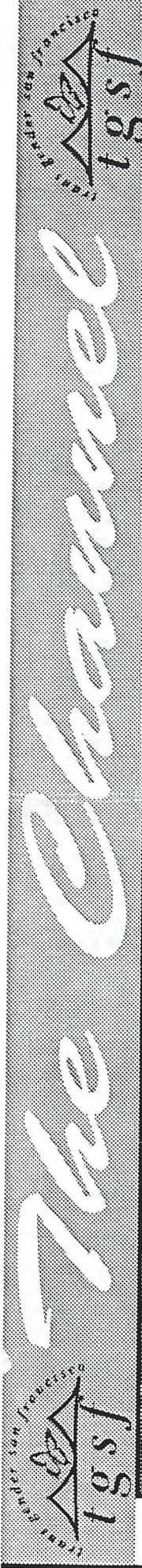


TGSF & Imperial Glitterati!

The Channel



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



The Channel

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

ExCom 2002 - 2003 Officers

(Fiscal Year: May 1 - April 30)

President Rachael Janelle
 Vice President Rachael Hill
 Secretary Susan Laird
 Treasurer Stephanie Ann Blythe
 Education Ally Grillo and Kara Flynn
 Outreach Kalani Makanani
 and Roxy Carmichael-Hart
 Social Aiyana Eveningstar and Gia Luisa

Membership Report

Final 2001-2002 Membership as of:

May 24, 2002 230

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

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

Newsletter Staff

Editor Ayme Michelle Kantz
 Advertising Inquiries to TGSF Excom
 Contributing Photographers, this Issue: Kris Davidson
 Rachael Hill & Telzey Adams

Ad Rates

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

Personal ads from TGSF members: \$10 for up to 40 words per issue. We will not accept ads with a sexual objective. Ad deadlines are the 15th of every month. Send ad copy and check or money order to TGSF, Advertising Dept., PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486. Please support our advertisers, and tell them you saw their ad in *The Channel*!

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FROM THE EDITOR...



While it's gotten me into trouble periodically, I'll admit I can be a bit profane and blasphemous at times. So I have taken the liberty of filling in the blanks in the news items reprinted in the *Channel's* memorial section to Gwen Araujo (found this month beginning on Page 22). Where the mass media are too shy or prudish to print the words spoken during testimony, I don't fear to tread. If you find the contents offensive, I apologize, for that is not my intent. I find some of the testimony quite offensive myself. If it makes you angry, good. I won't apologize for that at all. Every time I re-read what's printed about Gwen in the local press, I just want to scream.

The defensive team's posture seems to be oriented towards blaming the victim for her so-called deception. And there are a lot of people who think she needlessly placed herself in harm's way. Unfortunately, the defense have precedent on their side, and no doubt will recite a "gay panic" position. But thankfully, there's a glimmer of reason on the horizon. I refer you to Georgia DA Paul Howard's launching of a national battle to stop the use of this horrid line of thinking. Please see the article on Page 18 for more on this story.

And much has been made by the media of Gwen's sexuality, and her intimate relations with at least two of the defendants. To help combat that, however, it seems to me a key fact for the prosecution to draw out, is the accused's own sexual inclinations. Obviously, they enjoyed the sex or they wouldn't have kept coming back for more. Typical men - thinking with their dicks as usual. It was only until they began "comparing notes" (classic male adolescent behavior) that they began to wonder about Gwen's physical gender. I can almost picture it now: Dawning realization soon followed, and their insecurities mushroomed, that oh my God if she has a cock then that must mean we're faggots! Can't have that me bucko. Our football careers will be ruined forever!

Naturally, this warped behavior was taught and reinforced constantly by these boys' families and friends. Despite Nicole Brown's testimony of her reassurances to Jose Merel, if you read between the lines, what she really told him was that 'you boys are branded as butt pirates forever, and neither me or my girlfriends will have anything to do with you ever again!' Just what an ignorant, insecure hormone-driven image-is-everything überfootball-stud needed to hear after a night of heavy drinking, right?

Now that the weeks of preliminary hearings are finally over, and the judge has heard enough to recommend a jury trial, I'm envisioning the final day when guilty verdicts are returned. Hopefully then those three miscreants will get a real education in gender identity, as they spend a good portion of their lives in prison washing Bubba's socks.

But our community needs restitution as well, and I keep thinking that real justice for Gwen Araujo's murder would involve more than just convictions for those 3 boys. I believe it is their parents who should be held equally as responsible for reinforcing their sons' ignorance and insecurity about their own identities.

Even after the dust from the criminal proceedings settle, there's probably a wrongful-death civil course to pursue as well. Really hit those families hard where it hurts - in their wallets. But what I'd love to see is the parents of the main perpetrator (Magidson), now that their son's sizeable bail has been revoked and the entire family is in financial ruin, find closure somehow. They must be absolutely frantic with worry and disbelief, ravaged by a whole host of emotions at what their son has done. I pray that they don't become entrenched in anger and blame, but that they find a way to teach others at how it all could've gone so differently. It's nice to dream that they would even go out to high schools and teach gender identity awareness/sensitivity training to the students, particularly the males. Wishful thinking?

The Magidson family is one of privilege - plenty of money to go around, little good it will do them. Instead of teaching their son about what's really important to make your way in this world: a sense of compassion and kindness and an understanding of differences, they instead taught him intolerance and reinforced his hate, that he was better than others because the family was wealthy and powerful. It was they who propped up and encouraged his false sense of masculinity and ego, to the point where he killed a beautiful young girl in order to protect it.

"Boys! Don't let this happen to you!" would be their rallying cry. And it wouldn't be about how to avoid "getting fooled by a transsexual." It's the IDEA that trans people and faggots are evil and taboo that gets propped up by family units like the Magidsons and society in general. In the end, they let their son down. Money didn't solve their problems and after all this is over, they'll be digging themselves out of a hole for the rest of their lives. When that mother and father realize that they had as much of a hand in Gwen's death as their son did, and help us educate others so that the killings stop, that's when real justice will begin to be served.

Significant Other Support - East Bay

Questions or concerns about your partner's crossdressing? Please call Julie at (925) 937-8432, e-mail julie39@attbi.com or write to: Julie Freeman, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I'm not into writing this month report for some reason. Not because I'm almost finished as President of TGSF. I'm waiting right now for a friend of mine to come over so we can take his dog for a walk out at shoreline in Mt View. I just want to get outside and enjoy the beauty of day. March was a very busy month with events. I went to five major events in a row. They were lots of fun and took alot of work. I do not just go to an event to just hang out, I'm there to promote TGSF or other groups I'm involved with. Some people had said that no one can work a room as I can. I also went to West Hollywood for a seminar on training for trainer regarding transgender issue for clinicians dealing with transgender individuals. The seminar was very interesting to find out that some of the medical community still does not know much about transgender people. I realize that I deal with transgender issues daily from e-mail, phone calls and being one myself. I forget that we are a very small community and that most people don't know much about us, however times are changing. When groups get funding to train people to work with doctors and nurses to understand the transgender people needs that very positive. Also the media is doing a better job. I just saw the HBO special called "Normal" it was pretty good regarding M to F issues. Times are changing, but we all have get involved in this opportune time that has arised for all of us. Rachel Hill, Aunt Fran and I want to the Billy Defrank dinner in March and there were over 150 people there. The Mayor of San Jose was there and so were many city council members. However out of the 150 plus that were there were only 3 of us to represent the transgender community. Next year I want to have 6 of us there so each year we will double the numbers.

I like to thank all my friends who called and sent e-mails. Your kindness touches my heart and it helped me get over a different time I was going thru. Today I have sorrow in my life as my father just passed away yesterday (March 17, 2003). I really do not want to write about it. I just want to let you know where my head is in writing this report. One thing I will not miss as president is writing this monthly report. I have only 6 weeks left as President and I am very proud to see of some of the girls set up to fill the open ExCom positions. Besides putting their name on the ballot they also have some great ideas for the future of TGSF and with some enthusiasm to add to it.

In closing I would like to thank every one of you for your support, kindness and your help to make this a year I will not forget.

**Many Hugs -
Rachael Janelle Light**



Election Candidacy Announcement!

DEAR TGSF,

The challenge that we face is daunting. There is so much uncertainty and so much we must do and so little time to do it. Yet I believe that if we tackle these challenges together we will look back and smile with satisfaction, knowing that we have made a difference.

I have no illusion that the job of president will be an easy task. I know that it will be frustrating, agonizing, troubling and stressful. Yet, I believe that it will also be rewarding - not for me but for all of us. When the next girl comes forward to state that "I want to walk into the light" and we take her hand and lead her to safety, we can look back and smile knowing that we made a difference. Dear Rachel you encouraged me to reach out to those girls, for the next one I talk to may be the one on the verge of ending it all because she had no where to turn. Those are the ones that matter to me and should matter to all of us. I was once that girl, alone and crying and feeling trapped. TGSF saved me, gave me a home when I had none, gave me love when I had none, gave me a purpose when I had none.

I recognize my weaknesses. I do not have a lot of knowledge about other organizations that we deal with. I would like to call on those of you with more experience in that area to help me open those doors. I want all of us to work as a team for the common good. John Lennon once said "Imagine". Imagine if we can help lift each other, put all of our differences aside (and I know there are many within this community). We will have a stronger TGSF and a much stronger community.

I will bring many strengths to the office of president. My ability to manage, my organization skills, my knowledge of budgets and grant writing, my ability to get things done. I can be persistent and I can nag if I have to. Because I believe that there is so much we must do and so much good we can do and have done.

I applaud the work of this ExCom. They have made a difference in my life and in the lives of others.

I have no personal agenda no fame or glory to seek. My glory will be in the satisfaction that I see when TGSF reaches out to someone and helps her, and then she too knows she has a home, that she has love and that she is welcome. She becomes a part of our family, as I have.

I want to hit the ground running. If elected on April 24, on April 25 I will draft a plan of action for your review and meet with you and the new ExCom to see how we can get the things done that must be accomplished.

One year ago I had no knowledge of TGSF. I rode on the Pride Parade float, I joined TGSF and other groups, and I got involved with the Cotillion and was appointed to the ExCom. Things have happened so fast for me. And it all makes sense because I have discovered my purpose.

I thought all this weekend about the path that I have been on and where it may take me. I thought a lot about the people who have been there for me when I needed it and how important it is to give something back. I thought about how much that you and TGSF have meant to me.

I want to thank you all for your replies to my e-mail. I received some sound and candid advice and I appreciate the honesty. I appreciate the support you have shown me.

And because of that support and because you have all believed in me in the past, I want to announce, with great humility, that I am a candidate for President of TGSF.

Thank you all.

**With Love,
Roxy Carmichael-Hart**

DEAR TGSF MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,

It is hard to believe that it is April already. This certainly has been quite a year. We marched with Pride in June, dressed and partied on the ferry in October and crowned a new Mr. and Miss TGSF in January. And we watched with shock and sadness at the brutal murder of one of our sisters. With recent events providing more reason for reflection and trepidation, I am happy that TGSF has been there for us to turn to for comfort.

With April comes the end of the terms of your ExCom. A new leadership team will assume office on May 1. I am confident that they will bring energy and vision to the organization and will continue to build upon what we have started. I want you to know that each of you has been very important to the success of TGSF and I have appreciated your support during this last year.

Also with April comes membership renewal for most of you. If your dues have expired, please take a moment to complete the membership renewal form that is included in the mailing of the *Channel*. Regrettably, as is the case with everything, our costs have increased, so dues must also be raised commensurately. Effective May 1, annual dues will be \$40 if you wish the *Channel* to be mailed to you and website access to the *Channel*. If you would like to receive the *Channel* via the website only, annual dues will be \$35. Please make sure that we have your current e-mail address so that you can obtain your access password. I hope that the dues increase will not dissuade you from continuing your membership; however the increase is necessary to continue to give you the TGSF that you want and deserve.

It has been a privilege serving as your President this past year and I want to thank you for your contributions to your sisters and brothers. Please support my successor and the new ExCom as they strive to make this world a better and safer place for all of us.

**With Love,
Rachael Janelle Light
President, TGSF 2002-2003**

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



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March 2, 2003

TGSF ExCom MEETING MINUTES

Meeting convenes at 4:10 p.m. Present: Rachael Janelle, Rachel Hill, Susan Laird, Kara Flynn, Roxy Carmichael-Hart, and Stephanie Ann Blythe; Guests: Mr. TGSF, Tyler, Brooke Miller, and Jamie Fenton. Request to approve the minutes for the month of February. Minutes are approved.

Presentation of the Agenda

President's Report

The Channel: The Channel is max-ed out at 30 pages and cannot go larger without incurring additional postage.

Request for funds to purchase stamps for the mailing of March Channel. [Editor's Note: Sorry!]

Cotillion: Full single-camera versions are given to Cotillion contestants, but editing is still in process.

April 6th Fund raiser: Request is made for a couple of gift to present for the raffle. Discussion of necessity based on the cost and current state of TGSF finances. Decision is made to table the issue.

San Jose Coronation.

Elections: March 27th is the cut-off date for submission of names for the elections. Membership for Cat (Tekla) has been granted in exchange for the work that Cat has done with the Cotillion and other TGSF functions. Running for elections so far:

President: (Open), Vice President - Cat (Tekla), Treasurer - (Open), Secretary (Open), Education - Roxy, Social - Aiyana.

It is highly recommended that anyone who wishes to be on the Executive Committee should attend the end of the month meeting, March 27th at the Blue Muse, to confirm their nominations.

Pride Parade

Applications for the beer booth and the parade have been sent in.

Vice President's Report

Membership Fee Increase. It is proposed that the membership dues be increased to \$40 for members who receive the Channel by mail and dues to be increased to \$35 for members who would elect to view the Channel online through the website. Discussion of pros and cons of dues increases. The website is now ready to use for viewing the Channel online. Proposal that dues increases will be implemented upon the renewal of each membership. Motion is made to increase the dues as proposed. Seconded and Passed with Rachael Janelle Abstaining.

Credit card and merchant's account. Due to excessive expense of online credit card processing, a cheaper alternative has been found. This would be a machine that rents for \$19.95 per month and charged only in any month it is used plus \$.30 plus 2.25% of the purchase per transaction. This would allow greater flexibility in ticket purchases, and future possibilities for the TGSF online store, which is still in planning. Motion is made to table the proposal for future discussion pending the election of a new treasurer.

Secretary's Report

Website is gaining readership, but it is still necessary that we obtain e-mail addresses as that is part of verification and login processes.



We are beginning to expand the members section to include newsletters from other groups, but files are ungainly large.

Point is made that difficulty with obtaining the Channel online or by web should be addressed to the Secretary through telephone or by e-mail. It is stressed that the Secretary MUST have a member's e-mail in order to permit usage of TGSF Online.

Treasury Report

Current balance is \$1887.79 with the costs of the March Channel yet to be deducted. Costs of the March Channel is \$450. Remaining bills from creditors connected with the Cotillion are discussed. TGSF requires about \$625 per month to operate. Decision is made to curtail additional expenditures until after revenues from dues have added more revenue. Next ExCom to review revenues from advertisers in The Channel. Tickets to various events that require the presence of Mr. and Miss TGSF are to be paid for by TGSF. Discussion of debts owed to current ExCom members. Members agreed to deferral of repayment.

Education

Note is made that the participation of members in the self-defense class offered by TGSF was zero. SRS seminar produced \$20 in revenue. Videotape that was made was unusable. Other upcoming events are discussed.

Outreach

Voicemail is still receiving calls, in some cases throughout the country. Point is made that no phone numbers will be put on the messaging. The hotline is the only connection for many people who do not have computers. Discussion about point of contact by telephone for TGSF.

Social

Mid month social for March 13 announced and March 27 End of Month at the Blue Muse is announced. LGBT center is planning a June event but TGSF has no plans that would conflict with their plans. The new ExCom will have to decide on the last Thursday of June. Most likely, that end of month social would be cancelled in view of Pride Parade preparations.

Old Business

Transition Committee and vacancies on ExCom upcoming are discussed. Critical nature of the membership of ExCom discussed. Next meeting will be held April 6, at 2:00 p.m. at Susan's Home in Santa Clara May 4 the New ExCom will meet.

