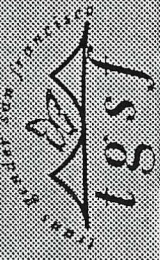


ExCom 03-04 Elected!



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 2003 - 2004 Officers

(Fiscal Year: May 1 - April 30)

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| President | Roxy Carmichael-Hart |
| Vice President | Susan Laird |
| Secretary | Rys McCusker |
| Treasurer | Brooke Jansen |
| Education | Kara Flynn & Kelly Anne Marsh |
| Outreach | Kalani Makanani & Marla Selby |
| Social | Aiyana Eveningstar & Roxanne Taylor |
| Miss TGSF 2003-04 | Rachel Hill |
| Mr. TGSF 2003-04 | Tyler Fong |

Fine Print

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: | Rachael Hill, Rachael Janelle-Light, Wendy Schultz & Ayme Kantz |

Ad Rates

| | Per Issue | Six Months | Per Year |
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| 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...



Kudo's to our outgoing ExCom, led by Rachael Janelle-Light. Teamed with the creative talents of Rachel Hill, Susan Laird, Stephanie Ann Blythe, Ally Grillo, Kara Flynn, Kalani Makanani, Roxy Carmichael-Hart, Aiyana Eveningstar and Gia Luisa - she steered our ship straight and true. TGSF had a pretty incredible year if you think about it. Yeah, the Cotillion bit us in the butt, but if you look at this year's event in the light of what took place that night,

you'd have a hard time disagreeing that it wasn't money well spent. But there's no doubt that Rachael's natural ability to lead and crack the whip was lovingly given and unselfishly driven. She's certainly left some tough pumps to fill.

To our newly elected Executive Committee (names listed in our masthead to your left), the challenges ahead are significant. But Ms. Janelle has left us on a good path, and in the truly capable hands of Roxy Carmichael-Hart, some returning stars and some new faces, there's a lot of determination and talent at the helm. I think that you, too, will be impressed with Roxy's visions for TGSF and dutifully moved by her passion. The year ahead indeed looks promising.

A Call To Arms!

So now I'm going to do something that I've never done before (and this is at the request of the new Prez): to reprint some of my old verbiage, found in this very column. A little chunk of relevancy from a by-gone era, that Roxy found while ruminating through past issues of *The Channel*. She thought it appropriate enough for today's audience, and would I please say it again on her behalf. Saves her the trouble, she said. The following is from my June 2001 column. Don't say I didn't warn 'ya.

...I see my role of Editor as part TG activist, part devil's advocate, in addition to just laying out the paper each month. Being a non-elected position within the organization, it does afford me a certain autonomy. I can remain free from the internal politics of the ExCom, yet remain objectively outside the box, and thereby act as a conduit for those of you wishing to express an opinion or publish an ad. I can pose questions or stir up controversy, or just prattle on about life as a Tgrrl in general. But I'd really like to see more participation by the membership in all facets of the TGSF organization.

Not too long ago, each ExCom Chair had their own committee, comprised of volunteers from the membership - a few were quite sizeable and active, of themselves opportunities to band together in our common lifestyle. Each of them had the responsibility of publishing in the newsletter a monthly update of their committee's progress and plans. I haven't seen a Committee Report in years. Unfortunately, our elected officials are all on their own these days. Not one of the three major committees (Education, Outreach and Social) has any help. It seems that, depending on who decides to run and gets elected (and it's not like these are regularly contested positions), seems to determine the quality (or quantity for that matter), of the available services rendered by our committees. That's too much work and pressure to put on one or two volunteers.

So I must again implore you, on behalf of the ExCom, would you please get off your pantied fannies and volunteer to help these people out! With your assistance, we can have a solid Education program again. With your help, we can have a terrific Outreach schedule, contacting everyone from high school students to corporate executives. By volunteering your time and talent, our Socials can be fun, informative, interactive and inclusive. Contact one of the ExCom members directly. Call the hotline. Send me an email. Show up at an ExCom meeting and volunteer for a Committee - and show up for those Committee meetings. Do the AIDS Walk. Help build the TGSF float for the Pride Parade. Show up and march with it. Volunteer to staff the TGSF Pride booth. Facilitate an education seminar or discussion group. Greet people at the door of our Socials. Get out the checkbook and send a donation...

Nuff said. Nice to have Shirley Faire back too.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Roxy Carmichael-Hart

Did you ever see the movie "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying"? It's a wonderful movie with Robert Morse, who plays a young man who starts a new job in the mailroom and by evening he is the CEO of the company. Well, my ascent to the Presidency was not quite that swift, but still, for a girl who didn't know TGSF from a cable TV Channel less than a year ago, I admit I have come very far. I

realize that many of you don't really know me (even though you may have voted for me). So in the next few months I will do my best to try and get to know all of you a little better. I will be writing a monthly report as your President but I am also going to continue my "Hart to Heart" column because I think that will be important for me to sometimes address you as your sister, not just as your President.

The first order of business is to pay tribute to the old ExCom. Thank you Rachel Hill, Stephanie Ann Blythe, Ally Grillo and Gia Luisa. I am so proud of and grateful to many of you for all of your efforts on behalf of your sisters. (You'll notice, by the way, that one name is conspicuous by her absence. I'll get to her in a minute.)

And congratulations and welcome to your new ExCom members: Vice President Susan Laird (moving up from Secretary), Treasurer Brooke Miller, Secretary Rys McCusker, Education Co-Chairs Kara Flynn (who is, I am happy to say, staying on for another term) and Kelly Anne Marsh, Outreach Co-Chairs Kalani Makaanani (also continuing) and Marla Selby, and Social Co-Chairs Aiyanna Eveningstar (another holdover) and Roxxanne Taylor. I sincerely appreciate you stepping up to the plate to continue the vital work we must carry out.

Which brings me to Rachael Janelle. There isn't enough room in this Channel or hours in the day for me to appropriately describe how I feel about this wonderful lady who has touched my heart and who has made me a better woman. I would not be here if it weren't for her love and kindness towards me. If you have read my past columns in the Channel, you know how I feel about her. Every time I think about what she has meant to me I want to cry as I am doing now (which is not good since I am typing this at work) and I want to celebrate because I am happier than I have ever been due, in large part, to what she has meant to me and to others. Rachael's tireless and selfless dedication and energy is a testament to what TGSF is and should be about. We should take our cue from her and look at her as a model for how we should conduct ourselves as members of this ExCom and this organization. I am going to miss Rachael as part of the ExCom but I will have her as a trusted adviser and more importantly, as a life-long friend. Rachael, you believed in me since Day 1 and I will forever love you for that.

And now that we reflected on our past, we must look to the future. I wrote some of the words below after the March ExCom meeting, before I had any thoughts about running for President. At that time, I was feeling very unsure about the direction of our organization and whether it would continue to be what it has been. I threw down the words below as a challenge to the new ExCom, regardless of whether I was part of it. However, since I am now leading that ExCom, I believe it is fair to hold myself to the same standards I challenged others to live up to.

I believe that our organization faces five significant challenges.

The first challenge is that of money. It is no secret that funds are tight, as they are for virtually every non-profit organization. How do we generate sufficient revenue so that TGSF can continue to do the things that our members expect and need from us? I am going to appoint a fundraising committee, to develop and help implement various strategies.

The second challenge is that of vision. This ExCom must develop a coherent agenda with clear goals and objectives. What are we trying to accomplish? Are we a social group, an educational group, a support group, a political group or a hybrid of all of the above. In light of our financial situation, we must evaluate our purpose. Perhaps we no longer can be all things to all people but we must set a direction and move towards it. We cannot lose our focus, which is to make our members feel welcome and safe and loved. Educational events, outreach efforts and socials are important tools in this effort. I am very pleased to see that we have some energetic and enthusiastic people in these positions so I am confident we will meet this challenge.

The third challenge is that of communication. How can we communicate to our members our vision? We have used the Channel and the socials but are the members getting the message? We may need to look at new ways to articulate the goals of TGSF to members and other interested persons, so that more people feel compelled to join and to participate.

