Assisi:

*Lord make me an instrument of thy peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow Love
where there is injury, pardon
where there is doubt, faith
where there is despair, hope
where there is darkness, light
where there is sadness, joy
Oh dear Lord;
Grant that I may not so much seek,
to be consoled, as to console
to be understood, as to understand,
to be loved, as to love
For it is in giving, that we receive
it is in Pardoning that we are pardoned
and it is in dying, that we are born unto eternal life.*

When he reached the line "where there is sadness, joy," silent tears began to flow down my face, as they do again as I write this. We gathered outside the center and lit candles for her, (one burns beside me now). I made a silent commitment to Alina's spirit that this will never happen again, that none of us will die in silence. I fear, though, that it will. About once a month, a transperson is murdered somewhere in the United States—the highest murder rate for any subpopulation. Crime statistics indicate that we are much more likely to be raped or assaulted than nontrans women. And these are the ones we know about. How many times has a newspaper reported "the body of a man was found..." and no one ever knew her true gender identity? How many have gone completely unreported, people without ID, living in marginalized communities? How many have died at the hand of a parent, lover, or spouse, when their true selves were revealed?

After the memorial, five of us male-to-female transsexuals went out to the Bank Cafe (not a bar, as far as I can tell), where Alina was last seen alive. It sits practically under the marquee of a theater that advertises the movie "Boys Don't Cry", a movie about the life and the brutal rape and murder of female-to-male Brandon Teena. While we didn't mention him, another name has come to my mind—Matthew Shepard. It has been suggested to me that because Alina acted in such a risky way by leaving with this man, that we shouldn't "make a lot of noise" about this murder (actually,

much more harsh words were used, but I choose not to speak ill of the dead). It's too late for this already—Saturday's article in the Mercury News appeared on the front page and still refers to Alina by her old name, still uses male pronouns, and incorrectly refers to "sexual orientation" rather than gender identity. We have an opportunity, and indeed an obligation, to educate the press and the public about who Alina was, and to establish standards for the press and police about how to treat gender-variant individuals in a sensitive way. Neither Matthew Shepard nor Brandon Teena were "perfect victims" either. We are in for the fight of our lives, and we'd better be prepared. We ought to be prepared for the next one, too. I propose a "fire alarm" system that we can pull when a serious hate crime occurs, so that every gender person on the net knows within a day.

Young transsexuals face incredible difficulties in their lives—while Alina's family loved her for herself, many are kicked out by their parents and find themselves homeless, at risk of violence and exploitation. Transition is costly and can seem like an impossible dream. Older TS's are sometimes hard to relate to, sometimes not approving, and sometimes jealous of the young ones' beauty. People who complete their transitions are often in a big hurry to get off the firing line and vanish into the woodwork. I've got to admit, the woodwork is looking pretty good right now, and I could see taking a year or two off from trans-activism after I complete my surgery. But not forever. Each of us who has been through transition, who can afford treatment, has a moral obligation to be a "big sister" or a "big brother" to the young ones who need our help. Our community needs to be able to better assist those who deal with hate crimes, domestic violence, discrimination, and abuse through the civil, criminal, or family law systems. Unfortunately, that includes just about all of us.

Last Sunday I attended services at the San Jose MCC. We prayed for Alina, and many tears were cried by many people there. This was the first time I had attended church since I began my transition over two years ago. I went there, not in a matter of belief, but to seek comfort, because it no longer matters to me whether there is or isn't a God. I needed the ritual, grounded so deeply in my past as a minister's child, and I needed the community. A woman of the church gave me communion. She hugged me, and prayed "...keep her safe."

I close with words from Dr. Martin Luther king's last speech:

...And you know, it's possible that the priest and the Levite looked over that man on the ground and wondered if the robbers were still around. Or it's possible that they felt that the man on the ground was merely faking. And he was acting like he had been robbed and hurt, in order to seize them over there, lure them there for quick and easy seizure. And so the first question that the Levite asked was, "If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?" But then the Good Samaritan came by. And he reversed the question: "If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?"

Let us rise up tonight with a greater readiness. Let us stand with a greater determination. And let us move on in these powerful days, these days of challenge to make America what it ought to be. We have an opportunity to make America a better nation. And I want to thank God, once more, for allowing me to be here with you.

Well, I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it doesn't matter with me now. Because I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people will get to the promised land. And I'm happy, tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.