No more old business

New Business

No new business

Motion to adjourn. Seconded. Meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

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VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Heading towards Pride week! Yes, that is the goal right now. For those who haven't been to Pride week yet, it is an incredible celebration with something to do from dawn to dusk (and thereafter). It was truly one of the highlights for me last year from the teamwork that went into the float building, the overwhelming size of the Dyke march, the view from the float and all the friends I made along the way. A hotel room works the best to take full advantage of the festivities. We piled 4 of us into one small room and had a blast. Pride week this year is June 28-29, with details found on the official web site. Our schedule for float building etc. will be out in the May Channel.



That brings us to the TGSF float itself. Initial pieces are coming together and we now have a trailer available that will be pulled by a diesel tractor! That's right, we should be one of the largest floats in the parade this year and I want to pack it with people. Usually the design of the float is collaboration between Miss TGSF and the Vice President so if you have some creative ideas, the VP spot will be opening next month!

Fund raising for the effort continues as well as an overall effort to bring TGSF solvent. The final receipts for the Cotillion are in and we have a ways to go. We still have outstanding bills to several vendors and then there are several TGSF members who are owed money. That's the part that really gets to me. Members who, out of the goodness of their hearts, have paid for expenses with the idea of being reimbursed. We all need to do our part to make sure these folks get paid back as well as the vendors.

Everywhere I have gone over the past two months there have been people who want to help us with some fund raising. It has been wonderful. Longer-term plans are underway for events, dinners etc but they take a lot of planning and come with a certain financial risk. Mark Paladini, who produced the highly successful BCEF fundraising dinner, has agreed to offer guidance in our endeavors (thanks Mark). The quick hit that was voted on and approved at the last Ex-Com meeting was an increase to the membership fee. Yes, I know that could evoke some grumbling, but all we're asking you to do is have one less Latte a year in support of your group. Here's how it is going to work. Membership fees will now have two different categories - those who access the Channel electronically and those who receive it by US mail. Clearly this endeavor is intended to motivate you in the direction of the electronic version which moves the membership fee to \$35 annually. If you elect to receive the Channel by US mail the annual fee will be another \$5 (envelope stuffing, postage etc.) for a total of \$40. Without your support at this level, TGSF will continue to have financial difficulties every year after the Cotillion and thus could jeopardize the continuation of such an important event.

I was looking back over what I have written most recently and although I have been thinking it, I could find where I had officially made the statement. I will not be running for re-election in the VP position and contrary to popular thought, I will not be running for President. As you can see by my Miss TGSF column, my new position is keeping me plenty busy. I also plan to shift some of my time back to my boys who are at a critical growing time. My older boy (7th grade) is starting to have some trouble with his grades and that takes priority for me right now.

Other comments about ExCom - I was disappointed that nobody showed up for the Self Defense seminar that Kara had arranged last month. With our continuing concern about personal safety etc., I would have thought that at least some people would have shown up. Please do what you can to support the planned events. With both Rachael and I stepping down, we have both been concerned about making sure there is someone in place to run the show. Not that there is much we can do, but we have been concerned.

Roxy Carmichael, recent addition to the ExCom, has expressed some desire to step into the President's role. Mind you, her real ambition for this year is to run for Miss TGSF, but she too grew concerned when nobody was raising his or her hand for the Presidency. She knows that one can't be the President and run for Miss TGSF at the same time - at least with any focus on either role. After some thought her response was "where ever I can be of most benefit to the group". I was moved and I say, "Hats off to you girl". She has since written several proposals including a strategic plan for TGSF. I was very impressed after reading her words. She has a passion and a fire that is best served leading a charge. I probably "outed" her by writing this, but I wanted everyone to know that I support her 100% should she formally place her bid for the position. Roxy, I am so proud of you!

I am also very proud of the 6 or 7 others who stood up at the last end of the month event with their desire to run for Miss TGSF. Clap Clap Clap. While the group was standing in front of the crowd a gal walked past on her way to the bathroom. On her way out I asked her to remain up with the other girls and she wasn't quite sure what I was doing. Well, she needed to be in that line up - she was absolutely gorgeous (I'm sorry I didn't get your name Hon) and should give serious consideration to running. If you are the one, please send me a note RachelH180@aol.com. If you know whom I am talking about, please urge her on.

We have a lot of wonderful events coming up - spring is here (spring line that is) - both inside and outside TGSF. Stand up. Be counted. And most of all...be safe.

**Warm Regards,
Rachel**

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Sunday / April 6 / 4:00pm

TGSF ExCOM MEETING

The meeting of the TGSF Executive Committee will be held at Susan Laird's house in Santa Clara, 2222 Pruneridge Avenue. All TGSF members in good standing are invited to attend. Call 408-430-2196 x1230 to make sure of starting time! Please attend! There's Cotillion debriefing and upcoming **Elections** to begin planning!

Sunday / April 6th / 4:00pm

TGSF, FTMI and TG Holidays Presents

**TG FUNDRAISER FOR THE
LGBT COMMUNITY STEERING COMMITTEE**

At Aunt Charlie's Lounge at 133 Turk St. at Taylor St. Phone is 415-441-2922. Food is provide by the Bar. Food at 4pm and Show at 5pm

First Prize is 2 Round Trip Tickets to any where in the USA, Bahamas, Caribbean, Mexico or Canada. And other Raffle prizes. It should be lots of fun!

Thursday / April 24 / 7:30pm

TGSF END OF MONTH EVENT

Election Night!

This is an important night for the entire TGSF Membership, as we elect our officers for the new fiscal year. Many positions still need to be filled! We need your talent and dedication! The Blue Muse 409 Gough Street, San Francisco. For more information contact Rachael Janelle.

Coming Next Month!

May 12th — May 18th

ESPRIT 2003 IN PORT ANGELES, WASHINGTON

The Esprit Gala is the premier transgender event in the Pacific Northwest, with something for everyone: classes, vendors, shopping and casino excursions, a fashion show, a talent show, special programs for significant others, and more! For more information visit www.espritconf.com.

Saturday / May 17

GAPA ANNUAL BANQUET

"A Tuesday in May", A&PIWC's annual community awards program, celebration, and fundraiser, will be held Tuesday evening at the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco. Tickets cost \$75. For event information and sponsorship opportunities, contact Esme Marconi at 415.292.3420 X341, or visit www.apiwelness.org.

IMPORTANT WEBSITE UPDATE!

If you want an ID/Password to access the new **Member's area** on the TGSF website, send an email request to Susan Laird: Susan@hairzapper.com.

Friday / May 30 / 5:00pm (Dinner); 7:15pm (Game)

**FIFTH FRIDAY - GIRLS AND GUYS NIGHT OUT -
DINNER AND A BALLGAME!**

The Giants host the Rockies, 7:15 p.m. at Pac Bell Park, and Gelsey hosts the RGA Fifth Friday dinner, 5 p.m. at MoMo's. Gelsey: "Peninsula attendees can ride CalTrain and East Bay girls can use BART. View Box tickets are \$25. We would like to see a good pre-season sign up for this event, so we can get an improved seating location and set the dinner arrangements. Another angle we will pursue is nominating the TG Gospel Choir to sing the National Anthem that night." Momo's is at 760 2nd Street (2nd and King), San Francisco, 94107. If you'd like to attend, please RSVP to the RGA Warm Line at (408) 984-4044.

June 7 & 8 - San Jose Pride

June 20-22 - Bay Area Rodeo

www.bayarearodeo.com. San Jose Airport Hyatt & The Horse Park At Woodside.

June 28 & 29 - San Francisco Pride 2003!

This year's theme: "You've Gotta Give Them Hope!" Lots of thing we can do! Volunteers are needed now!

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Lingerie

Cosmetics
Cosmetics

Lingerie
Shoes

Nails
Nails

Fem Fashions
Wigs

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Calendar of Events - April 2003

OTHER BAY AREA GROUPS

Pacific Ctr for Human Growth (PacCtr)

A counseling oriented growth center sponsors all-inclusive gender support groups on every Friday at 8:00pm, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. 510-548-8283

Rainbow Gender Association (RGA)

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

Sacramento Gender Association (SGA)

Blue Rose Chapter meets 8:00pm the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month in Sacramento. Write PO Box 162907, Sacramento, CA 95816 or call 916-364-7212 for meeting locations. Website: www.transgender.org/sga; email: sga@transgender.org

Diablo Valley Girls (DVG)

Meets 1st and 3rd Monday of every month. 8:00pm at Club 1220, 1220 Pine Street in Walnut Creek. Write to DVG, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885 or call 925-937-8432.

DVG Rap Group (RCC)

Meets 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month, 7:00pm at Rainbow Community Center, 2118 Willow Pass Road, Suite 500 in Concord. For more information call 925-937-8432.

FTM International

A support group for Female-to-Male CDs and TSs; Holds open Informational Meetings and closed Support Meetings. Write FTM International, Inc., 160 14th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 or call 415-553-5987.

TGIF

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

Silicon Valley Gender Association (SVGA)

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

Far West Women (FWW)

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

Santa Cruz Trans (SCT)

Bi-weekly social/support group for gender-gifted persons serving Santa Cruz and Central Coast. 1st and 3rd Tuesdays every month at The Diversity Center, 177 Walnut Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95060; (831) 425-5422; 7:00pm

SCOUT (SCOUT)

Santa Cruz Organization for Uniting Transmen, meets on the 4th Tuesday of every month at the Diversity Center (listed above); 7:30pm

The Mid-Peninsula Transgender Group (MPTG)

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

Central City Hospitality House (CCHH)

288 Turk Street, SF. 415-749-2167. Facilitated TG discussion group every Monday, 5:00pm - 6:30pm.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 7:00 PM SCT	2 7:30 PM MPTG	3 7:00 PM DVG RCC	4 8:00 PM PacCtr 8:00 PM RGA	5
6 4:00 PM TG Fundraiser LGBT ComCtr 4:00 PM TGSF: ExCom Meeting	7 5:00 PM CCHH 7:00 PM PISSR General Meeting 8:00 PM DVG	8	9	10	11 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr	12 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
13	14 5:00 PM CCHH	15 7:00 PM SCT	16	17 7:00 PM DVG RCC	18 8:00 PM PacCtr 8:00 PM RGA	19
20	21 5:00 PM CCHH 8:00 PM DVG	22 7:30 PM SCOUT	23	24 7:30 PM TGSF: EOM - ELECTIONS!	25 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr	26 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
27	28 5:00 PM CCHH	29	30			

TGSF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership Year is May 1 to April 30 / \$40 Single Membership; \$45 Family.

Special \$35 Single Membership w/ Email-Only* Delivery of CHANNEL

Please Print / Check all that apply:

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

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

Mailing Name: _____

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

Address: _____

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

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

*Email: _____ Website URL: _____

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

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

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

Special Events!

April 1st!

TRANSGENDER LAW 101

South Bay Transmen and the Transgender Law Center present a workshop on transgender legal issues for all transgender community members and allies. If you have questions about:

- Changing identity documents
- Marriage/Partnership Protection
- Child custody
- Discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and schools
- Immigration
- Asylum
- Health Care
- MediCal

Then this workshop is for you! The workshop offers a basic overview of current law as well as plenty of time to ask an attorney about your specific legal issue.

April 1, 2003 at 7:30 PM

**Billy deFrank Community Center
938 The Alameda, San Jose, CA**

If you have a gender identity related legal question, but can not make the workshop, please contact the Transgender Law Center for assistance. You can reach TLC at (415) 865-0176 or chris@transgenderlawcenter.org.

Gala Fundraiser!

NEW LEAF INVITES YOU TO JOIN ALAN CUMMING FOR OUR ANNUAL SPRING GALA

Tuesday, April 8, 2003 / 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Teatro ZinZanni / Pier 29 at the Embarcadero in San Francisco

HONORING: Robert Cabaj, MD, Nancy Kokolj, Wells Fargo Bank, George Roosen

SPECIAL PERFORMANCE BY: Tony Award Winner Alan Cumming

AND FEATURING: Veronica Klaus, Gregangelo's Velocity Circus, A Silent Auction filling with tempting items, Reception Buffet provided by Taste Catering - Fine wines, cocktails and other beverages will be served.

TICKETS: Individual tickets available for \$150 Sponsorships start at \$350 - \$15,000 and include a variety of benefits. Space is limited: early reservations are encouraged! We do expect this event to sell-out! Please call Brenda Larabee at 415-255-1767 for more information or to make your reservation for the New Leaf Spring Gala. ASL interpretation will be provided for the awards presentation and performances.

ABOUT NEW LEAF: New Leaf: Services For Our Community exists to help lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning individuals and families of all ages lead healthy and connected lives. We provide professional mental health, support and substance abuse services to strengthen our diverse community. Forged from the 1995 merger of Operation Concern and 18th Street Services, New Leaf has been providing services that are accessible, affordable, clinically excellent and culturally affirming for almost 30 years. New Leaf serves more than 2,500 individuals each year, primarily those who are low income and multiply diagnosed. With a rising demand for our services, we are expanding outreach to meet the increased need in our community. Your support helps make a difference to those most in need.

For more information please visit www.newleafservices.org

May 17-19, 2003

THIRD NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GENDER

The Gender Public Advocacy Coalition's Third National Conference on Gender (NCG) will be held May 17-19, 2003. Last year's conference drew over 1,000 activists from 30 states and 24 colleges over 3 days of events.

WHO: GenderPAC, the national organization working to ensure every American's right to express their gender free from stereotypes, discrimination, and violence.

WHAT: A 3-day conference on gender policy, strategy, and policy from May 17-19, 2003, at the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill. The Hyatt Regency is located only blocks from the U.S. Capitol building and the National Mall. In addition, there are over 50 free attractions within walking distance, including 9 art galleries and museums, the Supreme Court, and the Washington Monument.

For full information on Plenary and Workshop Highlights, Presenters and Speakers, Special Shows and Events, visit: Gender Public Advocacy Coalition (GPAC) at <http://www.gpac.org/ngc/2003.html> or <http://www.gpac.org/ngc/2003workshops.html>

Now Through April 12th!

'GENDER OUTLAW'S' NEW PLAY TANGLES WITH SELF-DESTRUCTION

Dave Ford, Chronicle Staff Writer

Kate Bornstein leans her slender body against a wall in a dim alley behind Theatre Rhinoceros in San Francisco's Mission District, on break from rehearsals for her new play, "Strangers in Paradox."

She changes angles for a photographer. She bumbles happily when complimented and takes direction without resistance. She is at ease; she has done this before. For Bornstein, shape shifting is second nature, if not first.

Albert Bornstein, born 55 years ago, underwent a gender reassignment operation in 1986 and bloomed into Kate, who considers herself neither male nor female. Bornstein has challenged society's expectations ever since, zeroing in on restrictive dualistic gender roles. "I'm all for walking the gray areas," she says with a laugh.

A child of the 1960s, Bornstein has explored such transgressions in books ("Gender Outlaw, My Gender Workbook") and plays and performance pieces ("Hidden: A Gender," "The Opposite Sex Is Neither"). Her work is studied in universities worldwide; she has performed nationally and internationally.

"Strangers" impishly details the adventures of Casey and the Kidd, lesbian serial killers who are the subject of a murder reality show. (Bornstein does not act in the play.) As in most of her work, the narrative is but an excuse to delve into deep personal issues. Her most autobiographical work to date, "Strangers" took seven years to write. "This one is a painful one for me," she says.

As with all public people, there is Kate-in-the-Box, trailed by invisible labels and the assumptions they imply. Then there is plain Kate, although Kate doesn't seem plain this day, dressed in pink-striped sweater over a red shirt, an ankle-length denim skirt with flames licking up the back and trendily chunky black shoes.

She is very tall; she looms, birdlike, and carefully observes her surroundings from behind oversize tinted glasses. Hers is the gaze of the afflicted, alert to danger. Yet, when seated and comfortable, she softens. By turns she is pointed, poignant and funny as she freely details, without self-pity, past struggles with alcoholism, drug addiction, eating disorders, self-mutilation — and suicide, a theme threading "Strangers."

"I know very few queer people who haven't gotten close to the edge of that chasm," says Bornstein, who lives in New York with her girlfriend, writer and performance artist Barbara Carrelas. "I think it's the common experience of 'freaks' to consider suicide. And what do you do when that urge comes up?"



Continued on Page 9

Special Events!

Wednesday, May 7; 6:30-9:30 p.m.