The fourth challenge is that of involvement. The strength of an organization lies not in its leaders but in its members. It was stated months ago that there is an overwhelming amount of work to do and very few people to do it. I am putting out a call right now, to our members and friends to get involved. I will be forming subcommittees to look at the Pride Parade, the Cotillion and fundraising, and over the course of this year, I will personally call on several of you to step up and assist. So whether you help build our Pride Parade float, act as a safety monitor, or help plan our Cotillion, our TGSF needs you. Help make it something special. In addition, I am asking all of the ExCom members, myself included, to participate in as many of our events as you can. I strongly urge you to attend each ExCom meeting and to participate in the decision-making. Our members have entrusted us with important work to do and we cannot belie that trust. If we are asking our members to get involved, then we must set an example.

The fifth challenge is that of unity. Remember our wonderful Christmas dinner at the Tarragon? What a radiant eruption of TG pride that was! It didn't matter if we were part of TGSF, RGA, DVG or another group. It didn't matter if we were CD, TG, TS, FTM or something else. We worked together to make it happen! I recognize that we have differences in our community regarding purpose and function. We are individuals and individuals disagree. But to make that happen, we had to work together to achieve a common goal and as a result, we had a very successful event. And the Cotillion. Although it was a TGSF event, many helped out that together, whether they were part of TGSF or not. We all worked together to do something we believed in. We need to do more of that. We need to look at more ways in which we can work together for the common good, which is, lest we forget, those who need us the most.

I plan to make the fourth and fifth challenges the cornerstones of my administration. And here's why.

For the last few months, I have been answering the hotline. Every day I become convinced that there is a growing need for what we do. I have answered calls from coast to coast. I recently answered a call from a young woman in Florida who happened upon our number "Where can I go?" she asked. She had no place else to turn to. It is incumbent upon each of us to ensure that the calls from that girl and the hundreds, perhaps thousands, like her, do not go unanswered. In last month's Channel, Rachel Hill mentioned my passion. She's right. The girls who call the hotline are my passion. Those of you who have just stepped into the light are my passion. Those of you who believe that we can and will make a difference are my passion.

I would like each of you to join me as we walk that road, hand in hand, ready to meet the challenges I have outlined. I am confident that we will.



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April 6, 2003

TGSF ExCom MEETING MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 2:15 p.m. Present: Rachael Janelle, Rachel Hill, Susan Laird, Kara Flynn and Stephanie Ann Blythe. Guests: Roshelle Cunning, Marla, Brooke Jansen and Kelly Marsh.

Presidents Report:

Request for approval of the minutes for March 2003. Seconded and approved. Pride Parade: The beer booth will not be available, but the information booth has been applied for. Discussion of certificates of appreciation for the year's work at the end of the month meeting at the Blue Muse. Introduction of Roxy who will be the new president as she is running unopposed.

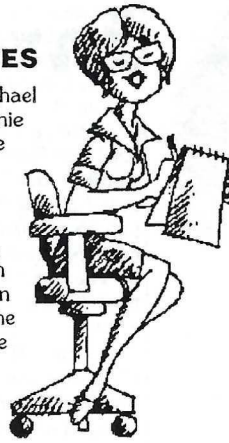
Vice President's Report

Work on the pride float is being discussed but ideas are dependent on the size and type of trailer. Trailer is a low-boy type 45' long X 8' wide. Call for 10 volunteers who will act as safety monitors for the float. They must attend a training class about one hour in duration held at various locations throughout the bay area. Costs associated with the float will be held as low as possible.

Secretary's Report

Website: Presentation of the suggestion that membership be allowed to choose between viewing The Channel through the website or receiving it my mail. Discussion of dues in relation to the type of viewing is held. Decision is made to wait through the elections to advise membership. Members should be advised that the dues structure has been modified to facilitate the renewal of membership at anytime throughout the year rather than just April or May.

TGSF on Yahoo: Stephanie Ann reports that there has been a problem with "trolls", people who deliberately inflame members of TGSF yahoo. Problem with Gwen and Stephanie having to work more as traffic cops on the group, screening people who sign in. Membership on TGSF Yahoo is probably about 20% actual TGSF members. It is suggested that ExCom study the possibility of moving the TGSF discussion group to our own website and limit participation to actual members of TGSF. Motion to table the issue for further study until May.



Treasurer

Presentation of financial report to ExCom. \$1670.55 is the current balance in the treasury. Outstanding accounts receivable and accounts payable are listed and discussed. Advertisers who have not paid for their advertisements in The Channel will be removed. Brook Jansen will be the new treasurer as she is also running unopposed. Preparations are made to hand over the job of treasury to her.

Education

The LGBT center has asked if TGSF would be interested in helping with a planned May 18th picnic. TGSF barbecue will be held on May 25th at the home of Rachael Janelle. No other events are planned at this time.

Outreach

No information was available. Elections are to be held at the Blue Muse on Thursday April 25th and everyone is encouraged to come say goodbye to the old ExCom and also meet with the winners of the elections.

New Business

Special Report from President-Elect Roxy Carmichael-Hart Phone Hot line: Presentation of story about someone in serious trouble who called TGSF and received supportive help and caring. This is the mission of this group and often we fail to remember that in spite of our ongoing issues concerning membership, finances, etc. that our existence is a great good for those in need of help.

Introduction of new proposals for the financial future of TGSF. Discussion is held as to the priorities of past due accounts and the raising of future revenues. Cotillion 2004 planning is discussed as well. Possibility of a fundraising position on ExCom is proposed and discussed. Motion to adjourn. Seconded. Meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m. Next Meeting to be held on May 4th, 2003 at the home of Susan Laird.

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 triness_family@yahoo.com and explain a little about your situation.

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Miss TGSF 2003

This last month was a little slower with events for Miss TGSF and I welcomed the rest. May starts to get busy again with June and July having an event almost every weekend. So this was a great opportunity to catch up on some of the "life" things I have going on.

A year ago, my wife and I decided that, although we still love each other very much, divorce was probably the best course. I have explained it as the only time I have ever heard of two people getting divorced out of love instead of out of hate or anger. You see, each of us needed to move forward in ways that our marriage would not allow us to. Because of this decision, we agreed to construct another home on our property where I would live so we could both be close to the kids. So for the last year I have been pounding nails and cutting drywall. I'm starting to get down to the end now and I would like to see it done soon. Very soon! I'm down to floor coverings and finishing the kitchen so hopefully a housewarming party will be about the time we hit 80 degrees consistently.

And not any too soon I might add. Over the last year my relationship with Robin has changed dramatically. Slowly, but dramatically just the same. We still live in the same house together (until mine is done) but it's more like best friends. And the time has come where she wants to date. Yeah, I know. I had to expect that right? It doesn't make it any easier when I'm told that. I'm not even into girls anymore, but it is still really hard. I came home from work Friday night about 8:00pm and there was a strange truck in the driveway. You all know the song, right? I turned off the engine and sat there for a few minutes. I kept saying over and over, "you can do this...you can do this" It turned out to be the father of one of my son's friends who was there to pick up his son. I breathed a sigh of relief.

Anyway, that's why it has been good to get some time to work on my place. I want nothing more than to be strong. After all, I want my friend of 25 years to be happy, right? Actually, I need it done so I have a place to go when I'm feeling hurt. A place where she won't be able to see my pain. Sounds kind of silly, but it's the truth.

Ask Miss TGSF

The purpose of this part of my 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 your message. Questions can be sent to MissTGSF2003@aol.com.

So...I'm embarrassed that I can't find the e-mail that I wanted to respond to so I'm going to ad lib. (I'm already late with this column) The e-mail had asked some questions about the best way to "come out" at work and asked how I did it.