THE CONTESTANT EXPERIENCE - PART I

By Nicole

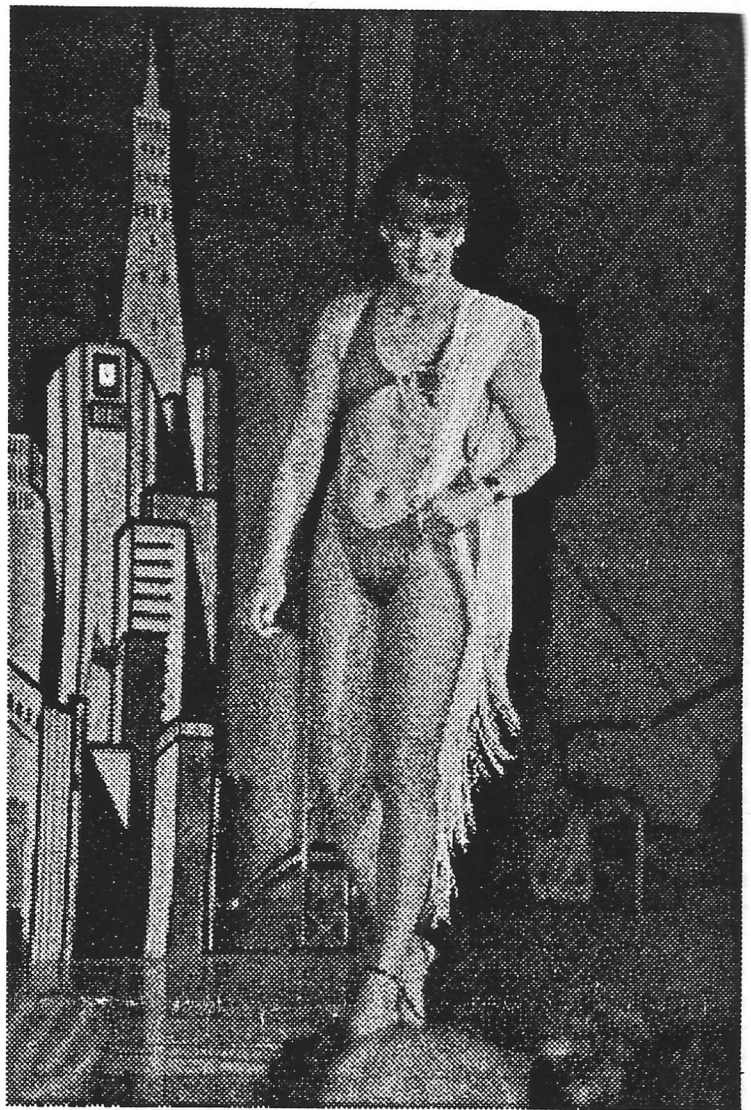
Two years ago I wrote about my experience attending my first Cotillion. Last year I wrote about the experience of catering the Cotillion. This year I was a contestant so I thought you might like to hear about that experience.

I announced my intention to run for Miss TGSF fairly early. Lulu tried to get me to run the year before, but Debbie wanted to cater so we did that instead. Since I knew in advance I was going to run we used the time to develop a talent. I had not sang in many years so it took some practice just to get my voice in the "tolerable" range. Debbie of course sings like an angel, so I was counting on her to make me look good. This meant we would be doing duets so that's what we practiced. Our first opportunity to perform was the 1999 SGA Talent show. We decided to sing the Metallica ballad "Nothing else matters". I selected the song because I already knew most of the words, and they had a meaning which could relate to the TG community. Later we figured out that no one makes Karaoke CD's for this song. We ended up having the sound person for the 1999 Cotillion make us a CD by stripping out most of the vocals. We survived the experience and we learned a great deal about singing live.

Our next event was the TGSF Big Shew. We decided to sing two numbers here, but we were still just working at getting used to singing in front of a crowd. In addition to the Metallica number we sang Depeche Mode's "Home". This number was selected because of the words and how they related to my feelings towards the TG community. Again, we learned that no one made the music only CD. We had a CD made with the vocals stripped out but it developed problems and we ended up singing over the retail CD version of the song. Although I was still uncomfortable singing in front of a crowd, I felt more comfortable than the first time we sang. I was still using my mental reminder to help me through the event (if I could jump out of an airplane at 14,000 feet, I could do this).

After surviving this event we were feeling a bit more confident about what we could do. Debbie even sang a solo to me at the Big Shew. We were looking for another event to do and realized that the Miss SGA pageant was coming up. I was a member of SGA so I decided to run. I thought it would be a great way to bring the groups closer together if I won. I wanted to have a more feminine part so we started looking at female artist who sang in a lower key. At first I selected a Garbage number (that's the name of the band) "When I Grow Up". The idea was to use it for the SGA pageant and the Cotillion. Despite extensive practice, I was never able to make that song work so about a month before the SGA pageant we switched to Cher's "All or Nothing". Now we were in the range of the Karaoke library, we were able to purchase Karaoke CD's for "When I Grow Up" and "All or Nothing". This was the first time we were able to practice to the music without echo's or other distracting noises in the background.