How To Cross-Dress For Success

With: *Veronica Vera* /

Location: *LGBTCenter, Room: 300*

Ten years ago *Veronica Vera* captured the public's imagination and fulfilled every cross-dresser's wet dream when she founded Miss Vera's Finishing School for Boys Who Want to be Girls, the world's first cross-dressing academy, in New York City. Tonight, *Miss Vera* presents an academy overview. Learn lessons from fashion to fantasy, sex ed to etiquette. You'll learn how to develop a new look or enhance the one they've got. Be guided by students' case herstories; learn how the academy came to be and who are its teachers; what is its place in the transgender movement; share recommended resources; Q&A; and book signing. All genders welcome. There will be a test.

Since then hundreds of men from across the country and around the world have enrolled for on campus classes. Thousands more have participated via telephone classes and by reading Miss Vera's two books. The first book, published by Doubleday, bears the same name as the school. Her second book, *Miss Vera's Cross-dress for Success, A Resource Guide for Boys Who Want to Be Girls* (Villard), was published this fall and quickly sold out its initial printings.

Veronica Vera was a sex journalist and "the thinking man's porn star." She is a sex workers' rights advocate and is on the executive board for Feminists for Free Expression.

"Looking fabulous is so much easier, thanks to Miss Vera"

- *RuPaul*

"I wish Miss Vera had been around...to teach me what I couldn't ask my mother about 'drag.'"

- *Coco La Chine,*

Celestial Dragon Empress of New York

Location Details: San Francisco Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Community Center/ 1800 Market @ Octavia

Please use public transportation to access San Francisco LGBT Center. Limited street parking available. The Center is accessible by MUNI J,K,L,M,N or F, or bus lines 6,7,61,71. Please be considerate of our neighbors and do not block driveways or park in blue or white zones.

Bornstein's New Play...

Continued from Page 8

Bornstein posits that the suicidal urge is no different from, say, the anger urge. Personal growth, she says, is a measure of how a person deals with each. "The healthy thing with suicide is . . . not taking my own life, but taking the life of the persona that needs to die," she says.

"Strangers" implicitly condones alternatives to suicide, Bornstein says, including self-mutilation. "Cutting is a whole lot better than killing yourself," she says, but is quick to add that something as harmless as, say, shopping is better yet.

Like many societal outsiders, Bornstein has grappled with self-destruction for decades — a result, she says, of cultural messages suggesting that those like her deserve to die. "I don't think we're born self-hating," she says. "It's how we respond to bullies. And if any place in the world grows tough bullies, it's this country. They're our chief export. George Bush cut his bully teeth on people like me."

Bornstein's variegated past includes a dozen years spent in the Church of Scientology and immersion in Buddhism and other mystical religions. (She now swears by tarot cards.) She spent years exploring sadomasochistic sex, where as a "submissive slave" she challenged every role she ever felt she'd been assigned as a onetime upper-middle-class heterosexual man.

"I had all these entitlements and chains of responsibility," she says. "It was very easy to go, 'Goodbye. I'm turning everything over.' Remember, I'd come from this whole point of view of anorexia and bulimia and cutting. You go right against the fight-or-flight option the lizard brain gives us: 'My body wants me to eat; I won't. My body wants me to run away from this person hitting me; I won't. See how good I am?'"

"Mostly what (the experience) gave me was the understanding that, for me, an effective way to deal with the experience of a binary life is to fully explore both sides before jumping into the gray area."

Among other projects, Bornstein is now collecting stories for a book aimed at helping teens who feel suicidal. After all, she says, young people, especially those confronting gender roles, hold the promise of a cultural swing away from dualistic bullydom. "In another 15 years, when those folks stretch their power, (the pendulum) will swing back again," she says.

Until then, there is "Strangers," a darkly humorous work Bornstein says is perfect for adventurous Bay Area theatergoers. "It is a dangerous, in-your-face play," she says. "But please trust me — it has a lovely ending."

Theatre Rhinoceros: To purchase tickets, call the Rhino Box Office at 415/ 861- 5079. To get additional information, visit our web site at www.therhino.org. TICKET PRICES: 15 - Previews; \$16 - Wed. / \$20 - Thurs. / Sun. Mat & Evenings. / \$25 - Friday / \$25 - Saturday

IMPORTANT WEBSITE UPDATE!

If you want an ID/Password to access the new **Member's area** on the TGSF website, send an email request to Susan Laird: Susan@hairzapper.com.

ANNEMARIE ST. JOHN

You saw her at the TGSF Halloween party. You saw her at Cotillion 2003. You saw her at Carla's Valentine Party. She is Annemarie St. John, she's a fabulous photographer, and now she's full-time (photographer, that is). Yes, now you have a friend in the photography business. Annemarie St. John is pleased and proud to announce the opening of **St. John Studios** in Belmont.

Annemarie is offering personal, private, and secure photographic services to the transgender and related communities. Her services include portraits, candid, and boudoir, in the studio, on location, or in your home. Annemarie is working closely with Denae and Carla, so you can get a makeover or go on a shopping spree and have your beautiful self beautifully photographed.

For services, pricing, location and contact information, go to www.stjohnstudios.com/genderphotos.



Election Night!

EXCOM NEEDS YOU!

Any current TGSF Member interested in running for a position on the Executive Committee?! Creative, Talented, and Dedicated People Needed Now!

A Ballot has been included with this issue of *The Channel*. The election and ballot counting will be held on **April 24, 2003** at the End of the Month event at the Blue Muse.

Rachael Janelle phone: 408 219 1250
or e-mail Rachael_Janelle@hotmail.com.

Miss TGSF 2003

Miss TGSF 2003

I feel so very blessed to be in this position at this time in my life. Sometimes it is overwhelming the opportunities and experiences that the Miss TGSF title can provide. Some of it is a big responsibility but most of it is a big opportunity. I am beginning to understand just how the role can impact so many others...

I have had many inquiries about the story I told during the talent portion of the Cotillion. The most often asked question, "Was that a true story?" Yes it was, and since some couldn't hear the whole thing, I'll give you the reader's digest version.

It's early one morning several years ago and I am driving my two boys to school in the morning. I am at a point in my life where I am presenting male and have not yet found the courage to disclose my secret to anyone. I dress whenever I can and store all my clothing, wig, shoes jewelry etc in the back of my car. It was kind of like a trunk but opened to the passenger area. Conversation was typical, my asking about their plans for the day - a reminder to do their homework right away when they got home...all the usual stuff. The country road is two lanes wide and the Honda CRX is humming along at about 45. In a split second everything changes. The driver of a Ford Excursion, who had been waiting at the stop sign, decided she could squeeze across in front of me. Not even close. All my weight went down on the brake pedal and the car just won't stop. There is nothing I can do. My face goes into the windshield. My son in the front seat goes into the dashboard splitting open his lip and chin. My older one in the back bounces off the seat in front of him. All I could hear was my son screaming. As I wiped the blood from my eyes I realized that all my belongings from the trunk had catapulted into the passenger compartment. There were pieces of clothing, shoes everywhere. In that split second I had to make decision. Do I clean up the clothes thus making sure my life long secret remains that way or do I take care of the most precious thing in the world to me - my son. The fact that I even had to think about it illustrates the immensity of the pain. It's hard to tell the story without crying. But....It was a turning point for me.

The answer to your question? I got my boys safely into the arms of people who had stopped to help, fought off the restraints of the firemen who were trying to put a collar around my neck and went back to that car and cleaned up my stuff. I'm ashamed that I wasn't with my boys for those few moments and I pray that someday I can forgive myself.

Ask Miss TGSF

The purpose of this column is to publish some of the wonderful e-mails I have been getting from you with great questions. I have received questions about my family, my job, my position, my boobs (yes my boobs), what I did to compete for Miss TGSF, etc. All have been great (and in good taste so far). I will choose the best one each month and publish it here along with my response. If I choose yours and you wish to be anonymous just tell me in you message. Questions can be sent to MissTGSF2003@aol.com.

Hi Rachel,

So I'm going to be a contestant next year. I'm trying not to freak out about it. I have a session with Danae Doyle next Saturday to work on feminine movement, so at least I'm already set up for some professional training. I had this set up weeks before the TGSF Cotillion because it's already where I wanted to go. If you can honestly tell me that it's all going to be all right if I just do the best I can with what I have to work with, I'd appreciate hearing that now.

I would like to know how, and over what time frame you attained your breasts. I really want some. What is the process, who should I see, how long will it take, and what will it cost, financially and physically. My only concern is impairment of my male sex organs if I have to do estrogen, since I'm not sold on SRS at this juncture.

I know two people, though, who have done hormones to grow breasts and redistribute their fat, but function fine sexually as men. There is no doubt whatsoever in my mind that I would like to be able to have a completely authentic female presentation. It hurts how much I want it.

The only other thing I really hoped to get from you is some emotional support in rising up to the challenge of the pageant and my own feminization goals. I just want to hear someone who has been through it to tell me it's all going to be all right.

Sincerely, Cotillion Bound



MissTGSF2003@aol.com wrote:

Hi Cotillion Bound,

Don't freak out about it, it truly is about doing your best and feeling proud about it. Planning and timing is probably the most important thing. I put off dealing with the talent portion until about 4 weeks before. If I could change anything, it would have been to prepare more for that. Danae is wonderful, both as a coach and as a person. Good move.

Aaahhhh the breasts. A long battle for me that has ended in contentment. Genetically I am predisposed to small boobs. My sister, mother and maternal grandmother were all of slight build with small boobs (struggling to fill an A cup). Once my sister had kids, hers ended up a little bigger but that didn't help me. This is important because hormonal development for me came slower than most other girls I talk to. Look at you family history and you may have better opportunity.

Now for the hormones. I lose track of time, but it seems like about 3.5 years for me so far. I started out very slowly for about a year or more before getting under a doctor's care - then ramping up the dosage. There are two drugs to consider. Estrogen to increase the serum estrogen level and an anti-androgen to suppress the testosterone level. I ended up with Premarin for the estrogen and had slowly ramped up to a level of 5 mg a day taken at two intervals. Spironolactone was used as an anti-androgen. Over the course of treatment I had ramped up to 200 mg and then backed off to 100 a day taken at two intervals. Blood tests show that this is perfect dosage for me. I do caution you though. There are many changes that occur other than physical development. That is the reason for the slow ramp up. Your thoughts, feelings and emotions shift dramatically. Your perspective and viewpoint will be different. I don't just mean that you will start crying at movies - it is much more. My aggressiveness changed a lot. This was good for my driving and my relationship with my kids, but hurtful to my career. I was not longer the "ball buster" at work that everyone had known for so many years. Ambition was exchanged for "smelling the roses". The end result? It brought everything into alignment for me, inside and out.

I took a few hours for ME last night and walked through Santana Row. (meandering shops and restaurants) I was in this wonderful store that had a great mixture of furniture, women's clothing, fund decorating things, candles, soaps etc. As I worked my way to the back of the store I found myself looking at this beautiful lace top and I was overcome with joy. Tears flowed from my eyes and I felt the need to thank someone, some being for allowing me to be who I am today. It all finally makes sense. (sorry if I stray, it's still good therapy for me to write). Anyway, it is really really important for me to let you know the other changes before we get back to boobs and erections.

Boobs. I never did develop to my satisfaction, but pretty much new I wouldn't. I engaged a wonderful surgeon to fill out my needs - and it changed my life. For the first time, when I stood in front of the mirror, my body began to resemble the image I have always carried in my mind.

Male performance. This one is more difficult for me. You see, although I never hated my penis, I saw it as more of a prop that was used for my act or performance. The difference was I couldn't just put it in a drawer when I didn't need it and it sure had a way of making itself known at times I didn't want it to. I was relieved when the involuntary erections went away. Now it was just an annoying bump in a bathing suit.

The first year on hormones was without my wife's knowledge - dishonesty I truly regret. But because of this I still had to perform. I found the spironolactone to have a greater effect on this function than the Estrogen. Varying the dosage between 50mg and 100mg a day I found different levels of performance. Good at 50, fare at 100. At 200mg there was no hope. Oh yeah, something I forgot. By the time I was on my regimen, I was the father of two kids and had undergone a vasectomy. Sperm count was not even an issue in my thinking. If it is for you, please consult a physician. There IS an effect on ejaculation.

I am here as your support. Sorry about the e-mail vs. phone thing, but the amount of communication to me from our community has increased ten fold and I am working to keep it under control without impacting my work situation.

I honor your courage, you are at a very exciting point (Taking control). Take it slow, you have the rest of your life to live in form you seek.....Rachel

Continued on Page 11

Miss TGSF 2003

MissTGSF On The Road

This is where I will keep you up to date on where I have been and hopefully where I am going to be. Where I have been is easy. Where I am going gets a little harder due to the required publishing deadlines and sometimes I only have a 3-4 day notice. If you think it is a good idea for me to post my commitments on the events calendar, e-mail me with your comments.

Saturday February 22nd

CORONATION 2003 - CARNIVAL ROCKSTARS IN RIO

This was my first coronation and I was a bit nervous. I have heard just how extravagant of an event this is and I was not disappointed. Everyone looked absolutely spectacular, far beyond any picture I can create in your mind. The costumes were better than any Mardi Gras party. The headdresses were bigger than any Las Vegas show. The venue, the program, the decorations were all first class. The energetic (and quite handsome) Lenny Broberg started out the evening as Emcee along side the vivacious Tita Aida. Quite a bit of the time is spent introducing members of royalty from all over the country. I have heard comments that this was the boring part but I was having a wonderful time. It was like being on the red carpet for the Oscar's!! Spectacular gowns, incredible outfits.

Tyler and I "walked" early in the event. "Walking" means to be announced by name and title and then you actually walk down the ramp to the stage where the current reigning Emperor and Empress await you. You are on stage for all to see - it is truly a great honor. Of course the fabulous Barbie LaChoy makes you feel like family while Berlin makes your heart pound right out of your chest. Rachael Janelle introduced Tyler and I to just about everyone in the place. Thanks Rachael for taking such good care of us.

The stage shows alone were worth the price of admission. Some of the most memorable were Lady Tia & Company, Angelica Devarox and of course Snatch. There was one more where the people on stage were wearing these costumes that looked like ice cycles. (look for a picture of me with them) Colored lights lit them up while the beat of the music pounded away. Later I looked in the program but couldn't figure out who they were - but they were awesome.

As the night wound down, Barbie and Berlin did their last walk. I couldn't help but feel a little melancholy knowing that all too soon I would be doing the same thing. Then just as it ended, it all began for the new Emperor, Michael Parsons and the new Empress, Snatch. Congratulations to you both and good luck in the coming year.

Saturday, March 1st

BILLY DEFRAK 22ND ANNIVERSARY DINNER

The Billy DeFrank LGBT Center serves San Jose and the Silicon Valley. Over the past 6 months I have been fortunate enough to get to know many on the Board of Directors and they have made me feel so very welcome. The venue was the spectacular Capital Club in San Jose. The first half hour was cocktail and mingling time. I shook hands and took pictures with Mayor Ron Gonzalez, Councilman Ken Yeager, Councilman Chuck Reed and many others. The room was full with beautiful people everywhere. Linton Johnson of NBC11, whom I had met during the Gwen Araujo coverage, performed the opening comments and did a wonderful job. Awards were given for Outstanding Volunteer, Tung Vo - LGBT Leadership award, Mark Gilliard - and Outstanding Public Citizen, County Supervisor Blanca Alvarado.

I sat between Rachael Janelle, who is on the Billy DeFrank BOD and the wonderful Aunt Fran. Fran and I had met once before, but I was really looking forward to chatting with her and she did not let me down. We had so much fun laughing and talking - she knows so many people. We agreed to get together again sometime after this event.

After dinner the casino and silent auction opened up and the room was buzzing. I found the most comfortable spot on a sofa in front of the fireplace and kicked my shoes off. (I'm not much of a gambler) It actually turned out to be a great place as people would sit and talk with me for a while, then move on. The Youth Services Coordinator, Rick Oculito would stop by every so often to make sure I had something to drink and everything else was ok. Rick is a great person and I enjoy his company.

I was very impressed by the dinner itself and the work the Billy DeFrank LGBT center is doing. Great job Patrick and the BDF Board of Directors!



San Jose Mayor Ron Gonzalez between the R's.