Dear Coming Out,

First of all there is more than one right way and many many wrong ways. The accounts I have heard vary widely depending on big company/little company, type of work, geographic location etc. Some do's and don'ts are:

- Don't let your company find out from other associates.
- Don't share your web site address with someone at work because you are proud of it.
- Do make contact with someone in HR.
- Don't make the mistake of believing they are on your side.
- Do make sure you have a well-prepared plan that you have gone through with your coach.
- Do remember to be flexible

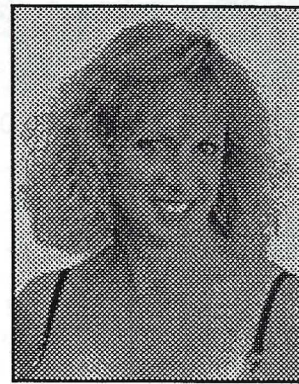
I had all these things in mind and my plan took a right turn even before I was ready to implement it. So although a plan is vital, be prepared to go in whatever direction real life takes you. I found that it still works out and a year later I am still employed there. Here is my story:

For almost a year I had been slowly changing. My hair had grown out quite a bit, my nails were long and polished, my eyebrows manicured. My ears were pierced with really small studs, my waist was 28" and I had recently shifted from wearing men's slacks to women's. Women's jewelry and light foundation. All changes that had been added one at a time allowing enough space in between for most people not to take notice. Kind of like watching your dog grow - you don't notice it because you see him all the time. (the dog and male pronoun thing was an accident I assure you)

I had been with the bank for fifteen years at this point and had held several positions. A couple years ago I had a job as a project manager for the build out of loan processing centers in 5 locations in California. It forced me to touch each loan officer and operations person in the state for at least one meeting. Because of this, I was a "known" entity.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By the time you read this column there will be a new Executive Committee in place, a new energy and a new vision. Congratulations to those who are at the point in their life where it is important to stand up and make a difference. Thank you. Thank you from myself and thank you from the entire TGSF membership. Talk is talk....Walk is walk....you are doing both.



Sadly, though, this will be my last opportunity to fill this page. This last year has been a year of growth for me. Big growth. Growth in so many places that I could fill 10 pages here. What is most important is that I was fortunate enough to be introduced to TGSF, a place where I could find friendships, build confidence and learn to understand that it's OK to be me. A place that not only allowed, but also fostered the growth I found this last year.

So often we get going in our lives and we forget what it was like to be the first-timer at a support meeting, or the first time eating in a restaurant dressed as your desired gender. The anxiety, the fear. Remember? That's the thought I want to leave you with. When you are tired on that particular night and just don't feel like going to one of the meetings or other TGSF events...think about that new girl of guy who is thinking, "...If I can just get through the night". That's the reason we do what we do. Remember back to that special person who reached out to you when you needed it. Now it's your turn....pay it forward.

Thank you, each of you, for making my year special.....

**Warm Regards,
Rachel Hill**

It was last May and I was now a Sales Manager attending my first all state sales rally in San Francisco. I had plans to come out some time later in the year October/Novemberish but that never happened. I didn't think anything of it when I appeared in front of several hundred people who had not seen me in a few years, but it had a major effect on them. In fact it was all good. People wanted their picture with me and old friends were congratulating me on my transition. "How come I never told them?" they would ask. I felt like a million bucks and I was learning to make people comfortable with me. This was Wednesday of the three-day event. That night a group of Latina loan officers enticed me into going out with them salsa dancing. So accepting.

The next day I pushed it a little further wearing a sleeveless sweater that although was not flowery, was definitely feminine. Even more applause and I was in heaven. All this time the dress had been business casual so I could really walk the tightrope between the genders and occasionally step to the side I wanted. Well, Thursday night was awards night and the dress was business/cocktail. We were given an hour to go up to our rooms and change before dinner and I paced the floor. What do I do now? Like any good tranny, I had brought enough clothes to suit any mood. After all I was spending 3 days in SF and there were places to go after hours. 45 minutes had gone by and I was still unsure. Was this my time? Was I being too bold? I stood there alone in my room....a Brooks Brother's suit in one hand and a cocktail outfit in the other. I agonized. I convinced myself to put on the cocktail outfit and see how I felt. If it wasn't right I could just change back before I left the room, right? It felt right. Ok, let's do the makeup and fluff the hair. That felt right too. Oh God, what was I doing?! Three minutes left...I grabbed the door-knob. I pulled my hand back. I had to convince myself. When the second hand hit the 12, I'm walking through the door....ok, when it hits the 6. Finally I took a deep breath, grabbed my purse and pushed myself out the door. I walked down to the dinner and into the room of a thousand people (so I'm exaggerating). I had many interested looks but everyone was cordial. I even had people going out of their way to be wonderful. Go figure. As the awards ceremony started I had started to relax a little. Then I looked up to the stage where my boss took the microphone as emcee. We looked into each other's

Continued on Page 10

Sunday / May 4 / 4:00pm

TGSF ExCOM MEETING

The meeting of the brand spanking new and improved 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! June is coming around the corner fast, and this meeting will be looking ahead to our participation in the annual Pride parade celebrations in SF. There's work to be done and plenty for all to do - pitch in! Please attend this meeting!

Sunday / May 4 / 5:00pm

SOUTH OF THE BORDER III - CINCO DE MAYO

Marlena's Bar, 488 Hayes Street - Party at 5:00 p.m. Show at 6:00 p.m.

Saturday / May 10 / 8:00pm

ASIAN DIVA'S SHOW

Club RendezVous, 1312 Polk Street - Reception at 8:00pm, Show at 9:00pm show. This event benefits The Asian Wellness Center and Positive Resource Center.

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.

Wednesday / May 14 / 7:30pm

TGSF MID-MONTH EVENT

A Night Out at the White Horse Tavern, 6551 Telegraph Avenue (near 66th) in Berkeley. Very T-friendly establishment. Full Bar, Dancing and Fun! 510-652-3820.

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.apowellness.org.

Saturday / May 25 / 12:00pm - 8:00pm

TGSF MEMORIAL DAY BBQ!

Hosted by Roxxanne Taylor - Miss Congeniality 2003, at Rachael Janelle's house. 931 Bidwell Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA. For more information, contact Rachael Janelle at 408-219-1250, or email Roxxane at Roxzanne13@aol.com

Thursday / May 29 / 7:30pm

TGSF END OF MONTH

The Blue Muse 409 Gough Street, San Francisco. For more information contact the hotline or Roxy Carmichael-Hart via email.

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.

Coming Next Month!

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

Cosmetics
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Wigs
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CARLA'S Salon & Boutique

124 Race Street
 San Jose, CA 95126
 (408) 298-6900
www.carlas.com

Serving the Cross Gender
 Community's needs with sensitive help
 and understanding.

**The Current Location of the
 TGSF Library!!**

Cosmetics Fem Fashions Shoes

Cosmetics
Shoes
Nails
Wigs
Fem Fashions
Lingerie
Cosmetics

Calendar of Events - May 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 potluck social from 4:00pm until early evening. Space is limited - Reservations Recommended! Call Diane or Anne at 707-544-1540.

Silicon Valley Gender Association (SVGA)

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

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 DVG RCC | 2 8:00 PM PacCtr 8:00 PM RGA | 3 |
| 4 4:00 PM TGSF: ExCom Meeting | 5 5:00 PM CCHH 7:00 PM PISSR General Meeting 8:00 PM DVG | 6 7:00 PM SCT | 7 7:30 PM MPTG | 8 | 9 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr | 10 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA |
| 11 | 12 5:00 PM CCHH | 13 | 14 7:30 PM TGSF MidMonth @ White Horse | 15 7:00 PM DVG RCC | 16 8:00 PM PacCtr 8:00 PM RGA | 17 |
| 18 | 19 5:00 PM CCHH 8:00 PM DVG | 20 7:00 PM SCT | 21 | 22 | 23 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr | 24 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA |
| 25 12:00 PM TGSF BBQ! | 26 5:00 PM CCHH | 27 7:30 PM SCOUT | 28 | 29 7:30 PM TGSF: EOM @ Blue Muse | 30 8:00 PM PacCtr | 31 |

TGSF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

Please Print / Check all that apply:

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

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

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

Member at a TGSF Social.

Special Events!

May 3rd!

WHO'S YOUR DADDY? WHERE'S THAT DIVA?

Come find out who will be San Francisco's 2003 Leather Dyke Diva and Leather Dyke Daddy! The SF LeatherDyke Family Charities is pleased to announce the 2003 San Francisco Leather Dyke Daddy Dyke Diva Contest! The Leather community and their friends are invited on **Saturday May 3rd** to the spacious venue at 550 Barneveld from 4:00 - 7:00pm to express our gratitude and well wishes to our out-going 2002' Leather Dyke Daddy Vick & Leather Dyke Diva Billie. We'll also welcome in our new Diva and Daddy Titleholders, who will be selected by our esteemed panel of judges:

Dan Alexander (Head Judge) - Mr. Daddy's Leather 2002 Annie Romano-Blas - Ms. World Leather 2001 Dean "Vibby" Bramlett - California Leather Woman 2003 Ms. Zoe - SF Dyke Diva 2001 Laura "Sir Bear" Carlos - SF Dyke Daddy 2001

Entertainment at the contest will include a hot opening act comprised of a number of Daddies and Divas from both the men's and women's leather communities. The band Creamy Goodness, and DJ Page Hodel will be performing for your listening pleasure, along with a host of other exciting performances. Food will be available for purchase at the contest venue.