The SGA pageant also provided me with an opportunity to experience the preparation, back stage environment and emotional effect of a pageant. The SGA Pageant was in itself a great event to be a part of. The SGA pageant actually offers you more latitude in what you can do. I went through 5 outfit changes at the SGA pageant but could only do 3 at the Cotillion. Also the time commitment is lower for the SGA pageant, so if you are looking to hold a title but can not commit to the weekly practice schedule for the Cotillion you might consider becoming a member and running for Miss SGA. The two events have a number of similarities, both are run on a beauty contest theme with an Active wear, Formal wear and Talent segment. Both events also have the on stage question segment. After the SGA pageant I was so tired I spent the



next 2 days at home. I had planned to go to 2 events the next day but I was completely exhausted to the point where I was not feeling well, so I could not go.

There really was not another planned practice for the Cotillion until December, however, as Miss SGA, Debbie and I performed at the San Jose Ducal Ball. During December we decided to look at changing the number we were singing. We had 3 options, "When I Grow Up", "Man I Feel Like a Woman" or stay with "All or Nothing". At first Debbie wanted to sing Shania Twain's "Man I Feel Like a Woman" and I wanted to stay with "All or Nothing" (because I was singing some of Cher's parts and I liked that). On December 11th we had our first contestant meeting for the Cotillion at Diva's place. We went over the basics of what we would need to do as far as practices go and what information we had to supply early for the programs and special effects. Diva also used this meeting to bring up the Red & Black theme, did you notice that we were all wearing either red or black in the active wear and formal wear segments? During this meeting we found out that another contestant wanted to use one of the songs in our list so we dropped it from consideration (we still may do it somewhere because we already have the CD). Debbie was not real hot on singing "All or Nothing" again so she suggested that we sing "After All". I was initially against the idea but she convinced me to do it. I am glad she did because I really like the way it turned out. We practiced the new song several times a week in December.

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Contestant Experience...

Continued from Page 20

We were on vacation during the end of the year but we came back early (January 2nd) to make the first Cotillion rehearsal. All the practices were held at the John Simms dance studio in San Francisco and was a great place to practice what we had to do. Sometimes it was a bit distracting, you know how it is when some of us get in a room full of mirrors. The first rehearsal was 3 hours long and we concentrated on walking patterns on the stage and posing. This was really the first time where all of us were working together on our Cotillion sequences. Some of us were dressed rather nice and others (like me) were dressed casual. After the rehearsal several of us went to The Patio, a restaurant in the Castro.

The second rehearsal was on January 8th. I decided to make and bring some cookies since we were hungry last week and I was on a limited budget. We covered walking patterns again but this time we had an idea of the music we would be walking to and the amount of time we had for each event. I believe it was this rehearsal where we learned about Diva's idea to use projectors to project pictures of us during the active wear portion of the show. Joseph was at this practice to give us an idea of how to walk. (I think Joseph's title is Miss Gay San Francisco and her femme name is Grizelda). We were again here for about 3 hours, but it was a busy night, after the practice there was a mid month at the G-spot and an SGA social.

Between the 2nd and 3rd practice each contestant went to Diva's place to review their talent segment with her. We scheduled our review with the director for Wednesday afternoon. We performed our number a few times and Diva made several useful suggestions on how to make the act better. At this point we had not worked out the steps yet just the song. Diva had a great idea to add some pictures to our act using the projectors which were supposed to be used the night of the Cotillion. We ended up spending several hours at Kalani's house scanning the pictures using her scanner.

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The third rehearsal and the interview with the judges was on January 16th. This one was exciting for us since we were at the Reno Ducal ball the day before and it was snowing in the mountains. We ended up driving back over the mountains Saturday night so we did not get snowed in on the Reno side. The interview was interesting, each of us spent about 15 minutes with the four judges. While I was there, I think each of them asked me about three questions. Some of the questions were pretty straight forward others showed that the judges had some experience with our community and required the contestant to come up with a well thought out answer. About an hour after the interview event we were at our third practice. Once again we were practicing how we would walk on the stage for the Active wear and formal wear events. This time Debbie (my wife) and Deborah (Roxanne's wife) stood in for the Miller bare-chested models we were to use as escorts at the Cotillion. No they did not have to take off their tops. At this practice we knew the music we would be walking to, the timing and the approximate size of the stage, so we were getting a good idea of how long we should be in each pose and how long we had to walk out and back. Some time was spent on the talent segment timing and the overall show timing, but since these segments were not locked down yet we did not dwell on them too much.