Photo: Ted Stahl

Saturday, March 8th

SAN JOSE IRLM CORONATION XXXII

The San Jose Coronation was only two weeks after the SF Coronation so it has been all I can do to keep up - new dress, new shoes, matching purse. Oh what is a girl to do! Again a fabulous event with incredible stage shows. Michael Healy did a great job brining it all together. Our very own Susan Laird was the stage director and handled all the lighting and music. Great job girl! There were at least 5 command performances that were outstanding. Empress XXXII Athena and Regent Emperor Diamond John held their court with pride and elegance. Congratulations to you both on a successful year!

Sunday March 9th

HBO PREMIER OF NORMAL

I had the great honor of being invited to the private Premier showing of NORMAL at the Herbst Theatre in San Francisco. I had met Michael Fried, a film producer, at the "Not in Our Town" event a few weeks earlier in Oakland and he thought I may be interested since the film had a transgender theme. It was short notice and it was a Sunday evening so I wasn't sure I could do it. I am so glad I did.



"Two-time Oscar winner Jessica Lange and Oscar nominee Tom Wilkinson star in a poignant, often humorous story of one man's desire to have a sex change after 25 years of "normal" marriage."

An official selection at the 2003 Sundance Film Festival, this HBO Films production adapted by Jane Anderson from her acclaimed play mixes humor, drama, and tenderness in telling the story of a seemingly "normal" Midwestern factory worker who stuns his family and community by revealing he wants a sex change operation.

Roy Applewood's outrageous news shocks and angers Irma, his wife of 25 years. Despite his insistence that he wants the family to stay together, she kicks him out of the house.

Her adolescent daughter, Patty Ann, takes the news more in stride as she is discovering the awkwardness of her own burgeoning sexuality.

However, nothing in his career as a rock roadie has prepared the couple's grown son, Wayne, for dealing with his father's decision.

As Roy begins exploring the accoutrements of being a woman (from perfume to breasts) he faces ostracism within the community and ridicule on the job. But, he also finds compassion from unlikely sources, such as his boss, who is beginning to take an interest in Irma.

Ultimately, the family struggles to understand Roy's decision and he and Irma discover that love can transcend both the genders we're born with and the ones we choose.

I quickly found a girlfriend to go with me just to be safe. Nighttime, San Francisco, a man I have met once - you get the picture. We were to meet Michael in the lobby of the historic Herbst Theatre about 30 minutes before the showing. He had the tickets. About 5 minutes before, Michael had not

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Miss & Mr. TGSF 2003

Miss TGSF On The Road...

Continued from Page 11

shown. Connie looked at me and commented that we could just go have a nice dinner and still make a wonderful evening of it. I was intent on getting in to see the movie. I glanced down at my watch; only minutes to go. As I looked up I saw State Assemblyman Mark Leno enter the other end of the room and he was immediately surrounded. We made eye contact and he slowly worked his way my direction and I met him half way. After hugs I explained that the person with our tickets had not shown up yet. He looked at me and said, Do you need tickets? I nodded and he excused himself. A minute later he waived me over to a handsome gentleman named David Castro who made sure I was provided tickets. (later I learned that David is the President of HBO San Francisco) Thanks Mark - you're my knight in shining armor! Not only did we get tickets, but they were the VIP ones with an invitation to the after party. Yeah Baby!

The film is an incredible body of work. Jessica Lange was wonderful, Tom Wilkinson was incredible. As a Trans person, I could get picky and point out pieces that were missing, timelines that were a little off or the non-mention of the HBIGDA guidelines but I won't and I ask you not to either. The movie DOES address many wonderful things like Ruth's (Tom Wilkinson) decaying relationship with her church, how well her younger child, Patty Ann (played by Hayden Panettiere) deals with the transition and the pain inflicted by insensitive extended family members. The film takes us many steps into the future by addressing many many pieces that were very moving. Twice during the film there were scenes where laughter was evoked from the audience while I cried. Is there more work to do...sure, but in my heart I feel that it moves the issue graciously in front of a huge viewing audience and does so with compassion. (it is airing right after one of the most popular show on TV right now, Six Feet Under)

I absolutely loved how Patty Ann described the technical aspects of the SRS surgery to a group of girlfriends during a sleep over. Her use of plastic sandwich bags as props will be used by many in the future.

Following the viewing I was invited to the Green Room Party where I had the opportunity to talk with Jane Anderson the Writer/Director of the movie. I was very curious of her "motivation" for making the movie. As the two of us sat in discussion we became surrounded by quite a group, including other filmmakers and HBO executives who were intrigued with our dialogue.

Jane is quite an interesting woman. She is full of life and never short on words. Her answer to my question of motivation was different than I had thought. In my mind I had dreamed that somewhere along her life she had encountered a transgendered person who had left an image of courage and grace in her mind. Someone who had touched her so deeply that she felt compelled to convince the world through the use of film, that a transgender was as NORMAL as anyone else. Maybe that's my dream.

Her motivation, while different from what I was thinking, was equally beautiful. She said she wanted to make a story about love. The kind of love that we all dream about. Love that runs so deep in our hearts that it becomes the essence of our being. Then, she thought, she wanted to introduce a circumstance that would be so substantial, almost insurmountable to overcome in a relationship. Something that would test the abilities of two people who shared the deepest love. I think she did a fabulous job and I was touched by her attention to detail. I felt very special to be with her on that incredible evening.

The HBO photographer, Leroy, was such a doll and snapped the wonderful picture of Jane and myself (page 10). Thank you David Castro and Beth Knutsen from HBO for such a beautiful event. Thank you Michael Fried, Producing Director of Public Interest TV Films for making me aware of the engagement, and a very big thank you to Mark Leno for helping me with the tickets.

If you don't have HBO, the movie will be available on VHS/DVD in the near future from the HBO website. www.hbo.com.

Tuesday, March 11th

PFLAG IN NEWARK

I had received a message from John Boyce about a need for some trans speakers at the Newark PFLAG meeting on March 11th. I had a commitment that evening so I couldn't commit, but I was going to do everything I could to get there. I got there about an hour after the start of the meeting. John, Stephanie Ann, Kara Flynn and Tyler formed the panel and each was providing answers to the audience's questions. There were about 12-15 people in the audience and the crowd was doing well. I watched and took pictures as the panel did their thing.

As we broke into groups, one of the leaders mentioned to me that in the other group there was a young man who had just come out to his (we'll use that pronoun for now) parents as being Trans. He had come to the first meeting with his mom, and this time with dad. I had noticed during the panel portion of the meeting, that one of the speakers said something that caused dad and son to look at each other. I couldn't hear them, but dad put his arm around his son and pulled him close. I could tell dad was struggling and I later told him just how important those hugs are.



UPCOMING:

June 20th - 22nd

BEST BUCK IN THE BAY - 12TH ANNUAL SF BAY AREA GAY RODEO & FESTIVAL

Airport Hyatt, San Jose, Ca./ The Horse Park at Woodside, Woodside, Ca./ Check www.bayarearodeo.com for details. I have to give these guys a plug because they have been so wonderful to me. Doug Graff and the boys (photo above) work with us every year at the Cotillion so let's make sure we support them in return. I will be attending this event and may even use one of my horses for the ceremony. Dances and parties will be at the Hyatt, while all the rodeo events will be in Woodside. This will be a lot of fun so please come join us. Aren't these guys just gorgeous!

Warm Regards,
Rachel

FROM MR. TGSF

By Tyler

I was introduced to the leather community almost immediately after I came out as transgender. My approach was very academic initially so I read all I could find in print and online. I spoke to individuals who expressed an interest in BDSM and those active in the leather community. Almost 2 years later, I applied my "book smarts" to practical situations. I am very pleased to report that the leather community has embraced my trans status. Many have asked questions and are shocked to find out that I was not born male. Over the years I have worked out regularly and have an overtly male physique. I wouldn't qualify as a male fitness model, yet.

Leather folk gather in a space called a dungeon to play (interact usually one on one, to elicit erotic sensations). I typically will only wear a jock strap and boots. This affords me the opportunity to cover my genitals. The physiological basis of play is to apply pain to the body so that endorphins are released. Too much pain too soon does not have the same effect as slow application.

An endorphin rush is my form of sex. It is also "safe sex" because it avoids penetration. I also get to leave dungeon occupants guessing as to what my genitals look like.

I currently serve on the Administrative Board of the San Francisco boys of Leather as Club Materials Coordinator. This is a social leather organization available for service to the community at large and its membership is non-restrictive based on gender, appearance and sexual orientation.



Takin' Care of Biz...

TGSF BALANCE SHEET

(February 21, 2003 through March 20, 2003)

Assets

Cash	\$1,430.93
Event Equipment	
Decorations	\$1,000.00
Food Service	\$200.00
Office Supplies	\$50.00
Total Assets	\$2,680.93

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$2,336.50
Educational Fund	\$0.00
Taxes	\$0.00
Insurance	\$0.00
Utilities	\$0.00
Operations	\$0.00
Total Liabilities	\$2,336.50
Equity	\$344.43
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$2,680.93

Monthly Income Statement

Revenue

Membership	\$130.00
Advertising	\$0.00
Cotillion	\$40.00
Donations Received	\$100.00
Social	\$0.00
Education	\$52.00
Outreach	\$0.00
Halloween Party	\$0.00
.....	\$322.00

Expenses

Cotillion \$200.00	
Halloween Party	\$0.00
Big Shew	\$0.00
Pride Parade	\$0.00
Social	\$0.00
Education	\$90.00
Outreach	\$0.00
Newsletter	\$363.86
Operations	\$170.00
Donations Paid	\$0.00
.....	\$823.86

Net Income (Loss) (\$501.86)

TGSF DONATIONS

*Our Friends Who Give
as of March 20, 2003*

Rachel Hill \$40.00
Jennifer Anderson \$25.00

Bless You and Thank You for Caring!

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Calendar www.tgsf.org

Submissions can be made online directly. Cancelling mistakes or for other problems, please contact the Webmistress.

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!

Announcements!

DEAR TGSF:

I have heard said that the Gwen Araujo situation could have been avoided.

That's something we were going to cover at the TGSF Education Seminar for Self Defense taught by the Triangle Tae Kwon Do Club. It was supposed to cover self-defense concepts, recognition of potential danger, conflict assessment and de-escalation techniques, and legal responsibilities of the defender.

I set up this education seminar in response to the killing of Gwen Araujo since every one of us should "watch our back," so to say, and know about the dangers that are out there and how to get out of them.

I advertised this on the TGSF Yahoo group, the TGSF Channel, Craig's List, the BayBoyz Yahoo Group, and mentioned it at the previous Education Seminar in February and the End of Month Social just 2 days before the event. I spent my time organizing the event and setting things up.

Why am I telling everyone all of this? Because...NO ONE SHOWED UP! Zero participants besides me and the friend I took along. It's very disappointing because I put this together as my attempt to reach out and prevent others from being hurt, and no one showed up. It was also very embarrassing for me in front of the Tae Kwon Do club that had volunteers there, and not have anyone even attend the event. Do we really care about our own safety, or are we just concerned about wearing high heels and lipstick? Are we all as arrogant as Gwen Araujo might have been on the night she was murdered?

It makes me wonder why I'm doing all of this.

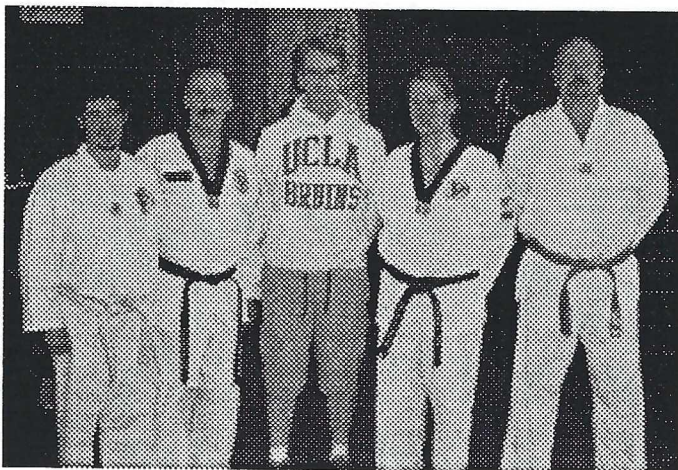
Kara

Seminar Review

TGSF's Education Seminar on Self Defense was unfortunately not well attended. Only 2 people showed up to benefit from the self-defense techniques taught by the Triangle Tae Kwon Do Club. The Club members present for the seminar included Ken, Mike, Chris, Jacob, and Allen. Mike led the instruction of the Self-Defense basic mnemonic **BEWARE** - Before, Evade, Warn, Attract, React, and Escape. Before involved basically being aware of where you are, and knowing the basics such as exits, fire extinguishers, etc. Evade dealt with choosing alternative courses if you are able to diagnose potentially bad situations. Warn your attackers very loudly that you will defend yourself because most attackers are cowards seeking meek targets. Attract attention by yelling such things as "Fire," since more people will be nosy than willing to assist you if you shout "Help." Also, saying things like "I don't know you" lets others know that this isn't just a friendly fight. React involves either giving the assailants what they want, or defending yourself if necessary. Escape as soon as you can from the situation and report the incident to the proper authorities.

Triangle Tae Kwon Doe Club operates several free self defense seminars throughout the year. If you are interested in joining one of these sessions, please contact Mr. Ken Craig using one of the following methods:

Mail: Triangle Martial Arts Association, c/o 229 Brannan Street #2G, San Francisco, CA 94107 / email: ttkdc@aol.com; website: <http://www.triangletkd.org>



Left to right - Jacob, Mike, Ken, Chris, and Allen
All were wonderful instructors.

Congratulations Theresa!

CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLYMAN SELECTS TRANSGENDERED WOMAN FOR HONOR

California assemblyman Mark Leno (D-San Francisco) announced Thursday that Human Rights Commission member **Theresa Sparks** will become the first transgendered woman to be honored by the state in its annual Woman of the Year ceremony, which will be held Monday, March 24. Each California assembly member selects one woman, usually from the district that member represents, to be honored at the ceremony, held by the governor in Sacramento.

Sparks was appointed to the San Francisco Human Rights Commission after years of advocacy on behalf of the local community. She served as a founding member of the city's Transgender Civil Rights Implementation Task Force and became the first transgendered woman elected as chair of the Alice B. Toklas Democratic Club.

"Theresa is intelligent, hardworking, committed, and tenacious in her efforts on behalf of our community," Leno told Advocate.com. "She is a very courageous and hardworking soul and has taught me a great deal about how to be most effective in my own advocacy and legislative work."

Sparks's recognition comes just as California Assembly Bill 196, which would add gender identification to the protected characteristics enumerated in the Fair Employment and Housing Act, leaves the labor and employment committee for debate on the assembly floor. Leno said that by recognizing Sparks as a woman of the year, he might be able to bring a human element to the bill. "I think that by bringing her to the floor on Monday and introducing her to my colleagues, I can put a face on the issue of transgender rights."

Pride Parade Needs You!

Volunteers are needed for the Pride Parade! Call the Hotline at 415-564-3246 if you want to participate, help build our float, work as a Parade Monitor, help staff our Outreach Booth, or a host of other activities!

Ya Gotta Give 'Em Hope! Stand Up and Be Counted!

PISSR - People In Search of Safe Restrooms

PISSR is committed to establishing gender-neutral bathrooms. We believe that all people, regardless of their gender identification or presentation, have the right to access safe and dignified restroom facilities without fear of harassment, judgment, or violence. General meetings are always the first Monday of the month; 7 pm at 870 Market Street (Flood Building), 4th floor in San Francisco.

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Visible Man

BRAVE NEW WORLD REVISITED

Jamison Green offers a man's POV on life in the trans lane. Opinion, advice and information from an internationally respected leader of the FTM community.



My article last fall ("Brave New World") about Sue Bartone, the Massachusetts candidate for state representative who identified as transgendered, had exactly the effect I expected it would. Some people saw it as a celebration of the spectrum of trans experience. Some praised it for its willingness to speak the truth about what some people fear and are loath to discuss in public. Others people reacted as if it was a position statement on the superiority of gender-variant people over transsexual people, an idea which anyone familiar with my work would find patently absurd. But the real success of the piece was that it caused people to think.