Meet the contestants and judges at Daddy's Bar in the Castro on Friday May 2nd at the Meet-N-Greet from 6:00 - 9:00pm. The Meet-N-Greet will also include the selection of two lottery judges chosen randomly from the community members in attendance.

Following the contest on May 3rd, Leatherwomen and their FTM friends are invited to celebrate at the after-party beginning at 9:00pm at The Scenery in Hayward, a dungeon play space! A shuttle from the contest venue to the Scenery and back is available.

On Sunday May 4th leather family and friends can join the contestants for a Victory Brunch at Mary's Restaurant (formerly known as Harvey's SOMA) from 10:30am to 2:00pm.

All weekend festivities largely benefit the Breast Cancer Emergency Fund, with a small portion set aside for the Titleholder's Travel/Operations Fund. Save the first weekend in May to celebrate and support the LeatherDyke Community. For more information visit the website: <http://www.DykeDaddyDiva-SF.org>

May 16th 6:30pm

BAY Positives 2nd Annual...

MILD TO WILD LEATHER AND FETISH SPRING FASHION SHOW

Bay Area Young Positives is happy to announce its 2nd Mild To Wild Leather And Fetish event. We have moved the date earlier in the year so as to avoid burn-out of the community that worked so hard during the winter last year to help make the show the huge success it was. We were able to raise over \$10,000.00, with over 300 people attending the event! We expect to have upwards of 400 people this year. The event is to be held at the Gay and Lesbian Center, 1800 Market Street in San Francisco, the theme- Spring Fashion.

We have lowered the cost of general admission this year, the tickets are \$20.00 each, with special pricing structure for those willing to become a sponsor. There will be a dance after until 11:00pm, so come down and join the fun.

To become a sponsor, to purchase tickets, or for more information, please call 415.487.1616 and ask for Douglas Hudson or Michael Cooley or email douglas@baypositives.org, michael@baypositives.org

The mission of Bay Area Young Positives (BAY Positives) is to help young people (26 and under) living with HIV/AIDS live longer, happier, healthier, more productive, and quality-filled lives.

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.

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>

Opens May 10!

LA CAGE AUX FOLLES SHOW IN OAKLAND

Hi All,

I am in rehearsals for La Cage Aux Folles, a show running for 9 performances in May. It is being held at Glenview Performing Arts Center, a fairly small venue in Oakland, but with some very talented individuals.

The story centers around the announcement of a young couple's engagement and their quite different parents. Ironically, the young man's gay male parents run a transvestite/drag queen club while the young woman's parents are quite stern, with the father being the local politician bent upon closing all the transvestite clubs.

I will be playing Dermah, one of the Cagelles (showgirls). The show is a musical and will feature limited tap dancing. I guarantee a very fun and lively show, yet also quite touching. I teared up tonite when one of the songs was being rehearsed as it hit quite close to home.

The show is running for the following dates and times: May 10th - 3 and 8pm / May 11th - 3pm (Mother's Day) / May 17th - 3 and 8pm / May 18th - 3pm / May 23rd - 8pm / May 24th - 3 and 8pm.

Tickets are \$17 for general table seating. Complimentary wine will also be served. Call the Glenview Performing Arts Center at 510-531-0511 for tickets. The Glenview Performing Arts Center is located at 1318 Glenfield Ave., Oakland, CA 94602.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Kara

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!**

Special Events!

Sunday, May 18, 2003, 12-5pm

TRANNY PICNIC

Dolores Park (19th St & Dolores), San Francisco

Free!

Calling all members of the gender communities! Grab your best friend, a blanket and some food - this is one genderbash you just don't wanna miss!

The Tranny Picnic is an inclusive community event. All trans, genderqueer, intersex, genderfuckers, those who transcend the binary gender system, sofas, chasers and friends most enthusiastically invited! Bring your ideas, games, skill share, potluck, noise & fun!

Performers and DJs include Vinsantos, Shawna Virago, Lynnee Breedlove, Larrybob, OTHER, Thea Hillman, Storm Florez, Daphne Gotlieb, burlesque-esque, KY, Spike, Gender Pirates, DJ Beet, DJ Molly S and oh so much more! MC Fairy Butch!

Fun & Games provided by: United Genders of the Universe, Crafty Bitches, hiccup queer & genderfuck playground, Q-Force and you.

Grab the Muni #33, J Church or exit BART at 16th/ Mission or ride your bicycle to 19th & Dolores!

The Tranny Picnic is organized by nobody and everybody. If you want to be a part of making the Tranny Picnic happen, please contact picnic@kithology.com.

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 histories; 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.

"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.

Transgender Law Center (TLC)

Protects people's rights to be the most important thing they can be - themselves. Every day, TLC connects Transgender people to technically sound and culturally competent legal services, increases acceptance and enforcement of laws and policies that support California's transgender communities, and works to change laws and systems that fail to incorporate the needs and experiences of diverse transgender communities.

TLC and the National Center for Lesbian Rights will release "TransRealities: A Report on the Legal Needs of San Francisco's Transgender Communities" at the event. This first of its kind report presents results of a six-month survey collecting data on the legal needs of over 150 transgender people in San Francisco. In addition to details from the survey, the report includes recommendations for how community members, social service providers, legislators, and foundation funders can participate in eliminating bias against the transgender people.

Organization Contact info:
Transgender Law Center
Info@transgenderlawcenter.org
www.transgenderlawcenter.org
415-865-5619 (Dylan Vade)
415-865-0176 (Chris Daley)

TLC provides free transgender legal information to transgender community members, attorneys, business owners, and social service providers. Feel free to contact us with any questions you have or go to our website for more information about us.

*NCLR, BALIF,
The Fundamentals Consortium,
FTMI & TGSF
invite you to celebrate
the arrival of*

*The Transgender Law Center
California's newest civil rights organization!*

Wednesday, May 14th

6:30 - 8:30pm

*SF LGBT Community Center
Ceremonial Room (4th Floor)
1800 Market Street
at Octavia*

The Center is right on the Muni Streetcar F Line and accessible by a number of other forms of public transportation.

*Entertainment will be presented by
The Transcendence Gospel Choir,
The World's First Transgender Gospel Choir.*

Light food and beverages will be served.

Accessibility: This event is wheel chair accessible. The program portion of the show will be ASL translated. Spanish translation is available for the program as well, upon request. Contact Chris at (415) 865-0176 for more information.

RSVP

RSVPs appreciated, but not required.
(415) 865-0176 or
launch@transgenderlawcenter.org

TLC is supported by

National Center for Lesbian Rights
Fiscal Sponsor

FTM International
Community Sponsor

Echoing Green Foundation
Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence Community Fund
The Initiative for Public Interest Law at Yale
The Horizons Foundation
VanLobenSels/RembeRock Foundation
Numerous Individual Donors

The Transcendence Gospel Choir is available to perform at public and private events. For more information on booking the Choir, you can call (510) 682-7763 or visit their website at <http://home.attbi.com/~tgchoir/bio.htm>

Miss TGSF 2003

Ask Miss TGSF...

Continued from Page 5

eyes and he smiled. Maybe it was all going to be ok. That night I went out dancing with a bunch of people and came back to the hotel late. My boss was in a group of about twenty in the hotel bar and again just smiled, even as one of his loan officers who did not know me was hitting on me. Talk about uncomfortable. Friday I came as all girl and even attended a debriefing meeting with my peer group. No one said a thing either way.

Over the weekend my bliss turned to fear. Huge fear. It really settled in just what I had done. And I had never spoken with HR or my manager about the situation. I was going to be so fired. On Monday I had a lunch already scheduled with the SVP of Premier Banking. I was very concerned that once I had made the leap, I would not go back. Flipping back and forth would look like I was playing games so I was determined to stay girl. I dressed in a woman's business suit and went to lunch. Christy was a bit taken back, but quickly recovered. When she asked me how management was dealing with it, I squeaked out, "I haven't told them". I was in sooooo much trouble.