The fourth Rehearsal was held on January 22nd, one week before the Cotillion. When we arrived there was a reporter from San Francisco Weekly there to interview several of the candidates. In this rehearsal we were able to do an almost complete walk through of all our events. Nancy was there to hear about how the lights and other technical needs would be effected. This rehearsal was four hours long, so you would think we had plenty of time, but we ended up being there longer.


Part Two will continue in the April Channel.

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GenderPAC Editorial

SAME SEX MARRIAGE?

TRANSGENDER PEOPLE AND MARRIAGE

Clare Howell, clare@gpac.org

[New York, NY: 25 Jan 00] IN NOVEMBER, THE Texas Fourth Court of Appeals ruled that a post-operative transsexual woman, Christie Littleton, is legally male and therefore lacked standing to bring legal action as a widow. And since Texas law forbids marriage between two men, she could not have married Jonathan Littleton; hence, their 7-year marriage was retroactively nullified.

This fall a transsexual woman and her female partner flew to England, which takes a position similar to the Texas court, and were married. Although legally man and wife, they are, to all appearances, lesbians.

With state legislatures and the US Congress making laws restricting marriage to heterosexual couples, little attention has been given to how transgender people affect the issue. And, to further spice the mix, many transgender people identify as gay and lesbian. To help clarify the issue, we talked to Dana Priesing, a Washington D.C. attorney who works with GenderPAC.

YF: What's the immediate consequence, if any, of the Littleton decision for transsexuals?

DP: It affects post-operative transsexuals with un-amended birth certificates who seek to marry persons of the same anatomical sex. If you are in that situation, and you want to marry your same-sex partner, you might consider doing so in a jurisdiction that does not recognize reassignment as changing a person's legal sex. Great Britain appears to be one such jurisdiction. At least one Texas state appellate court has taken a similar view.

YF: If a post-operative transsexual woman marries a non-transsexual woman in a jurisdiction that does not accord legal significance to sex reassignment surgery, is their marriage valid?

DP: Generally speaking, yes, at least in that jurisdiction. Such a jurisdiction apparently would consider assigned birth sex irrevocable, and would consider the transsexual woman still legally a man. Consequently, in that jurisdiction, their marriage wouldn't be a same-sex marriage, but a heterosexual marriage. Now, it is questionable whether their marriage would be recognized in another jurisdiction that considered the transsexual woman legally a woman. In such a jurisdiction, their marriage would constitute a same-sex marriage, and likely would be unlawful unless the jurisdiction allowed same-sex marriages.

YF: You're saying that a person who is, to all outward appearances, a woman could be legally male in one jurisdiction and legally female in another? Isn't there a single accepted standard for legally 'sexing' people?

DP: Not when the issue is legally sexing them at some point in life after their initial birth assignment. Typically an infant is visually inspected, with follow-up testing—and sometimes surgical sex assignment—for infants with atypical sexual anatomy. There is some diversity in the standards that have been applied in assessing if and when the law should acknowledge at some later date that the initial assignment is no longer accurate. For example, in the 1976 case of *MT v. JT*, the Appellate Division of the Superior Court of New Jersey considered psychological and physical factors, including the irrevocability of the medical steps taken and capability to have intercourse as a member of the reassigned sex, in holding that a male-to-female transsexual should be considered legally female. In contrast, the Texas Fourth Court of Appeals in the Littleton

case refused to accept the possibility that one's initial sex assignment could be superseded by later events. Apparently Great Britain's position is similar.

YF: What about the converse situation: a married heterosexual couple, one of whom undergoes gender reassignment. Is their marriage still valid?

DP: The answer depends upon the legal post-birth sexing standards of the jurisdiction where they reside, and perhaps of the jurisdiction where they were married, and/or the jurisdiction where the transsexual spouse was born—as well as 'choice-of-law' provisions that might be applied by whichever jurisdiction found itself addressing the issue. In short, we won't know until it happens.

YF: How does this issue affect the debate over same-sex marriage?

DP: It demonstrates that same-sex marriage is in many ways already a *fait accompli*. Consider the couple who were married in Great Britain. Although they were considered legally man and wife when they married, day in and day out they live as and are taken to be two women. It would be very difficult for the average person they encounter in the grocery store to see evidence to the contrary. (That would require a thorough pelvic examination and a chromosomal smear.) So, if they or others like them are willing to be public about the fact that they were legally married, the fact that they don't appear to be man and wife, but lesbians, would encourage those they meet to re-examine their preconceptions about same-sex marriage and its consequences.

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