One concept I touched on in that article was the idea of nonsurgical transsexuals. I mentioned that some transsexual people who have had surgery may have regrets about the outcome of that surgery, and I remarked that I thought Bartone was courageous for owning her gender identity and not letting gender variance hold her back. I also said that some transsexual people who regard surgery as a qualifier for transsexual status might feel threatened by nonsurgical transsexual-identified people. I did not claim that Bartone was transsexual, and I did not assert that transsexual people were not courageous for owning their gender identity and seeking physical congruence.

Some transsexual people are afraid that if "unqualified" people change their sex surgically and then have regrets, it will look bad for all transsexual people; therefore they think we should never discuss these events for fear of drawing attention to the questions of choice, access and autonomy. Also, some believe that if we acknowledge the existence of nonsurgical transsexual people it dilutes the position of transsexual people who require medical intervention (hormones and surgery) to self-actualize.

The fact is there are fully "qualified" transsexual people who have regrets about various aspects of their transitions. Bad surgical outcomes can happen to anyone. Losing one's job or family can be something that anyone might regret. This doesn't mean such a person regrets everything about being transsexual, or that society should revoke the privilege of access to body-altering technology, forcing all transsexual people to live as nonsurgical transsexuals. These are complex concepts for most nontrans people, and often difficult to discuss even among transpeople when ideas become polarized, as they easily do for myriad reasons. But if we can't talk about these varying experiences, we ultimately end up invalidating ourselves as well as others.

Medical language about transsexualism does qualify different manifestations of the desire to change one's sex. "Primary" transsexuals are those, like me, who were clear about their gender identity from a very early age. Our gender never changes. We never could conform to the expectations for gender expression of our natal physical sex, so when we do change our sex our gender expression is natural for our new bodies, according to the judgment of gender conformists.

"Secondary" transsexuals are those whose desire to change sex comes upon them in adolescence or later. They may change their gender expression as well as their sex, and often have more social difficulty because they have to retrain themselves in the gender expression appropriate to their new sex. Cross-dressers and other transgender-identified people (like Sue Bartone) who do not have a desire to change their sex regardless of how effective their gender expression is in either male or female presentation, are not necessarily good candidates for surgical sex reassignment. They may prefer their natal bodies, or the ability to live in both the male and female sphere, and being pressured to conform to one or the other gender expression might be damaging for them. On the other hand, who are we to say what the best solution is for every other person's self-perceived difficulties in life?

I have never argued that one manifestation of transness is better than another. Whether I am addressing the need for safety and civil rights for trans people in the nontrans world, or the need for different styles of trans people to respect each other's differences, my work has been consistently about asserting the dignity of all experience, and the validity of all identities. Some people may disagree, may want to claim that their way of being is superior or more authentic, and that is their prerogative, but it is not a view that I support.

I do not encourage people to change their sex, either socially or physically. Being a transsexual person is a complicated matter, and it is something that anyone who feels the need to transition should weigh very carefully. Transsexual people must be willing to accept the consequences of their actions. I have only two regrets about my own transition: that I was unable to do it before my father passed away, and that it caused me to be separated from my children. But neither of those considerations clouds my satisfaction with what my transition did for me, or with the very positive changes in my present and future life that came with it.

Hart To Heart

By Roxy Carmichael-Hart

FAKE FRIENDS

"You have lost your mind. I keep praying for you but it doesn't seem to be working."

Nice words, huh? And from someone who I thought was my dear friend, someone who claimed to love me. But that is what she said when I sent her my Cotillion picture.

This was not my first case of rejection. In January, I visited Palm Springs with an ex-girlfriend of mine, but someone who has been my friend for almost 19 years. I had warned her and prepared her for me and she never voiced a concern. Seeing me in person was an entirely different matter. She did everything in her power to avoid me. The worst episode was when we walked into a movie theatre and she said "Oh, it's really crowded in here. I'll just sit in the back here". And she sat down, leaving me to struggle to find a seat on my own. After the movie, I waited 20 minutes for her. She had vanished, left, abandoned me as if embarrassed to be seen with me. I was so crushed and so devastated that I drove back to my hotel room, whipped out my laptop, and typed my autobiography for my therapist. I began "I wish I weren't here..."

From that rejection came some revelations. The first was renewed determination. I didn't go out for a day but I attended a street fair with my friend and met up with a friend of hers who, after her initial shock, proved to be quite accepting. She asked some good, honest questions and unlike my friend, did not seem to be ashamed of me. My other revelation was about friendships. It's amazing how abused that word is and how it is thrown around as if it meant nothing. Many times, it doesn't. I found out that those people who claim to be your friends will do so only when times are good and nothing is expected of them. But when things change, they change their colors quite easily. And soon vanish into the woodwork. Despite the fact that you are the same basic person, something is wrong with you. You're suddenly not good enough. Maybe my two friends felt inadequate around me. Maybe they were jealous of my clothes. Maybe they had a moral problem with it. Maybe they doubted their own sexuality. I just don't know.

What I do know is that we are on a journey, like the pioneers. On their journey, many were left behind. And so it is. I know that on my journey I will need to leave behind many of those I loved. They just don't fit in my life anymore. And their cold reaction to me showed me that they were not real friends at all.

I also know that for every one of those I have lost, I have had many, many more take their place - G-girls and T-girls alike. I have been surprised and pleased by the reaction of many of my G-girlfriends. One whose reaction I doubted threw her arms around me and told me she was honored that I would share this with her and that she admired my courage. Another took me shopping and gave me advice on makeup. One waxes my back and trims my eyebrows. One gave me jewelry. Another asked to borrow my jewelry. One compared me to Jackie Robinson. It goes on. And as you know, I have been touched by the love and acceptance from the TG community. I am honored to call them my friends. After I announced my candidacy for President of TGSF, one sent me a beautiful e-mail saying she was proud to be my friend and sister. After I stopped crying, I printed her note and I keep it by my computer. Her words meant more to me than any vote I could possibly get. That, in a nutshell, is what friendship is all about.

Am I sad to have lost people who once meant a great deal to me? Of course. But I remember what Joan Jett said - "You've got nothing to lose you don't lose when you lose fake friends."

The brave new world that acknowledges a broad scope of transgender experience — as opposed to a rigid definition of "a true transsexual" or "a true gender identity" that requires validation from some authority — is a world that acknowledges the autonomy of every individual. People need to be able to make their own fully informed choices, even if they make mistakes. The conventions that we agree upon to mold our society should not require sexist definitions of male and female gender roles for anyone — transsexual, transgender or nontrans alike.

IMPORTANT WEBSITE UPDATE!

If you want an ID/Password to access the new **Member's area** on the TGSF website, send an email request to Susan Laird: Susan@hairzapper.com.

FREE TO BE FRAN

Uncle Frank signs off, but couple's love remains - no matter what changes.

Sam McManis, Chronicle Deputy Living Editor

This is the second of a two-part profile of Fran (formerly Frank) Bennett, a San Jose disc jockey who for decades hid the fact that she was a woman trapped in a man's body. Part 1, which focused on her years of deception and coming to terms with being a transsexual, can be found on sfgate.com.

What to wear? My, this was harder than Fran Bennett thought. What? To? Wear? She studied her closet. Skirts and low-cut tops were out. A summery dress? Not for this occasion. Better to ease people into her transformation, save the pearls and slinky black dresses for later, when images of the old Frank had faded like a Polaroid.

In the end, with the help of her partner, Erika Taylor, Fran chose classic businesswoman attire: black slacks, flat black shoes, white blouse and red blazer. She wore minimal makeup, too, just enough to accentuate her cheekbones. She didn't tease her bangs much, either. Her goal: blend in as just another one of the office gals.

Oh, who was she kidding?

Fran was not going to just seamlessly return to work on this, the Tuesday after Labor Day, 2000. It was her first day back on the air at San Jose classic rock radio station KFOX (KUFX-FM 98.5) after a week's vacation. And her first day as Frances. For five years, co-workers had known Bennett as Frank, the macho, hip afternoon drive-time disc jockey who could spin Stones records and make girls' heads spin with equal skill.

Now, after a week off to get mentally prepared, after the station's general manager broke the news to the staff that "Weird Ol' Uncle Frank," as he was known on air, was "transitioning" from male to female, after trying to figure out how he could exist being a woman full time but keeping his burnished baritone and macho on-air demeanor for ratings' sake, Fran was finally ready to venture out as her true self.

Her heart was thumping like a single shoe in a dryer as she pushed open the doors of KFOX's studio at 1:30 p.m., a half an hour before "Uncle Frank's" shift began. Before she could even stroll through the lobby, where an electronic "Walk" and "Don't Walk" sign flashed like a warning, Fran was swarmed by co-workers.

Some were gushing, some jocular, all respectful and welcoming. They gave her a dozen roses and three signed cardboard cutout cards. After she stopped weeping with relief and joy, Fran spoke in the breathy, upper-register, feminized voice she had been practicing for months. She thanked them for their support. The reception, in the words of Fran's beloved Rolling Stones, was a "gas, gas, gas."

All those years of holing up in a darkened apartment, thinking of worst-case scenarios should Frank ever muster the courage live as Fran, just seemed like so much wasted energy now. In fact, everyone Fran told about her transition handled it as if it were the most normal thing in the world - which, to Fran, it was.

Erika's mother, former big-band singer Evelyn Knight, did not disown him, as feared. She needed some moments to adapt and then said, brightly, "I'd rather have a happy transsexual daughter than a miserable son." Saira, Fran's daughter from a relationship he had in the 1970s, was only upset that Fran took so long to tell her. And, by the way, she wanted to know if she could still call Fran "Dad." When they told Erika's young son that his stepdad would become a stepmom, he chirped "OK," and went back to flipping pages in his book.

She had it all now. Her career intact. Her family supportive. Her co-workers respectful. Her relationship with Taylor strong. It was all good. Except for one problem: Fran still had to be Frank on the radio.

You Can't Always Get What You Want

In the studio, that first day back, Fran swiveled in the chair, adjusted the headphones and chatted with co-workers in girlish giggles until it was time to crack the mike and start her shift.

Then, with a flip of the switch, she spoke. But it was Frank's voice bellowing out, way down there in the lower register. "It was kind of freaky to some people at first," Taylor said.

Fran hardly remembers her six hours on the radio that day. "It was hard to keep my mind on 'my act,'" she said. "I twitched and fidgeted. But as time went on, honestly, I felt a little disingenuous to the listeners. I owed them honesty, above all. I regret that. But I had to keep my job."

"The difference," Erika, "was that she was pretending to be somebody she no longer was. She was an actor playing a role for a couple hours before going back to her normal life."



Beauty Boost

by Wendy R. Schultz

"TAKE CARE OF YOUR SKIN, AND YOUR SKIN WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU!"

Hello and welcome to Beauty Boost, a column dedicated to making you look better. My name is Wendy Schultz, and I'm an Esthetician. I have some great ideas to share with you about skin care and makeup, and I'm available to answer your questions and provide some helpful information. My column has two parts: first, I discuss an aspect of either skin care or makeup; second, I review a product.

Exfoliation: Uncovering the Other You

This month's beauty topic is exfoliation. Exfoliation is the process of eliminating dead surface skin cells to reveal soft, glowing skin. The skin produces over 5 billion skin cells every day. They progress from the lower layers of the epidermis to the skin's surface. During this time, cells harden and lose moisture, thus causing the skin to look dull and dry. Moisturizers don't work as well without exfoliation, and makeup just covers the problem. Acne can also develop from skin that hasn't been exfoliated properly.

Mechanical or Chemical

Basically, there are two types of exfoliation; mechanical and chemical. Mechanical includes loofahs, mesh balls, or scrubs. Chemical exfoliators include alpha-hydroxy acids, glycolic acid, or enzyme peels. Most chemical exfoliation processes are done during a professional facial, and mechanical exfoliation processes can be done right at home.

Pits or Granules?

Most people think just of the face when exfoliation is mentioned; in fact, you can exfoliate your entire body, making the use of moisturizers even more effective as a result. Every skin type needs exfoliation. There are so many wonderful products on the market right now. Look for a body scrub or skin "polish" for body, feet, and hands, and a gentle facial scrub for the face. One thing to avoid is scrubs containing ground fruit pits. The fruit pits are shards that can actually irritate skin or aggravate an existing problem like acne. These granules viewed under a microscope reveal sharp edges. Choose a facial scrub that has polyethylene granules. These are smooth, round beads that are gentle on the skin.

How often you use a scrub also depends on your skin type. I recommend using a scrub twice a week, once with a mask. Scrub in a gentle circular motion. If skin becomes irritated, you're scrubbing too hard or too often. The trick is to be gentle.

Product Review

This month's product review is about Peter Thomas Roth's Silica Strawberry Scrub. This is a botanical strawberry scrub that contains fine polyethylene granules, botanical nutrients, almond meal, and silica. It's a wonderful product that will enable moisturizer and treatment products to work better as well as reveal soft glowing skin. It's available at Sephora, www.sephora.com, or www.peterthomasroth.com.

Questions and feedback are always welcome. My email address is BeautyBoost@msn.com.

Although I'm a licensed Esthetician, I'm not a healthcare professional. As such, please consult with your doctor prior to beginning any new skin-care regimen.

TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP

Safe ongoing group
All gender queers welcome
Transitioning NOT required
Monday eves * East Bay near BART
FREE interview * Sliding scale \$20-45/wk



Valerie Igl, Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist
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Normal life, Fran knew now, meant just being herself. It was freeing, she said. Her mood brightened. Gone was the impatient, quick-to-judge Frank. She no longer drank or smoked, her scent changing from a mixture of Black Russians, Menthol Kools and leather to Chantilly perfume. Plus, Fran smiled all the time.

"Frank was wound pretty tight, and Fran was not," said Laurie Roberts, program director at KFOX. "This was someone I've known for 20 years as a guy, so that took some getting used to. But the great thing was, Fran didn't have the issues Frank had. She was a much happier person."

So pleased was Erika with the new Fran that she didn't hesitate saying yes when Fran popped the question. On Sept. 8, 2001, they were married (legally, because, since Fran was still a preoperative transsexual, she was still biologically a man) in the living room of the two-bedroom house they bought in North San Jose. Fran's daughter, Saira, was the maid of honor for, well, both brides. A new family modality was born.

Let's Spend The Night Together

Life is not always so tidy. Happy endings can be elusive. Fran and Erika, now pronounced wife and wife, still had some interpersonal issues to hash out. Their sex life, for one thing.

Fran was progressing inexorably toward full womanhood. She had scheduled her sexual reassignment surgery for summer 2002 in Montreal. Her hormone treatments had reached a point where traditional sexual congress between a man and woman was not possible. Fran was morphing before Erika's eyes: breasts developing, hips widening, skin softening. It all took some getting used to. Erika had loved this man; she now loved this woman. Confusing.

"I am a heterosexual woman," Erika said. "But Frank being Fran certainly doesn't turn me off. Maybe that's just because of our bond. If you'd ask me, 'Gee, do you want to be with a woman?' I'd say, 'No, that doesn't interest me at all.' Ask me about being with my partner, who I love and have been through so much stuff with, and I'll say, 'OK, this'll be interesting.' Someone on the outside may argue, 'Well, you must be bi(sexual) then.' I just don't think of myself that way. . . . Fran just fits in a whole different category."

"And once she reached a point in her hormone treatments, we had to learn to be creative with our intimate relationships. We've been good at that. We've found our way without the traditional parts working."

Erika's family initially was not quite so accepting. Her ex-husband worried about the effects this new family dynamic would have on their son, now 9. Erika's three younger brothers didn't mince words with her: "Does this mean you're gay?" Erika's father, a devout Deadhead who used to talk rock 'n' roll with Uncle Fran, couldn't deal with the change. Her mom was, as always, understanding.

In those 18 months leading to Fran's surgery, Erika started thinking about her own needs. She had expended so much time and energy pushing Frank to transition full time to Fran that she was taken aback when it finally happened. She, like Fran, had therapy sessions with Mildred Brown, a Campbell therapist specializing in transgendered people.

"There are no statistics on how many spouses stay with transgendered people after transition," Brown said, "but it's got to be a small percentage. The good thing is, a lot of people stay good friends even after they leave the transgendered spouse."

"It takes a certain kind of person willing to defy society to make this type of marriage work, because society doesn't approve of this. You have to be able to say, 'My love is stronger.' I found myself in the middle, trying to help Fran and Erika deal with the feelings."