Tuesday I was to be at another huge sales rally, this time with banking center managers from all over California. These folks I did NOT know. Monday night I finally got through to my boss. I quickly explained my situation and asked for his advice for the next day. He said he did not see any reason for me not to carry forward. I was a bit relieved but still worried about Tuesday.

By the time I arrived at the Concord Hilton, there were hundreds of bank associates everywhere. To my surprise, management plucked me out of the crowd and pulled me aside just to make sure I was doing ok. That made me feel pretty wonderful. I integrated myself back into the crowd and picked up my nametag. At this point I had not changed to my female name so it still had the old one. The highlight of my day was standing in line for the women's room with a nametag showing my male name. I can laugh about it now, but I can't believe I made it through the day.

So the moral of the story is to plan well, but expect some unexpected turns.

It's now been one year now and next week I go back to that same sales rally, again in SF. This time I'm really going to enjoy myself. In Fact there are a few SoCal boys I would like to get to know a little better. Wish me luck!

MisTGSF 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.

BREAST CANCER EMERGENCY FUND DINNER

Friday March 14th, San Francisco Zoo, San Francisco, Ca.

The weather had been clear all week, actually starting to get a little warm. But not on the night of the second Friday in March. No, tonight the sky had decided to let loose and the rain came and went all day and into the night. It made for a wonderful night, however. The Lemur pavilion was a round, glass walled structure beautifully decorated and filled with the joy of celebration. About 100 people sat for a spectacular meal and incredible entertainment all to raise funds for the Breast Cancer Emergency Fund. Mamma Reinhardt and the Leather family always through the most wonderful events. Mark Paladini was the producer of this event and I believe he has set the bar even higher. The attention to detail was spectacular (the ravioli appetizer was to die for). Mark, please take a bow, you did an incredible job. The silent auction opened early in the evening and seemed to provoke some active bidding. The entertainment was incredible and I wish I would have written down some names for future Cotillions. I recall this young lady with the most incredible voice - so beautiful. The type of voice that makes you hate your own. I was really taken by her. As the night wrapped up I sat, watching the crowd feeling very proud that Rachael Janelle, Tyler Fong and I had ventured out on this rainy Friday night to support Mamma and the BCEF.

Since it's founding in 1982, AIDS Emergency Fund (AEF) has continually sought to satisfy a very simple, yet vital mission - providing critical financial assistance to friends, family members, neighbors, and fellow citizens facing the challenges of debilitating HIV and AIDS.

Over the course of a grant year, AEF enables over 2000 clients to maintain housing and utility services, make medical co-payments, and meet other

critical expenses that might otherwise tip the scales against these already over-burdened men and women.

In the spring of 2001, after several years of consideration and research, AEF launched Breast Cancer Emergency Fund (BCEF). Dedicated to the women of San Francisco who have supported sick and dying friends since the beginning of the AIDS epidemic, BCEF is modeled on the same premise of compassionate outreach and grassroots community involvement.

The growing Breast Cancer Emergency Fund provides financial assistance to low-income women and men who are battling the effects of breast cancer and its difficult treatment regimes.

True to its roots, AIDS Emergency Fund today remains a largely volunteer driven and supported organization. Its handful of full-time staff are augmented exponentially by dozens of client intake volunteers, the fundraising efforts of thousands of local school students, businesses and community groups, and countless men and women throughout San Francisco who support the agency through their personnel donations and gifts of time and dedicated service.

Aids Emergency Fund is located at: 965 Mission Street, Suite 630, San Francisco, Ca., 94103 / Tel: 415.558.6999 / www.aidsemergencyfund.org

MISS TRANS-GLOBE PAGEANT 2003

Saturday, April 19th, Herbst Theatre, San Francisco, Ca.

The Miss Trans-Globe pageant is one of the first pageants I had ever been to so it was very special for me to go back this year as Miss TGSF. Connie Hall, a TGSF official photographer and recipient of the President's Award, had the great honor of being a judge at this event. Because of Connie's hospitality, I was able to bring several people with me as the TGSF contingent. Tyler Fong, Susan Laird, Jaime McConnell and Rachael Janelle were all there. It was a great time to see friends again. Tianna DeVille, Chablis, and Alexis Miranda are always so gorgeous and wonderful to see. Their constant support in the community gives me inspiration.

The contest. OMG! These girls are so fabulous, if you have not been to an event like this; you absolutely have to go. The girls are beyond beautiful. The opening costumes were over the top. Each girl put a great deal of time and personal effort into her creation. 13 incredible girls started the pageant, which paired down to 6 and from 6 to 3. And then there was one. I saw friends from other events up on stage. Erika Amerika, Miss GAPA 2001 was in the running as well as Monica (my pageant coordinator for the Cotillion) and several girls from last year's event. The fabulous Tita Aida and Victoria Lavoovah did an outstanding job as emcees keeping everything rolling along.

Being a judge at this event would have been an extremely difficult job - I had no less than 4 favorites. But in the end one was chosen to be Miss Trans-Globe 2003, the official spokesmodel for The Filipino Task Force on Aids. Congratulations Miss People's Republic of China or Bea as her friends called her. You were truly spectacular in every way.

It was an honor to be asked up on stage to present the winning bouquets to Miss TransGlobe and the two runners up. Special thanks you to Victor Hall, Executive Director of FTFA for allowing me to be a part of this event.

The Filipino Task Force on Aids is dedicated and committed to bring to an end the increasing risk of HIV and AIDS in the Filipino community.

We mobilize the Filipino community to join us in our cause, our heartfelt concern and efforts to improve the health and well-being of individuals, their families and other groups vulnerable to HIV and AIDS, through linguistically and culturally appropriate prevention education, outreach, awareness, and advocacy.

The Filipino Task Force on AIDS, 109 Bartlett Street, Suite 204, San Francisco, Ca. 94110 / www.ftfa.org

**Warm Regards,
Rachel**



Mr. & Miss TGSF 2003

MR. TGSF

By Tyler

Music has been a part of my life even before birth. My mother loved to listen to Beethoven and sang in the church choir. She stayed at home with all of us kids until we reached grade school age. Even then, she only worked part-time so she was home by the time we got out of class for the day.

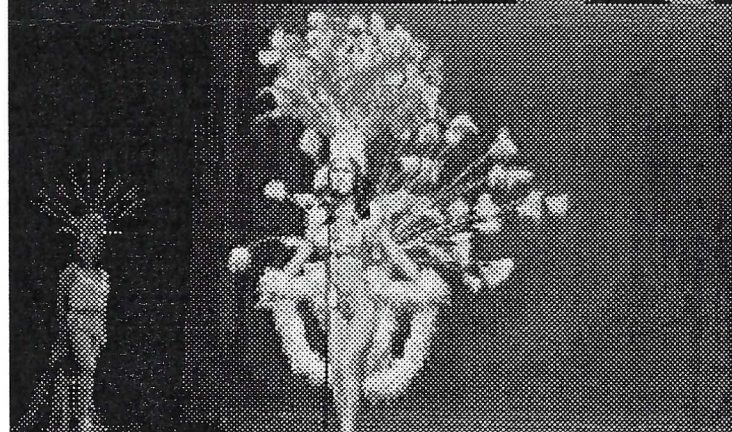
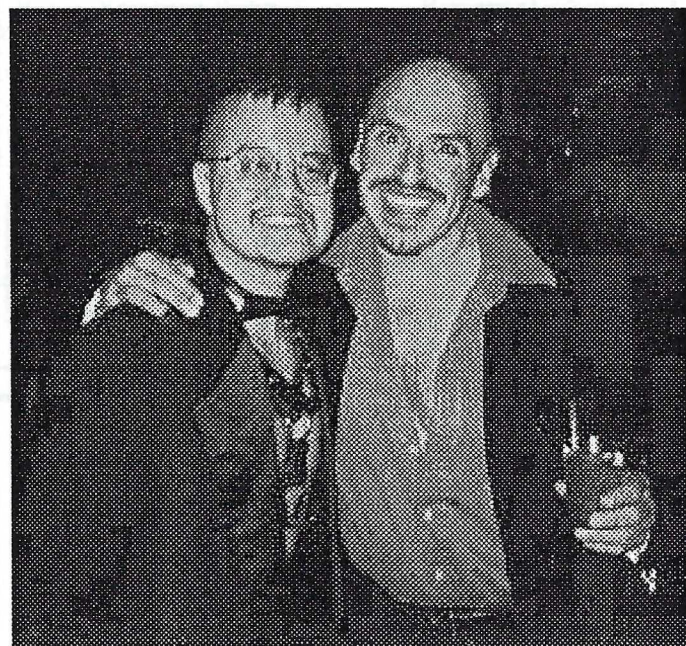
In 2nd grade she started each one of us in private piano lessons. I took up the trumpet in 4th grade and integrated in French horn in 7th grade. I focused solely on French horn since high school and have been actively performing with the UC Davis Symphony Orchestra since 1986. I have also performed with the Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra, Diablo Symphony Orchestra, Diablo Valley Orchestra, Los Medanos College Concert Band, Cal State Hayward Concert Band/Wind Ensemble and Orchestra, LMC Music Educator's Band, Danville Community Band, Timbuktones and the Cal Aggie Alumni Marching Band-uh as well as various chamber ensembles and musical pit orchestras.