One giant leap came in 2001, when Erika decided she wanted to take Fran to the Silicon Valley Charity Ball. Erika had left radio several years before and now worked in public relations, and the ball was her client. Fran told Erika she didn't have to risk public disapproval for her sake, but Erika insisted. "Let's go get a ball gown, baby," she told Fran. "I refuse to be ashamed of our relationship."

A framed photograph of Fran and Erika at the ball now has a prominent place in the couple's living room. "Don't think for a minute that wasn't a Cinderella moment for me," said Fran, eyes welling in memory of that night. They paused in the retelling and blew kisses to each other across the couch. "IOYB," Erika said, as their eyes met.

"It's one of our secret codes," Fran explained. "I-love-you break.' We have no problem with PDAs either - public displays of affection. I mean, this is the Bay Area. I wouldn't be doing this if were Nebraska."

The extent to which Fran, 48, and Erika, 35, are just another old married couple might surprise those who would consider their arrangement an "alternative lifestyle." Theirs is a sweet and loud domestic sonority. They are the proud parents of a beagle named Beagie, whom Erika's son loves to play with when she has weekend custody.

They have the usual marital struggles, too. Erika is a Type A+ personality, with a cell phone at each ear and five projects pending; Fran moves at a slower pace, sees life on a flat plane. Erika gets irked when Fran leaves puddles of water on the kitchen counter after wiping it down; Fran gets annoyed at Erika's compulsive cleaning impulse. Fran is religious, Erika an agnostic.

"I'm shocked and thrilled they stayed together," said Deby Lemire, a longtime friend of both.

"If my husband decided to transition, I'd freak and say, 'Hey, it's been great, but bye.' I've got to give them a lot of credit. Frank helped Erika through her body changes with her surgery, and now Erika is helping Fran do the same thing."

In 1997, Erika had gastric bypass surgery, and four years later, Fran underwent sexual reassignment surgery. Brown, for one, is not surprised the bond has held.

"They didn't fall in love with bodies," Brown said. "They fell in love with souls. And that's why it works. When you love on the soul level, the body is less significant. Fran and Erika really are a testimony to love. I mean, how much further can we expect to reach out to another human being and accept what's inside?"

It's Only Rock 'n Roll

Not that there haven't been challenges.

On Thanksgiving 2001, eight months before Fran's surgery to make her anatomically complete, KFOX's corporate owner, Clear Channel Communications, laid her off. This, despite the fact that "Uncle Frank" maintained top ratings in the afternoon slot. Fran's oyster was one of 600 Clear Channel purgings nationwide and Fran believes that the station did not discriminate against her because of her gender issues.

In any event, it was devastating. Fran was saving for the \$20,000 needed for her surgery - her insurance wouldn't cover it - and now a revenue stream had been halted. But, in another respect, Fran was relieved. Now, at last, she could bury "Uncle Frank" for good.

If she was going to return to radio, it would be as "Aunt Fran." No more duplicity, she said. She knew it wouldn't be easy. There are no known transsexuals on the air in commercial radio, but Fran wanted to be the pioneer. She sent out resumes up and down California, touting her impressive credentials as Frank but selling herself as Fran.

The voice has been a big issue. Frank's distinctive growl was history now, and Fran had been working with a speech coach to project as a female in pitch and timbre. She has developed her voice to the point where people on the other end of the phone conversation routinely call her "ma'am." It is a passable woman's voice, high, fluting, somewhat breathy. Whether it's a voice suited for radio is an open question.

Last July, KFOX invited Bennett back for a week's vacation relief as "Aunt Fran." The listeners responded overwhelmingly positively. The week before Aunt Fran cracked the mike, KFOX's afternoon drive-time rating was 18th with a 1.6 share. The next week, with Fran, KFOX was first with a 10.3 share. The next, post-Fran, week, KFOX was back down to sixth with a 5.0 share.

Her appearance led to interviews with Ricki Lake and MSNBC and more than 100,000 hits on her Web site (www.auntfran.com). Fran thought Bay Area classic-rock radio executives would take notice, but few have even returned her calls. No job offers have come.

Steve Dinardo, general manager of San Francisco rock radio station Alice (97.3), said he had not listened to Fran's air checks or read her resume. But he said, generally, he would have no problem hiring a transgendered disc jockey.

"It's about content, not about mitigating circumstances the DJ may have," Dinardo said. "If any person happened to be a compelling on-air personality and happened to be transgendered, that would be OK. What you're asking me is like asking whether the Bay Area is ready for a one-legged DJ. It doesn't matter."

Allan Hotlen, who was the program director for rock station the Drive in San Francisco when Fran applied for a job, has heard Fran on the air. He turned her down. "It's how it sounds," Hotlen said. "That's how we evaluate."

Roberts, KFOX's program director, said she was impressed by Fran's ratings her week as a fill-in. She said Fran just needs to refine her feminine voice. "She's got everything else going for her," Roberts said. "The experience, the knowledge, the personality. Everyone at the station admires Fran's courage."



Continued on Page 21

NIKKI NICHOLAS MURDER UPDATES

February 28, 2003

Man's Slaying Could Be A Hate Crime

VICTIM FOUND SHOT WAS A TRANSGENDERIST

By Alejandro Bodipo-Memba, Free Press Staff Writer

Livingston County police continue to investigate the slaying of Anthony (Nikki) Nicholas last Friday, but family members and gay activists said this week they fear it was a hate crime.

The body of the 19-year-old Detroit native was found shortly before 2 p.m. Friday in an abandoned farmhouse near U.S. 23 and M-36 in Green Oak Township in Livingston County. Police said Nicholas, who was shot in the head, was dressed in women's clothing. "We think he was killed because he was gay," Willie Parker of Detroit, Nicholas' stepfather, said Thursday.

Known to friends and family as Nikki, Nicholas was born a male but had lived as a woman for about two years. "We have no motive and we aren't willing to say it is a hate crime at this time," Green Oak Police Chief Robert Brookins said Thursday.

Nicholas, who made a living as a female impersonator at area bars, lived as a transgenderist since he was 17, family members said. A transgenderist is a person who lives all or most of the time in a gender role different than the one associated with his or her biological or chromosomal sex, according to the Gender Equity Resource Center at the University of California at Berkeley.

Nicholas' family members said the last time they saw or heard from him was around Jan. 8. Nicholas had been living in Southfield with friends, they said. "We don't know why this happened, but we believe in our hearts that it would have taken at least two people to do what they did to Anthony," Parker said. "He was a scrapper, and there is no way just one person could take him down, even with a gun."

Triangle Foundation, a Detroit-based gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender civil rights group, acknowledged Thursday that it is too early in the investigation to determine a motive for the killing. But officials of the group said the slaying appears to be hate-related.

Reports of crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identification have been increasing over the last three or four years, said Jeffrey Montgomery, executive director of Triangle Foundation.

"This is speculation, but in this case, based on the severity and the brutality that was used on the victim and the fact that this was a male in women's clothes and one who apparently lived very openly in that way, would lead us to be treating this as a bias-related killing," Montgomery said.

Brookins said Nicholas' killing has not been classified as a hate crime. Investigators have conducted interviews in Detroit and Livingston County, Brookins said. The county's Major Case Task Force, which includes detectives from the Brighton Police Department, Michigan State Police and Livingston County Sheriff's Department, plans to meet later today to discuss the case.

February 28, 2003

GPAC CONDEMNS SHOOTING MURDER OF MICHIGAN TRANSGENDER TEEN

GREEN OAK TOWNSHIP, MI - The Gender Public Advocacy Coalition today condemned the shooting murder of a transgender teen-age woman in Michigan.

Police discovered the decomposed and badly beaten body of a 19-year-old transgender woman with a fatal gunshot wound to the head in an abandoned home an hour outside Detroit on Feb. 21. The woman, who reportedly went by the name "Niki" for the last two years, was born Anthony Lionell Nicholas in Detroit, according to investigator's analysis of the victim's fingerprints. Police are investigating the death as a homicide.

The murder comes within months of the killings of Ukea Davis and Stephanie Thomas in Washington, DC, and Gwen Araujo in Newark, CA. "Violence against transgender teens continues to claim young lives at a terrible pace. Our sympathies go out to Nikki's family," said GenderPAC Executive Director Riki Wilchins, "Public attitudes about gender must be changed, and the U.S. Congress must pass hate crimes legislation that addresses victim's gender expression and identity."

Early press reports had covered the victim as "a male" wearing "women's clothing. However, a spokesman for the Triangle Foundation, a state LGBT groups noted, "Police are being very aggressive, very non-judgmental, and very committed to this case."

The body of Nikki Nicholas was found, an apparent victim of murder, in an abandoned farmhouse in Livingston County last Friday. This has been a terrible blow to the family, Nikki's friends and the community at large. A multi-agency police task force is aggressively investigating the homicide. An article from Wednesday's Livingston County paper contains additional details.

A memorial fund has been established by the family of Nikki Nicholas (Anthony) to help with expenses at this time. The fund has been set up at Standard Federal and Triangle Foundation suggests two ways to contribute. First, checks or money orders (no credit cards or cash) should be made payable to THE ANTHONY NICHOLAS MEMORIAL FUND and may be sent to Triangle Foundation (19641 West Seven Mile; Detroit, Michigan; 48219). Triangle will bundle the contributions and deposit them with Standard Federal. Checks may also be directly deposited to the Fund at any Standard Federal branch office. If anyone has further questions or is seeking information, please contact Triangle Foundation at 313-537.3323.

26 February 2003

HATE CRIME SUSPECTED

By Jon Zemke, Daily Press & Argus

The older brother of Anthony Nicholas said Tuesday that he believed hate was the motivation behind the 19-year-old's murder in Green Oak Township. Detroit resident James Nicholas said he and his family believe whoever murdered Anthony did so because he was a gay man dressed as a woman. "I think somebody found out that he was a guy," James said.

Anthony's body was found Friday in an abandoned house near U.S. 23 and M-36 in Green Oak Township. Police believe someone shot the Detroit man to death. Anthony was wearing a woman's dress. Robert Brookins, chief of the Green Oak Township Police Department, said police are treating the investigation as a normal homicide, but they're not ruling anything out. "We don't know what the motive for the crime was," Brookins said.

James Nicholas and the Triangle Foundation, a statewide gay and lesbian anti-violence and civil-rights organization, think they do. Jeffrey Montgomery, the executive director of the Triangle Foundation, said his staff has been in contact with police, Anthony's family and people who knew the teen. From the information they've gathered, they suspect Anthony's murder is a hate crime. "At this point we're regarding this as an attack motivated by the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity, and that's horrific," Montgomery said.

He and James said that Anthony Nicholas, born a male, had been living as a woman named Nikki for the last few years. James said the last time anyone saw Anthony was on Feb. 15 when he was going to a party between Detroit and Ann Arbor. He added that Anthony hadn't lived at home since early 2001 and had been staying in several different places. Anthony's family hadn't seen him since Jan. 3. Police have not indicated when they think the murder occurred. "He was never much of a homebody," James said. He also said that the family believes two people committed the crime.

Brookins said police don't know if it was one or multiple people who committed the murder. The only details he confirmed were that Anthony died at the crime scene from a gunshot. The Livingston County Major Case Task Force is assisting Green Oak Police with the case. The task force includes detectives from the Brighton Police Department, Michigan State Police and Livingston County Sheriff's Department.

Brookins added that investigators are working hard on the case in Livingston County, Washtenaw County and Detroit. "Hopefully, somebody will come clean," James said. "Whoever did this can do it to somebody else."

Transcending Transgender

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City of Refuge UCC Outreach Ministries

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

GEORGIA DA LAUNCHES NATIONAL FIGHT AGAINST 'GAY PANIC' DEFENSE

by 365Gay.com Newscenter Staff

(Atlanta, Georgia) Fulton County DA Paul Howard is launching a national battle to stop the use of the so-called 'gay panic' defense. Howard says he was horrified the use of the defense tactic led to the acquittal of a man accused of killing one of his assistants. Last month a jury acquitted Rodericus Reshad Reed of murdering Assistant District Attorney Ahmed Dabarran.

During the trial Reed's lawyer said his client became enraged when Dabarran suggested sex. Dabarran and Reed met on a phone chat line. Howard said on the weekend told Atlanta LGBT paper Southern Voice that he wants to bring together district attorneys and law enforcement officers from across the country to focus on "understanding and defeating" use of anti-gay defense tactics.

"Gay crime victims must receive equal treatment as crime victims," Howard told the paper. During the trial, Reed's lawyer turned the trial away from the defendant to focus on Dabarran. "This is a case of a man who lived two lives," attorney Vic Reynolds, told the court.

"By day an educated, articulate, felony prosecutor, a married man. The other side of a coin is a man who at 12:30, 1:30 and 2:30 in the morning was on chat lines with teenagers, who frequented gay bars, who preferred street males. A man who picked up other men - a life of deceit." The trial's focus on Dabarran's sexual orientation was homophobic and may have lead the jury to acquit Reed a statewide gay advocacy group said. "I think homophobia played a role in the decision that it was okay to kill the guy," said Allen Thornell, executive director of Georgia Equality.

Recent TG Legal Gains!

ILLINOIS SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE PASSES GLBT RIGHTS

SPRINGFIELD, Illinois - The most conservative committee of the Illinois Senate voted to pass a bill banning discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The 8-5 vote was along party lines with Democrats casting yes votes and Republicans voting no. The bill, which has been around since 1974, now goes to the full Senate for consideration. The bill's sponsor is optimistic about its passage.

"This is the first time that the Senate Executive committee passed this bill. We are ecstatic," said Rick Garcia, political Director of Equality Illinois. "For years this civil rights legislation was bottled up or stopped in this committee and today's vote is a huge step forward."

Testifying in favor of the bill were Garcia and the bill's sponsor State Senator Carol Ronen (D-Edgewater). Opposing the legislation was Rev. Bob Vanden Bosch of Concerned Christians of America. The proponents explained the content of the bill and suggested that the legislation promoted equal treatment for all people under the law. Vanden Bosch testified that the bill violates religious institutions' rights, will hurt businesses and pave the way to the sanctioning of gay marriage and "protections for all other kinds of sexual behaviors."

Rebuffing Vanden Bosch Garcia suggested to the senators that they listen to businesses, especially religious businesses themselves. "A slew of Catholic orders of nuns and brothers that operate hospitals, schools, and social service agencies are on record supporting this legislation. As does Advocate Health Centers, the state's second largest private employer sponsored by the Evangelical Lutheran and Episcopal Churches," noted Garcia. "Clearly these religious groups would not endorse legislation that was bad for their businesses or that would violate their deeply held religious beliefs."

"The bill has an excellent chance of passing the Senate this year," said Ronen. "More and more of my colleagues are recognizing that this is a simple matter of fairness. They recognize that the opponents' arguments are not based on fact, but simply an attempt to mislead. I'm confident we will pass this bill."

Among those submitting statements of support were American Airlines, LaSalle Bank, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, Advocate Health Centers, SEIU, National Coalition of American Nuns, AFL-CIO, Lutheran Advocacy Network, Illinois Federation of Teachers, Chicago Bar Association, the ACLU, NOW and the AIDS Foundation of Chicago. Both Garcia and Ronen's testimony is available.

CAPE-Sponsored Gender Non-Discrimination Bill Passes Key Assembly Committee

BILL AUTHORED BY ASSEMBLYMAN MARK LENO PASSES WITH SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS LEADERS

SACRAMENTO - The California State Assembly's Labor & Employment Committee today passed a historic civil rights measure, sponsored by the California Alliance for Pride and Equality (CAPE), to prohibit housing and workplace discrimination based on gender characteristics. The bill, AB 196, is authored by Assemblymember Mark Leno (D-San Francisco) and co-authored by the four other members of the Legislative Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Caucus. The bill now goes to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

"AB 196 will provide critical protections for those who are fired, evicted, or experience serious harassment because they are perceived as gender non-conforming," stated Geoffrey Kors, Executive Director of CAPE. AB 196, the Gender Non-discrimination Act of 2003, clarifies that the state's prohibition of sex discrimination also prohibits discrimination based on gender-related characteristics, including transgender status. The bill is supported by a broad coalition of organizations, including the California Labor Federation, the NAACP, and the California Commission on the Status of Women.

Leno affirmed, "The right to employment and housing is a basic human right. No one should ever lose a home or job because of gender characteristics which have nothing to do with one's qualifications."

Kate Kendell, Executive Director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, explained that courts, as well as California's Department of Fair Employment and Housing, usually interpret sex discrimination laws to include discrimination based on gender stereotyping. "The insidious nature of discrimination based on gender non-conformity has been recognized and redressed by many courts. Amending California law to protect all citizens from this type of discrimination is long overdue."

Kors observed, "This bill is good for business and property owners, as well as employees and tenants, because it will explicitly clarify what constitutes illegal discrimination. AB 196 will help everyone understand the law by making clear the rules that already exist." Kors noted that a growing number of businesses and property owners have written letters in support of the bill, including the Greater San Diego Business Association and the California Apartment Association.

"We commend the Assemblymembers who helped advance this important civil rights bill with their votes today," continued Kors. "We also thank Assemblymember Leno and the entire LGBT Caucus for officially designating AB 196 as one of their top priorities for the year. We are confident that this measure will handily pass both houses of the Legislature and gain the signature of Governor Davis."

IMPORTANT WEBSITE UPDATE!

If you want an ID/Password to access the new **Member's area** on the TGSF website, send an email request to Susan Laird: Susan@hairzapper.com.



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A LIFE IN TRANSITION

At San Francisco State University, Meredith Greenblatt is working toward a lifelong goal to become an accomplished musician and to sing with a man's voice. "I've just always known (that I wanted to change my sex) since I was about 5 years old," she said. "I came home and actually told my parents that I was going to get a sex change operation."

Now 18 years old, Greenblatt is acting on that wish and is beginning to transition from female to male. She recently began receiving testosterone injections, which she says have lowered her voice and given her facial hair. Eventually, she says she'll have her breasts removed and will undergo a sex change operation. "It's kind of like finally — finally — I get to go through puberty like all the other guys," she said. "So I mean getting testosterone is not glamorous by any means, it's really not. It's irreversible, and it's scary but it feels right I feel a lot better."

Greenblatt also feels a lot better with her new name Butch. She said it's a nickname her father used growing up in Redwood City. "I came out as a lesbian when I was like 14 or so," Butch said. "And I knew that there was like more to it but that takes a lot of time to really figure it out."

Three years after "coming out" as a lesbian, Butch came out again — this time as a transgender. Butch said no matter how hard he tried to be a girl, he always felt like a man. "I got harassed really, really heavily in middle school and so that led me to growing my hair out," Butch said. "I wore tight shirts and tight pants. I dated as many boys as I could and tried to do whatever I could to fit the girl gender norm."

Now a freshman at SF State, Butch said he feels quite "normal". Butch enrolled himself in classes he calls "fun" such as creative writing, guitar and sign language. He also is taking a weight training class so that he can build muscle and "pass" more easily as a man. "In general, if I go into a public place like restrooms, I have a huge issue and I base it on whether I am "passing" or not," Butch said. "You know, do I look like a biological male today? Because I don't want to get stared at in the bathroom and I don't want to even risk getting beat up."

So far, Butch has been lucky. He said both his parents have always supported his decisions. And, although severely harassed in middle school, Butch was never physically harmed. But he will admit to trying to take his own life on more than one occasion.

In that area, he's not alone. According to Transgenders United for Equality, roughly 40% of all transgendered young people in the U.S. contemplate committing suicide every year. However, statistics are hard to come by. It really not known exactly how many people fall into the transgender category. "I identify as "gender queer," said Andy Duran of Berkeley. "Gender Queer is kind of a little different than transgender, but in the transgender community its more or less feeling like you don't fit into a box of a label of male or female. You fit like outside of both." Lauren Bruton identifies with another label. "I don't really go by gender queer too often, I just say I'm androgynous," Burton said.

Carolyn Laub of the Gay Straight Alliance Network said there are thousands of teens wrestling with their gender identity. "There are hundreds and thousands of teenagers whose expression is gender non conforming," Laub said. "So they may not look the way or act the way a stereotypical male is supposed to act or female is supposed to act and they become targeted with harassment and in some cases violence."

Laub helped organize a conference last weekend to educate students and teachers on how to fight homophobia in schools. "Homophobia and name calling and harassment and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity is still extremely prevalent in our schools even in the bay area," Laub said.

Eddie "Gwen" Araujo, a Newark teenager who dressed and lived as a girl, was bludgeoned to death Last October. A preliminary hearing for the four men charged in the case is currently underway. Araujo's death remains on the minds of many. "I'm always worried about ending up like Gwen," Butch said. "I walk around with a brave face, I go on the news and be open about who I am. I will not hide who I am."

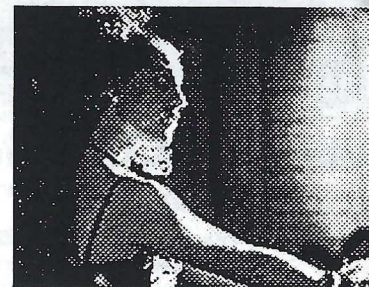
Right now, Butch is most concerned with finding a job. He wants to start saving money so that he can afford the surgeries necessary to complete his transition. "I need my breasts removed," Butch said. "They are very uncomfortable for me to have, and it really makes its hard for me to pass."

To his friends, Butch is just like any other teenager struggling to express himself. But to the world that doesn't know him or people like him he'd like to say this. "We're people. We're not weird. We don't have a mental disease. It's real. It's not just a phase. We just go about our gender identity and sex identity differently. We can be successful nice people."

Boys' Night Out

FEMALE IMPERSONATORS REIGN AT QUEEN MARY IN STUDIO CITY

By Leslee Komaiko, Special to The Los Angeles Times



Not since celebrating Halloween on Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood several years ago have I seen so many men in dresses. Sure, some of them are Cpl. Klinger-like, ungainly in their body-skimming ensembles and high heels. But a lot of them are hot. Double-take hot. If only I looked half as good in a cropped tee and miniskirt.

Welcome to the Queen Mary in Studio City, which has been serving up female impersonators for more than 40 years to a strikingly diverse audience of straights, gays and everything in between.

On a recent Saturday night, the lounge is packed for the 9 o'clock show with couples, small groups of friends and, in the last row, a dozen female UPS employees ready to party. The show opens with an old queen who looks a lot like a West Palm Beach matron — big hair, diamonds and all — overdue for a face-lift. S/he zeroes in on the bald men in the audience. (Beware, ye follicly challenged.) Several unrepeatable jokes follow. Just know that the Queen Mary is not for the prudish.

Maximilliana is a crowd favorite. He does an electric version of "Walk Like an Egyptian," stripping down from an oversized caftan into a sequined gold bikini top and matching hot pants. Shortly into the number, he steps down off the stage. Audience members tuck dollar bills into the waist of his pants, his cleavage. Later on the evening, he returns as Boy George. There's also Dolly, a blond who does an acrobatic performance of "All That Jazz," and Dani Kaye, who owns the room with an R-rated version of "Hey, Big Spender."

Between the Madonna and Whitney Houston numbers, there are also a couple of Chippendale's-style flings. One muscular stripper bares almost everything, then goes slithering up a pole like a seasoned stripper. He grabs a glass of beer from a table, slowly pours the liquid over his chest — hope the owner was finished — and follows this up with splits atop the bar. Soon he's playing to one of those UPS women, and she's loving every second of it. Over the course of the evening, the audience gets rowdier and looser with those dollar bills. No doubt the two-drink minimum is a factor here. Fortunately the drinks are relatively cheap.

"They're beautiful performers," says 30-year-old Los Angeles resident Barbara Chanrion, who is checking out the show with two male friends. "The bodies are great, the costumes are nice and the makeup is beautiful." This is no small compliment, considering Chanrion is a casting agent.

Outside the lounge in the front bar, an odd assortment of men in jeans and polo shirts and others in cascading-curl wigs and lipstick mingle over cold beer and the signature Kahlua-cinos. A dozen girls and guys dance to high-energy techno music. Others hang around the perimeter, taking it all in. This show is almost as good as the one on the main stage. But it feels decidedly more cliquy, closed: a place for cross-dressers, transvestites, the transgender crowd and those who love them, not the ogling curious.

Before I leave for the night, I visit the ladies' room. But as is often the case for us females, there's a line, a line I don't feel like waiting in. As I turn to leave, I catch sight of that familiar icon on the door: a stick figure in a triangular skirt. It's the same icon I've seen a thousand times before. But tonight it has new meaning. Tonight it's anything goes.

[Editor's Note: I have fond memories of the Queen Mary, for it is there - back in the Winter of 1989 - that I first ventured forth publicly en femme, and the place where I awakened to the truth of my life.]

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She's a Rainbow

Erika wanted to watch. At first, the surgeon in Montreal, Pierre Brassard, balked. He has performed hundreds of sexual reassignment surgeries, but few spouses wanted to scrub in and watch the gender metamorphosis take place. But Erika insisted, and the doctor caved.

It was important to Erika to actually witness the 2 1/2-hour penile inversion and vaginoplasty surgery, to see Brassard peel away Fran's penis and scrotum for labial tissue and carve out a vaginal canal. "I figured," Erika said, "it would be psychological closure for me."

The afternoon of the surgery, Aug. 13, 2002, Erika squeezed Fran's hand as they put her under, whispered "I love you." The medical team had set up a stool for Erika several yards from the operating table. Ten minutes in, Brassard looked back, saw that Erika had not fainted and waved her over. Erika sat just over Brassard's left shoulder until the operation was completed. "It was fascinating," she said. "Start to finish."

Fran awoke, groggily, hours later, Erika at her side. Once she regained clarity, Fran's reaction might have seemed muted to an outsider. There was no giddiness about losing her male genitalia and finally looking like a woman. Truth was, Fran had felt like a woman for 30 years. Now she just had the body parts to match. "It was like it (the vagina) had always been there," Fran said. "This was just the period at the end of the sentence. I'm done. It's lovely. I'm a happy girl."

Happy? That was one emotion alien to the old Frank. For Fran, it's just her natural disposition. Five months after the surgery, which has healed without complications, Fran and Erika say they have never been happier and that they are finding their way sexually and emotionally. "We're looking forward to the adventure," Erika said. "All the walls are down now, all the facades blown away. It'll be new territory for us."

Even if Fran doesn't flip a mike again as a disc jockey, she says she will never regret her choice. She has Erika. She has open and honest relationships with family and friends. She is, at last, herself.

"Sometimes I think I should've done this 30 years ago," Fran said. "I think Bonnie Raitt said it best in 1991 when she won three Grammy after struggling 20 years. She said, 'I'd like to thank God for bringing me to this at a time when I can truly appreciate it.' Now, I can truly appreciate being Fran."

How Families React to a Sex Change

Fran Bennett's daughter, Saira McGan, is a 24-year-old Air Force senior airman on duty in Saudi Arabia. She says she has no problem telling many of her fellow soldiers that her father is now a transgendered woman.



TG MALE ACCEPTED INTO RABBINICAL SCHOOL

By 365Gay.com Newscenter Staff

(Cincinnati, Ohio) For the first time a transgendered person has been accepted into a rabbinical seminary, paving the way for another first: the ordination of the first transgendered rabbi. Reuben Zellman, 24, of Oakland, California was born female, and began gender re-identification

several years ago.

He was accepted into the freshman class of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, the nations leading seminary for Reform rabbis. "As far as I know, I am the first person to do this, but that's not why I'm doing it," Zellman said. "I realize it has political ramifications and I think those are positive, but I'm becoming a rabbinical student because that's what I want to do with my life," he said in a telephone interview with a Jewish news service.

Zellman, who was open about being transgender throughout the admissions process, was accepted "on his own merits," said the school's National Director of Admissions, Rabbi Roxanne Schneider Shapiro. "Certainly we listened to the story he had to tell. But Reuben was an outstanding candidate."

In 1990, the Reform movement became the first to ordain gays and three decades ago pioneered the ordination of women. Rabbi Richard Address, director of the department of Jewish family concerns of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Reform movement's congregational arm, hailed the news about Zellman's admission. "I see it as a historic move, but I also see it as a continued progression of the philosophy of the Reform movement," Address said. Zellman's admission to the school comes as the Conservative movement wrestles with the question of how Jewish law should treat homosexuality.

"I'm not ashamed of my family at all," she wrote in an e-mail. "I will tell anyone if they ask. Like at all work centers, there are going to be folks who are cool with it and ones who aren't... My dad was my dad. Regardless of what he wore or how he acted, he was still my dad and nothing was going to change that. I love my dad unconditionally."

The adjustment has not gone so smoothly for Fran's 9-year-old stepson K. (who did not want to use his name). Last year, as a third-grader, he was teased by some classmates after showing off a photograph of Erika, his mother, and Fran. This year, however, K. says most students have been supportive. Fran has attended many school events and, in Fran's words, blends in as just another mom in the carpool lane. "They bullied me a lot," K. said. "But maybe it takes some people longer to adjust."

Mildred Brown, a Campbell psychologist specializing in transgendered people and co-author, with Chloe Ann Rounsley, of the 1996 book "True Selves: Understanding Transsexualism," has helped families, friends and co-workers deal with the many issues of having a transsexual family member. It is important, Brown said, that people first understand that gender reassignment is not a lifestyle choice.

Here is Brown's explanation of gender dysphoria in her book: "The body (transsexuals) were born with does not match their inner conviction and mental image of who they are or want to be. Nor are they comfortable with the gender role society expects them to play based on that body. This dilemma causes them intense emotional distress and anxiety and often interferes with their day-to-day functioning."

Parents' reaction: Brown says many transsexuals postpone telling their parents until later in life. "Even the most loving and supportive parents require a period of adjustment," Brown writes. Typical reactions, she says, are confusion, denial, fear, guilt and shame. Some parents, too, react angrily that the transsexual has "taken away my only son."

Spouse's reaction: Brown says 50 percent of male-to-female transsexuals and 10 percent of female-to-male transsexuals were married when they first sought therapy. There are no statistics about how many stay married, but Brown says it is a small percentage. Most spouses' first reaction, Brown says, is to ask: "Why did you want to get married in the first place?" Some spouses blame themselves, while others cut off all contact and try to prohibit custody of the children. Still others divorce but remain "good friends."

Children's reaction: In the past, Brown said, therapists recommended that transsexuals "disappear forever" from their children's lives. Now, however, it's agreed in therapy circles that "a sex change does not in any way diminish the parent's love for the child, nor does it affect the ability to be a good parent." How children react, Brown says, depends on whether the parents speak to them in a positive or negative manner about the transition.

Erika Taylor, Fran's wife, said she told K. at age 5 about his stepdad. "I explained in basic terms," Taylor said, "that this -wasn't dress-up. This -wasn't a costume. This was life. I explained that Frank had a medical problem and that Frank was getting help. One thing needed to help was a gender change, that Frank was born with the wrong body. We've been very honest and he seems to accept it well."

April's Birthdays

4/00	Phylcia Anya Morningstar	4/11	Michelle Ayres
4/00	Joanna Wilson	4/12	Julie Freeman
4/01	Michelle Nelson	4/13	Tina Kearns
4/03	Elaine Lerner	4/14	Chelsea Grammer
4/04	Paula Bacigalupi	4/15	Sharon Moriarty
4/08	Davida Frazier	4/16	Bommie Smith
4/09	Veronica Smith	4/19	Bobbie Williams
		4/29	Ellie Anderson

Many Happy Returns of the Day!

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 Cheryl at triess_family@yahoo.com and explain a little about your situation.



Remember Gwen Araujo!



February 25, 2003

Guilty plea in transgender killing

NABORS MAKES DEAL

Henry K. Lee, Chronicle Staff Writer

In a dramatic turn, one of four men accused of murdering Newark transgender teen Gwen Araujo pleaded guilty Monday to a lesser charge and testified against his three friends.

The plea bargain by Jaron Chase Nabors, 19, provided the prosecution with a powerful witness who described discussions he had with his three friends in the days leading up to the slaying of the teen, who lived as a young woman. Nabors, who led authorities to Araujo's body in a shallow grave four months ago, told the court during a preliminary hearing that he had written a letter claiming the men had discussed a "Soprano-type plan" to "kill the bitch (Araujo) and get rid of her body."

But it was unclear from his testimony whether the plan alluded to in the letter was actually made. He had written the letter for a girlfriend after his arrest and while he was in Santa Rita Jail in Dublin. Sheriff's officials intercepted the letter. Nabors also testified that in the week before Araujo's slaying, the four friends debated whether Araujo was indeed female. He said they then agreed that "something bad could happen" to any man who dressed like a woman if she was to meet a "really bad guy."