Music allows me to express my emotional side which is not always evident in my scientific occupation of radiologic technology. I can experience soaring through the sky, marching through foreign lands or rage at the death of a loved one. I've gained an appreciation for different people, places and times in American history as well as other countries. Those who compose and for whom compositions are written all have so much to learn from and can be shared with others.

Physical pleasure is also an important part of live music performance. I love to feel the floor vibrate as I perform as well as when I'm sitting in the audience. My breathing and body temperature are also affected in conjunction to the piece at hand.

I usually get out of breath and break a sweat when in performance. This is a definite signal that I've put into the music as much as I can and that the performance was a success.

Check out the UCD Symphony web page at: www.hector.ucdavis.edu/ucdso/default.html for concert information, our trip to France, guest artists and the members' pages.



Announcements!

Premieres on May 31, 2003 at 9:00 PM
Showtime Presents Controversial Film

'SOLDIER'S GIRL' - A CRITICAL LOOK AT THE 'DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL' POLICY

Showtime premieres *Soldier's Girl*, a film based on the true story of a young soldier who fell in love with a transgendered nightclub performer. Directed by award-winning director Frank Pierson, the film had its world premiere at this year's Sundance Film Festival.

Soldier's Girl stars Troy Garity ("Bandits"), newcomer Lee Pace, and Shawn Hatosy ("Outside Providence") and features Andre Braugher ("Homicide: Life on the Street").

Soldier's Girl recounts the story of Barry Winchell (Garity), a 21-year-old Private First Class who fell in love with Calpernia Addams (Pace), a beautiful transgendered nightclub performer. The movie details their relationship against the growing animosity of Winchell's roommate, Justin Fisher (Hatosy). Fisher ignites anti-gay sentiments in the barracks, which ultimately lead to Winchell's death in 1999 by a drunken fellow soldier.

The film is produced by Linda Gottlieb ("Dirty Dancing," "Citizen Cohn") and Doro Bachrach ("Citizen Cohn," "Truman"). *Soldier's Girl* was written by Ron Nyswaner ("Philadelphia," "Mrs. Soffel") who also serves as the film's co-producer. The film is a Bachrach/Gottlieb production.

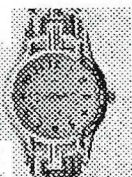
IMPORTANT WEBSITE UPDATE!

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

soozn@141.com

XLentJewelry.com

Your source for quality women's fashion jewelry **in hard to find extended sizes!**



Rings (sizes 10 to 13),
 Large-size Watches & Bracelets,
 Necklaces and More!



Single White Male Heterosexual Crossdresser SF, early 50's; Sensitive, Intelligent, Integrity, Sense of Humor, Seeks genetic woman any age, open-minded, understanding, intelligent, for relationship:

PMB 769, 633 Post Street, San Francisco, CA 94109-8215.

Paid Advertisement

May's Birthdays

| | | | |
|------|-------------------|------|--------------------|
| 5/01 | Valerie Cross | 5/14 | Phyllis Fink |
| 5/01 | Susan Agles | 5/15 | Cindy Martin |
| 5/01 | Sylvia Finak | 5/16 | Vera Sepulveda |
| 5/01 | Alicia Kenwood | 5/18 | Rhonda Shaw |
| 5/01 | Cindy Mckay | 5/19 | Nikki Rillingale |
| 5/02 | Consuela Valdes | 5/20 | Terry Ryan |
| 5/04 | Melanie Okubo | 5/21 | Robyn Smith |
| 5/09 | April Brennan | 5/23 | Angela Pidge |
| 5/09 | Gracie Thoreson | 5/25 | Tianna Marie DeVil |
| 5/10 | Alicia Chan | 5/25 | Marielle Valence |
| 5/10 | J.F. Schimmel | 5/28 | Nicole Cook |
| 5/10 | Amanda Gonzales | 5/28 | Siobhan Ellis |
| 5/12 | Joyce White | 5/28 | Magan Regiani |
| 5/13 | Sallie Hunt, LMFT | 5/30 | Jane Bolig |
| 5/13 | Serena Anderson | 5/30 | Chris Silver |

Many Happy Returns of the Day!

Coming in July!

PFLAG Chosen as 2004 Beneficiary

MISS DIVA INTERNATIONAL 2004 FINALS

International Female Impersonator Competition

Los Angeles, Ca - Rising Stars Productions, producers of the 2004 "Miss DIVA International Pageant" have announced PFLAG will be the beneficiary of this years show. A portion of ticket sales of this year's Awards Show will go directly to PFLAG and its local chapters.

The lavish spectacular will be staged in the most glamorous resort town in the world, Palm Springs. The pageant is scheduled for July 3-7, 2003. Professional Female Impersonators are expected from the United States, Mexico, Canada, Europe and Japan. The show will be taped for a future television special. Contestants are still welcome to register.

"Miss DIVA International Pageant" is unique in the world of female impersonator competitions. It is the only pageant who's rules state that all performers must be physically males and cannot have had hormone therapy, implants or any physical alterations to enhance a female physical illusion. It is also the only competition that includes an exotic lingerie contest in its judging.

Contestants will compete in various competitions including show-stopping Talent, fierce evening gowns and of course, our special highlight, the exotic lingerie competition. There is also a division for Plus Size competitors. "Miss DIVA International" 2004 winners will share in a prize package valued at over \$5,000, including wardrobe, make-up and cold hard cash. A panel of experts and celebrity judges will be on hand to crown the world's greatest DIVA. New contestants will be accepted until June 1, 2003.

If you are interested in competing in the 2004 competition as a "contestant-at-large" or purchasing tickets to our show, please contact www.MissDIVAInternational.com, the DIVA International hotline at (818) 464-DIVA for an application or by email at RSTARPROD@AOL.com.

ANNEMARIE ST. JOHN

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.



Takin' Care of Biz...

TGSF BALANCE SHEET

(March 21, 2003 through April 21, 2003)

Assets

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Cash | \$2,674.33 |
| Event Equipment | |
| Decorations | \$1,000.00 |
| Food Service | \$200.00 |
| Office Supplies | \$50.00 |
| Total Assets | \$3,924.33 |

Liabilities

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Accounts Payable | \$4,155.63 |
| Educational Fund | \$0.00 |
| Taxes | \$0.00 |
| Insurance | \$0.00 |
| Utilities | \$0.00 |
| Operations | \$0.00 |
| Total Liabilities | \$4,155.63 |
| Equity | (\$231.30) |
| Total Liabilities & Equity | \$3,924.33 |

Monthly Income Statement

Revenue

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Membership | \$555.00 |
| Advertising | \$275.00 |
| Cotillion | \$0.00 |
| Donations Received | \$926.00 |
| Social | \$0.00 |
| Education | \$0.00 |
| Outreach | \$0.00 |
| Halloween Party | \$0.00 |
| | \$1,756.00 |

Expenses

| | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| Cotillion | \$500.00 |
| Halloween Party | \$0.00 |
| Big Shew | \$0.00 |
| Pride Parade | \$0.00 |
| Social | \$0.00 |
| Education | \$0.00 |
| Outreach | \$0.00 |
| Newsletter | \$317.18 |
| Operations | \$218.70 |
| Donations Paid | \$0.00 |
| | \$1,035.88 |

Net Income **\$720.12**

TGSF DONATIONS

**Our Friends Who Give
as of April 21, 2003**

| | |
|--|----------|
| Wendy Munn | \$100.00 |
| Nicole Mossinger | \$50.00 |
| Roshelle Cunning | \$50.00 |
| Stephanie Ann Blythe | \$250.00 |
| Jo-An Torres (I Love It! Boutique) | \$63.00 |
| Roxy Carmichael-Hart | \$50.00 |
| Michelle Hoffmann | \$20.00 |
| Rachel Hill | \$40.00 |
| Felicia Elizondo | \$328.00 |

Bless You and Thank You for Caring!