Hit With Skillet

Monday, he described in graphic detail how one of the men, Jose Antonio Merel, 22, struck Araujo in the head with a metal skillet when he and others discovered that Araujo, 17, was biologically male. Merel and Michael William Magidson, 22, had become worried about Araujo's gender after having oral and anal sex with her in the weeks before the fatal confrontation at Merel's home the night of Oct. 3, Nabors said. At one point during the attack, Araujo begged, "No, please don't. I have a family," Nabors said. Sylvia Guerrero, Araujo's mother, and other relatives sitting in the Fremont courtroom wiped away tears.

The testimony came at a preliminary hearing to determine whether Merel, Magidson and Jason Cazares, 22, should be tried on charges of murder and committing a hate crime in the death of Araujo, who was born Edward Araujo but had been living as a young woman.

Voluntary Manslaughter

Nabors pleaded guilty Monday to voluntary manslaughter and will receive a prison term of 11 years under the deal with prosecutors. Alameda County Superior Court Judge Kenneth Burr asked Nabors whether he understood that the murder charge could be reinstated if he got "buyer's remorse" and prosecutors found "you're not living up to your end of the bargain." "Yes, your honor," Nabors replied.

The plea deal — and Nabors' promise to testify truthfully against the other men — was greeted warmly Monday by Araujo's family, who gathered outside the courthouse with "Happy Birthday" balloons. "There's a celebration in heaven going on now. That was very comforting to come in this morning and have that happen," Guerrero said. "And what a more perfect day for that to have occurred."

Gloria Allred, a Los Angeles attorney representing Araujo's family, said she believed Nabors to be a credible witness. "I don't think this was a good morning for the other three defendants, knowing that one has basically decided to enter a plea and testify, but it's a good day for us," Allred said.

Risk of Long Prison Term

Nabors' attorney, Robert Beles of Oakland, said his client opted for the plea deal because the risk of a lengthy prison term for a murder conviction was too great. "Jaron has accepted responsibility for his role in this matter," Beles said.

Beles said Nabors did not assault Araujo but made numerous admissions as to what he did after the killing in the letter to his girlfriend, which proved to be a major factor in the plea deal. Nabors testified that Merel and Magidson met Araujo in September and later questioned the youth's gender because Araujo — who went by the name "Lida" would claim to be menstruating and recommend anal sex, Nabors said.

Araujo would also push away their hands during sex to prevent them from determining her gender, Nabors said Merel and Magidson told him. Nabors testified that he knew his friends, who have gotten into fights before, would become angry if they discovered the truth about Araujo. "When people do them wrong, they stand up for themselves," he said.

'I'm Gonna Kill Him'

On the night of the party, Merel said, "I swear, if it's a fucking man, I'm gonna kill him. If it's a man, she ain't gonna leave," Nabors testified. A woman who was at the party, Nicole Brown, testified last week that she grabbed at Araujo's genitals in a bathroom confrontation and blurted out, "It's a fucking man."

Nabors said he saw Araujo in the bathroom, her head down. "She looked like someone whose secret had just come out," he testified. Magidson then pushed Araujo to the ground and pulled down her skirt and her underwear before choking her, Nabors said, adding Magidson had practiced a chokehold on him.

Merel began crying and said in disbelief, "I can't be fucking gay," Nabors testified. Merel struck Araujo with a can and skillet, Nabors said. Nabors said he and Cazares then went to Cazares' home to get some shovels and "kill that bitch."

February 26, 2003

GRAPHIC DETAILS REVEALED IN ARAUJO CASE

By Robert Airoldi, STAFF WRITER, Oakland Tribune

FREMONT — After Eddie "Gwen" Araujo was beaten and strangled, one of the three defendants charged with the Newark transgender teen's death hit Araujo twice with a shovel to make sure the teen was dead, Jaron Nabors testified Tuesday.

A slew of unusual details about the night of the killing emerged as Nabors, 19, testified for the second day against his three friends. Nabors pleaded guilty Monday to voluntary manslaughter in exchange for his testimony. He will serve 11 years in state prison.

On Tuesday, Nabors described how one of his friends ordered Araujo off a couch at an Oct. 3 party because the teen was bleeding; how he himself changed shirts before burying the body; and how all four stopped for breakfast after burying Araujo in the Sierra foothills.

Michael Magidson, 22, of Fremont, and Newark residents Jason Cazares, 22, and Jose Merel, 23, are charged with murder and a hate-crime enhancement in Araujo's death. They have pleaded not guilty to killing Araujo after discovering the transgender teen was biologically male. Magidson and Merel had anal and oral sex with Araujo in the weeks leading up to the party, Nabors testified.

During a day and a half of testimony in front of a packed courtroom that included some of victim's family, Nabors described how Araujo was slapped, punched, kneed, kicked and hit with a frying pan before the teen was bound at the wrists and ankles and strangled in the garage. Nabors said the four men hurled insults at the teen after they buried the body — still bound with ropes — in a shallow grave at the Silverfork Campground east of Placerville early on the morning after the party.

Merel was so mad "that he could still kick her a couple of times," Nabors said at Tuesday's hearing, held to determine if there is enough evidence to proceed to trial.

Araujo's mother, Sylvia Guerrero, sat in court most of the day listening to the testimony, wearing a pair of her slain child's jeans. "It's inconceivable to me that there are human beings in this world that are capable of murdering another human being in the manner that Gwen was murdered," she said. "I teach my kids to love, not to hate. I really miss (Gwen) deeply."

After Araujo was struck in the head with a frying pan, Cazares and Nabors left in Magidson's truck and picked up three shovels and a pick from Cazares' home.

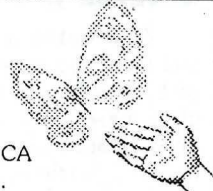
When they returned about 20 minutes later, they saw Araujo sitting on the couch, the teen's face covered with blood. Someone ordered Araujo

Continued on Page 23

PLEASE HELP SYLVIA!

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Remember Gwen Araujo!



March 19, 2003

Defense's Crime Of Passion Claim Rejected In Transgender Teen Case

JUDGE OKS MURDER CHARGES

Kelly St. John, Chronicle Staff Writer

Dismissing defense claims that the slaying of transgender teen Gwen Araujo was a crime of passion that should be charged as manslaughter, a judge ordered three men to stand trial on murder and hate crime charges Tuesday. Alameda County Superior Court Judge Kenneth Mark Burr ruled there was sufficient evidence to try Michael William Magidson, 22, Jose Antonio Merel, 23, and Jason Michael Cazares, 22, for murder in the death of 17-year-old Araujo, who was born Edward Araujo but lived as a young woman they knew as "Lida."

Then — surprising even prosecutors and prompting applause from members of Araujo's family — Burr revoked bail for Magidson, who has been free in a drug treatment program since February after his family posted a \$1.6 million bond. "Mr. Magidson is the key actor. It was at his hand that the death of Lida was brought about," Burr said, adding that he believed Magidson might try to flee before a trial. "He's a young man. What's really here to keep him except his parents and their financial ruin?"

Jaron Chase Nabors, 19, who attended the party in Newark and admitted participating in the slaying, was initially charged with murder but pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter after agreeing to testify against his friends. He will serve 11 years in prison.

In closing arguments Tuesday, defense attorneys said the men — at least two of whom had sex with Araujo — had been provoked into an unplanned attack upon learning they had been deceived. J. Tony Serra, Cazares' attorney, called it a "classic" crime of passion and said at worst it was manslaughter. "But for the eruption of this identity issue, which started like a flame that quickly swelled into an uncontrollable human fire, there would never have been any homicide," Serra said. "It was instinctual rather than premeditated."

Jack Noonan, Merel's attorney, went further and said since his client was not in the garage when Araujo was strangled, he should only be charged with assault. But prosecutor Connie Campbell countered that it was a premeditated, cold-blooded attack, and that all three defendants had participated in nearly two hours of kicking, choking, beating and strangling. "They took their own perverted view of justice, weighed the facts, put it on a scale and determined that their egos were worth more than Lida's life," she said.

Afterward, Campbell said she was pleased not only that the men would face murder charges but that Burr had revoked Magidson's bail outright. Earlier, Campbell had asked the court to raise his bail to \$5 million. "I think it's appropriate given the defendant's level of violence," she said.

Immediately after the hearing, bailiffs ordered Magidson to remove his tie and belt, and he was taken into custody. Several of his family members watched solemnly, his mother weeping. Magidson's parents had put up their home, three rental properties and the home of a friend to raise bail. "They're incredibly disappointed," said Magidson's attorney, Michael P. Thorman.

But the day's events thrilled Araujo's family, who vowed to "celebrate for Gwen." "The angels are dancing in heaven, and this mom is very happy," said Araujo's mother, Sylvia Guerrero.

Graphic Details...

Continued from Page 22



off the couch so Merel could clean it, and then Cazares said, "knock that bitch out," Nabors said. "Then I said, 'Yeah, knock that bitch out.'"

Magidson walked over and punched Araujo twice in the face, causing the teen to fall to the ground. Then he kneeed Araujo twice in the face, the second time so hard that the teen's head dented the wall, Nabors said. Then Magidson retrieved a handful of rope and bound Araujo's wrists and ankles, Nabors said. Cazares left and returned shortly with a comforter that they wrapped around the body before taking the teen into the garage. "She was getting blood on the carpet," Nabors explained. So Magidson, Cazares and Nabors carried the body into the garage while Merel cleaned the couch and carpet.

Nabors said he saw Magidson grab a loose end of rope and bring it toward Araujo's head, before he went back into the house. But Deputy District Attorney Connie Campbell reminded Nabors of a jailhouse letter he wrote to his girlfriend a couple of weeks after his Oct. 16 arrest, in which he described the strangling. "Did you describe how you had seen Mike place a rope around Lida's neck?" Campbell asked. "Yes," he replied.

Then the body was placed in the back of Magidson's pickup truck along with the tools, Nabors said. But before they left, Nabors borrowed a shirt from Merel. "I had on a nice shirt and didn't want to wear it," Nabors said. "I believed it was going to get dirty because we were going to bury Lida."

During the trip east, the four men discussed various aspects of the crime. "Mike said he wasn't sure Lida had died when he twisted the rope, but once Jason hit her with the shovel twice, he knew for sure," Nabors recalled. When they got to the campground they found a remote location, dug a hole, tossed the body in and covered it with rocks before filling the hole with dirt. Then, using a branch with leaves, they covered their footprints. Shortly after leaving, they stopped at a McDonald's restaurant for breakfast, Nabors said.

"They had no remorse," said David Guerrero, Araujo's uncle. "They were more interested in figuring out how they could cover it up, get food and stay clean."

Once they got home, Nabors said he called a friend, Adam Hewson. Hewson went to Nabors' house, Nabors said, and the two smoked marijuana while Nabors told Hewson about Araujo's death. The account was passed from one friend to another until it reached Araujo's family. The family, who had reported the teen missing Oct. 5, then contacted police about a possible connection between the missing boy and the party.

Nabors said he initially lied to police, but after he was confronted with a tape of a conversation police made using a wire worn by Hewson, Nabors eventually told of his involvement and led police to the body. Michael Thorman, Magidson's defense attorney, began his cross examination Tuesday, questioning Nabors credibility, perception and recollection.

OSCAR WINNER HILARY SWANK, DIRECTOR KIMBERLY PIERCE SPEAK OUT ON ARAUJO KILLING

WASHINGTON, DC (Mar. 4, 2003) Actress Hilary Swank, who won an Oscar for her portrayal of Brandon Teena in the movie Boys Don't Cry, today issued a strong statement condemning the murder of Latina transgender teen Gwen Araujo and calling for new laws to discourage gender-based violence.

"The brutal murder of Gwen Araujo is yet another painful reminder that the gender hatred that also killed Brandon Teena is alive, and work remains to be done," said Swank. "Congress must pass hate crimes laws, and organizations must change public attitudes, if all Americans — including those who transcend gender norms — are to live freely with dignity and respect."

Swank's words were echoed by director of Boys Don't Cry, Kimberly Pierce, who issued a statement that read, "Youth who cross gender lines —

whether they are gay, straight, or transgender — continue to be targets for violence. We need tough laws that will punish those responsible and deter future attacks."

Similarities between the two crimes have led some to compare them. Teena, a transgender man, was romantically involved with a local woman in Falls City, NE. He was murdered in 1993 after two of the woman's male friends took him into a bathroom, where they found that he had female genitals, and then assaulted him, later killing him.

Araujo, who was romantically involved with a local man, was killed in October, 2002 in Newark, CA. Several of the man's friends, including one woman, took her into a bathroom, and discovered that she had male genitals. Two of the men then beat and strangled her, leaving her in a shallow grave nearby.

When a man is a woman

MIDWESTERN COUPLE SHAKEN BY SEX CHANGE IN MOVING 'NORMAL'

Edward Guthmann, Chronicle Staff Writer

Roy Applewood has a secret that's gnawing away at him, but nobody would ever guess it. He feels like a woman trapped in a man's body. Married for 25 years, Roy has a life that plays like a template for heterosexual conformity: father of two, foreman at a Midwestern tractor-manufacturing plant, pillar of his church. But when fellow churchgoers toss an anniversary party at the Rotary Club and Roy (Tom Wilkinson) kisses his wife, Irma (Jessica Lange), he faints dead away. An emergency counseling session is called between Roy, Irma and their pastor. "I was born in the wrong body," the tall, robust and not remotely effeminate Roy says. "I'm a woman."

So begins the HBO drama "Normal," a smart, sympathetic and occasionally droll look at gender dysphoria and its impact on families. Directed and written by Jane Anderson, "Normal" doesn't approach its subject with sensationalism or finger-pointing, but burrows inside its subject and into the Applewood home, taking us deeper than we expect it to.

What happens, for example, when Roy starts taking female hormones and grows breasts that ache? What happens when he starts dressing in dime-store wigs and thrift-shop smatties and Irma has to take him under her wing for sartorial counseling? Or when he wears earrings and perfume to the tractor plant, or changes his name to Ruth, and his pubescent daughter (Hayden Panettiere) has to adjust?

Subtle but Humorous

Wilkinson, a British actor who played Sissy Spacek's husband in "In the Bedroom," is subtle and respectful of the delicate subject matter but hardly numb to the vein of humor that runs through "Normal."

When he tells the pastor (Randall Arney) that he wants a sex change, and adds, "I hope you'll still accept me as a member of the congregation," the pastor tries to mask his shock. "Heck," he finally says to Roy, "you're the only fella I can get to nail together the Nativity every year. You think I'm gonna let you go that easy?"

Anderson, who wrote the hysterically funny "The Positively True Adventures of the Alleged Texas Cheerleader-Murdering Mom," is a specialist in working-class folks caught in extraordinary circumstances. She frames "Normal" with homespun visual idioms (a bridal shop) and cornball pop tunes ("You Always Hurt the One You Love"), and brings to it an uncanny ear for Midwest-ern speech.

An ironist with a heart, Anderson maneuvers that risky border between naturalism and satire, staging explosive drama in one scene (Irma bitterly orders Roy out of the house), shifting to the buffoonish pastor in the next, then offering a goofy, aborted love tryst between Irma and Roy's shy boss (Clancy Brown).



Temptation to Overplay It

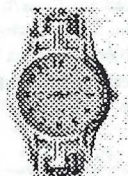
Lange is expert at conveying Irma's shock waves of disbelief and anger, but Wilkinson has the toughest job. The temptation, I'm sure, would be to camp it up a tad — to overplay Roy/Ruth's emerging womanliness by lifting the voice, puckering the lips and swishing the hips.

Instead, Wilkinson keeps it all on a modest scale and creates a character who's so fundamentally real, decent and brave that it's impossible to brush off Roy/Ruth as a freak. We recognize that he has more in common with us than not.

The false note in "Normal" is Wayne (Joe Sikora), Roy and Irma's grown son. When Roy sends a heartfelt letter explaining his transition, Wayne reads it out loud, mockingly, to a bunch of yahoos in a bar. Morons like Wayne exist but, given how carefully "Normal" establishes the tact and kindness of his parents, it makes no sense that Wayne could be their issue.

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