CONTACT TGSF!

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Calendar **www.tgsf.org**

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

Heart To Hart with Roxy

Note: I wrote this article back in February before I had an inkling that I would be President. I thought I would share it with you, unedited, so that you would get a sense of what TGSF has meant to me.

WHAT'S A NICE KID LIKE YOU DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?

Not that this title is particularly relevant to anything, but I have always wanted to use it.

If you are currently looking at this article, chances are that you are a member of TGSF. Or, if you are not a member, you may have picked up the *Channel* at one of our events. If you are a member, then you probably realize that this being April, membership renewal time is just around the corner.

As you consider your renewal or perhaps new membership, I would like you to take a moment and reflect on what membership or participation in TGSF has meant to you. What if there were no TGSF? Would you have been able to walk proudly as a debutante in the Cotillion? Would you have competed for Miss TGSF? Would you have had a joyous Christmas dinner at the Tarragon? Would you have marched in the Pride Parade? And most importantly, would you have met a wonderfully supportive group of friends who have encouraged you and helped you? Perhaps.

Then, again, perhaps not. I know that for me, if there were no TGSF, I would not have had the opportunity to do any of the activities I mentioned above. I know that at best, I may have dressed only occasionally or I might not have gotten out at all. I might have stayed home alone. I might not have been Roxy at all. I just don't know.

But TGSF was here for me, as it has been for many of us. I know the affect that being a member of this organization has had on me. I know that participation in this organization (and RGA and DVG) has given me the strength and the encouragement to move forward. It has given me the confidence to not only be a member of the ExCom, but to also compete for Miss TGSF 2004. It has given me the opportunity to do something I love, which is to write (thank you Ayme). I have grown not only as a woman but also as a person. I find myself to be more loving, more accepting, more compassionate and more tolerant of others. I want to hold my hand out to every girl out there who is alone, afraid or unsure and tell them "Come with us. We will help you." I doubt that any of this could have happened without TGSF in my life. And I know I have said it before but the support network that I have received has been wonderful. I know I would not have received that without TGSF. And this is why I have dedicated myself to doing whatever I can to making sure that TGSF continues to be there for all of us.

I observe how TGSF treats the new girls. Every one is always greeted with a smile and a hug. Every one is made to feel welcome and part of the family. Every one is made to feel as if she belongs. To me, that is the ultimate beauty of this family. It is that love, that acceptance, that support that eases the transition into the person you were meant to be.

As I write this, the ExCom is currently looking at a variety of new membership benefits. You will probably be informed about them long before you read this article. I know that after the holidays, the Cotillion, paying taxes and the general state of the economy, our purses are somewhat empty. But I promise that if you will renew or begin your membership, the benefits will be returned to you several times over.

And maybe the title of my article was relevant after all. Because the "place like this" has allowed me to be me. I can't think of a better purpose than that.

HOTLINE TO HEAVEN

In my President's report, I noted that sometimes I would need to address you as your sister, not as your President. This is one of those times.

I have heard some people wonder whether we matter. Sometimes, I admit, I have wondered it myself. When I see how few people show up at events, when I see memberships decline, when I see few people stepping up to run for office, I wonder "do we matter?"

As I stated in my President's report, I have been answering the hotline for the last few months. This isn't something that I asked to do; it's something that Rachael Janelle thought I would be good at. I didn't really know what to expect. After a few months, however, I am more convinced that we most assuredly do matter. A lot.

I have taken calls from all over the country. Most are asking about TGSF. Those are the easy ones. Some ask "where can I get hormones", "are there clubs I can go to?", "I need shelter", "I'm afraid for my brother". Those are a little harder. I usually go to my list of references (which is sorely in need of updating) or the Tranny Guide, or other resources of which I am aware and help as best I can. And then, there are the calls such as the one I had last night; the calls that make you numb.

A young woman (my age) called from Kentucky. She was 125 miles from Lexington, no friends in the area, no car, rejected by her parents for whom she moved to be near, afraid to venture out for fear she'd be laughed at, pointed at, or worse, beaten up. Mind you this is someone who had SRS 26 years ago. She was so lonely and so unhappy. She wanted desperately to move back to the Bay Area. As I listened to her story, tears began streaming down my face. I was touched deeply by her pain and her agony as I tried to assure her, through my own tears, that she was not alone and that she mattered to me.

The lady was looking for someone who could give her a line on housing. Although I do not have knowledge of that, I gave her the name of an angel named Tiffany Woods, who I know has done some research. But as the call went on, the lady kept couching her remarks with "if I get back there, I am so depressed". I told her that when she got back her, she should come to TGSF and she would be welcomed and hugged and loved and made to feel as part of the family. And then she said (and I cannot write this without crying), "Now I have a reason to live because when I get back there I know I can see you." After she hung up, I sobbed for 10 minutes before calling my own angel named Rachael Janelle who comforted me. I called the lady back and we talked for another hour about all kinds of things.

The point of this story is that *someone* was at the other end of that phone when she called. *Someone* touched her and cared enough about her to let her know she mattered and was important. *Someone* was there for her when she needed it. Any one of us could have returned that call. The point is that *someone* did.

How many times has one of us felt like she did? How many of us have felt so alone and unhappy that we wondered whether we wanted to go on? How many of us have been in that position? I will bet many, if not most of us. When that happened, weren't we glad that there was a TGSF to which to turn; a TGSF that would hug you and welcome you and love you?

TGSF is more about the fancy dinners and the floats and the tiaras. It's about a community - a very strong community of people who need and are needed. It's about our sisterhood. It's about the place where we can come to where we can feel welcomed and safe and loved. The calls from that lady, and the *hundreds* like her must NEVER go unanswered.

So, do we matter? Ask the woman in Kentucky.

PAULA-JO HUSACK, MA, LMFT, CGP
LIC. #MFC27864

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Valerie Igl, Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist
<http://members.aol.com/valigl/page/feministtherapy.htm>
valigl@aol.com 510-527-5662

Readers Respond

TGSF FUTURE

By Jamie Faye Fenton

It's been almost 10 years since Jamie emerged and joined TGSF, or ETVC as it was known then. Both have changed in unimaginable ways. When I started, ETVC met at the Chez Mollet. Ginny Knuth's health had begun to fail. We had about 400 members, and each of the Outreach, Social, and Education committees not only had chairpersons, but members. Cindy Martin was the President.

So much has changed. After years as a waif, we now meet at the Blue Muse. Membership has dwindled. We lost Barbara, Ginny, Nancy Ann, and Janis. The world changed too. We went from maybe 50 computer bulletin boards to, as of today, 793,000 indexed web pages on Google. Through many of our efforts, everyone now says GLBT rather than GLB.

I served on the Executive Committee for about 18 months as Secretary, starting in 1994. I have long considered running again for President or Vice President. The biggest issue for me is living 50 miles away - a situation that I am working on changing.

I look at the state of the club and see both possibilities and problems. There are more social, education, and outreach possibilities for TG people than ever before. Much of the TGSF leadership will be turning over soon. I feel TGSF has to change to adapt to the times. Here are some possibilities to consider.

Simplify Things

Our membership is smaller and the service mix we now deliver has changed. We should be able to slim down to a simpler Board of Directors. We also need to take a hard look at what our service mix is, and how it integrates with the other agencies in San Francisco.

The TGSF Executive Committee was designed for our mission years ago. Perhaps it can be reorganized to be more efficient and less taxing on its members.

Go Virtual

TGSF should conduct its affairs, as much as possible, using telephones, email, and on the web. This will reduce the need to travel as well as open up participation.

The Channel should be produced using a content management system and essentially be a frozen, edited rendition of the electronic presence, printed out.

Have Fun

Try to combine business with pleasure. Make sure there is some sort of celebration involved any time we get together. Make it cool to work on TGSF projects and people will want to do exactly that. Our Awards Night should be a big deal. It was in 1994.

Hold the Cotillion Somewhere Else

Making any money at all at the Design Center is extremely difficult. Typically we lose \$2000-\$4000. They keep the entire proceeds from the bar and the facility rent is high. This is in contrast to earlier years where we would make \$2000-\$6000 and give a sizeable check to charity. We need to move.

This list is just for starters, and I am sure many other TGSF members have good suggestions. Times have changed and TGSF must as well. Let the discussions begin.

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Beauty Boost

by Wendy R. Schultz

SKIN 101

This month's column is devoted specifically to the function of skin. There's more to the skin than meets the eye. It's not just a canvas on which to apply makeup and hold in our bones. In fact, it is the largest human organ, and consists of a complex network of hairs, nerves, blood vessels, sweat glands, sebaceous glands, and sensory apparatuses for heat and cold. Collagen gives skin structural support for cells and blood vessels. Elastin gives the skin its elasticity. As we age, both the collagen and elastin weaken, thus causing the skin to lose moisture and resiliency. There are several things one can do to prevent further skin damage, and help improve the condition of the skin.

Hydrate and Protect

What you've heard about drinking water is all true. Our bodies are 65% water, and our skin is 50-75% moisture. Drinking water daily to replace lost moisture not only hydrates the skin cells, but also flushes impurities from our bodies. Water helps to keep skin clear, and helps replenish fluids lost from exercise and hot weather. All types of skin need hydration from within as well as moisture applied topically. Dry skin needs extra moisture daily, and acneic skin can become more irritated if it isn't moisturized or hydrated properly. A good moisturizer will help hydrate the skin and seal in much-needed moisture. Sunscreen also protects the skin and prevents sun damage later in life.

Your Epidermis is Showing

The epidermis is the outer layer of skin. It's the layer that we show to the world. The epidermis actually consists of six layers that are constantly making their way to the surface. The innermost layer, called the stratum germinativum, makes its way to the surface every 28 days, thus allowing new skin cells to generate from beneath. This is why we find dust in our environment. A great deal of dust particles are actually dead skin cells. The dermis is the innermost layer of skin and consists of two layers, and is closest to our blood supply. This is why what we eat and the health of our bodies play a huge part in the look and feel of our skin and its health. It is also why changes in our skin are so noticeable, particularly where hormones and acne are concerned.

Product Review

The product of the month is Extra Strength Cleansing Gel from Peter Thomas Roth. It's a concentrated cleansing gel that removes makeup and impurities from the skin. It can be used both morning and evening, and is excellent for oily, combination, or problem skin. A little goes a long way, so an 8 ounce bottle lasts. 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.

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.

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.

The Ask Master

MARGARET CHO Q&A w/ CD

PlanetOut
March 31, 2003

Q Margaret, Queen of All Things Faggoty, I love you. You help keep me sane — or at least comfortably well balanced. But I'm in desperate need of your advice.

Ever since I was 4 years old, I've dressed in women's clothes and wanted to be a girl. Back then, I put on my mother's bras and wore the neighbor girl's clothes during sleepovers. I fantasized when I was young about growing up to be a woman, and I had my wedding and my family all planned out. I always hung out with the girls. Since I was 9 years old, I've dressed in drag for Halloween.

I have secretly worn my mother's roommate's clothing. I have stolen dresses from friends without them knowing, just because I wanted to wear them. I pluck my eyebrows to look feminine. I stare in the mirror for hours on end, just imagining that my body looked like a woman's. I told my mother for years, almost daily, that I wanted to be a girl. (She denied even knowing I was gay when I came out — puke!)

My problem is that I have decided I want to be a drag queen, but I don't think my body will let me. I'm full of testosterone. My body was made in a bear cub way. I have a huge rib cage. I am covered in hair from head to tail. If I shave the hair off, I break out in bumps. I have size 12-wide feet. My voice is kind of deep, but I can work that. I have the attitude and the entertaining styles. I've got great hips, I can get in better shape and I have the walk down.

Another disadvantage is that I'm 16 years old and in northwestern Virginia. I am completely out of the closet with my aunt and uncles (my guardians), with friends and at school. I am pretty damn popular, which is surprising, considering I live in a conservative military community. I have gotten past those hurdles. Now I really just need help with this drag queen thing. I have a name, an act and all kinds of other stuff picked out, wardrobes and all. I just really need some advice on how to get to where I am going. Please help me; I'm losing my mind!

Patrick

Cho Answer:

A Grrl, you are a supernova just waiting to explode in sparkly lip gloss, glittery magenta mascara and teal eye shadow, burning a dynamic rainbow across the midnight sky. Arch that eyebrow and hold that beautiful face up high so that everyone can see you — your glamour, your magnificence and your truth.

Drag is what we all wear. Drag is not just a man in women's clothes, convincing everyone he knows "what it feels like for a girl." Drag is who we are to the rest of the world and, ultimately, who we are to ourselves. I am in drag 24/7. I wear my diamonds, false eyelashes (on the bottom and the top, honey) and Fendi lambskin thigh-high stockings (in chocolate, because black got so tired it had to go to bed), just to pick up dog shit in the yard. I live my drag, even though I am a woman already.

Throughout an extended childhood of misery, being told I was ugly, fat — not pretty enough to be a girl — I tried to disappear and fade into the scenery, like that octopus that suddenly turns into a rock when that underwater camera be comin' by. Then, I was adopted by some drag queens who saw the supernova swirling in me and decided to set me off! They put me into some platform shoes, a scarlet red flamenco dancing dress and striped stockings and launched me into hyperdragspace. Which is exactly where you need to go.

What you are born with and who you were told you are has little to do with who you decide to be. Who cares if you are biologically male? To me, you are the most gorgeous Miss Diva Beava femme fatale that ever worked the runway. Your vagina is in your mind, where a true pussy should reside — no matter what gender you are. Gender is an art form and drag is the medium. You are the canvas, painter and muse all in one.

Use what you have to your advantage. Big rib cage equals resounding voice — as unforgettable as Natalie Cole, Billie Holiday and Bessie Smith. Body hair can be worked into your act. Do not try to be shavin' or waxin'! Please. If you must, Tend Skin is a pretty good product that eases the irritation — but if you have that much fuzz just wear it like the fabulous fur Ben Affleck gave J Lo. Make mine mink!

I got me some wide ass feet, girl, with my biscuit heel that is so dry it needs some gravy, and my toes so crooked-y and thick with fungus that the



Connectivity - Ground Breaking Issue

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AMONG FEMALE-TO-MALE TRANSGENDERED PERSONS ADDRESSED

Nearly a third of female-to-male (FTM) transgender persons have been forced into mental health treatment against their will, according to a new survey released this week by FORGE (For Ourselves: Working Gender Expression) and published in *Connectivity*.

Ninety-six persons — most of them FTMs, along with a sprinkling of SOFFAs (significant others, friends, family and allies) and male-to-female (MTF) transgendered persons — answered the comprehensive, 19-item mental health survey. Available data and analysis covers the prevalence of mental health conditions, the level of severity of those conditions, rates of suicidal ideation and attempts, types of and reasons for mental health treatment, the perceived relationship of transness to mental health conditions, the impact of hormone use on mental health conditions, types of coping strategies used, the extent of mental health insurance coverage, and the extent to which having a co-existing mental health condition influenced therapists' willingness to write a letter allowing the transperson to obtain hormones or surgery.

The survey results are published in a groundbreaking, 56-page double issue of *Connectivity* focusing specifically on the mental health issues, concerns, and coping strategies of FTMs and SOFFAs. The issue also includes:

- First-person articles and poetry about living with trauma, paranoia, other people's "scripts", autoimmune hypothyroid disease, bipolar disorder, and issues youth face in accessing care;
- Articles on the mental health needs of female partners, parents and children of transpeople, those with trauma histories, and those who are going through a gender transition;
- Articles on spiritual, body and energy, and self-esteem approaches to mental health;
- What to look for in a therapist, and a review of what one national mainstream mental health group tells its constituents about "LGBT" mental health needs.

Connectivity is produced by FORGE (For Ourselves: Reworking Gender Expression) — a national education and support organization focusing on the needs of those in the FTM sphere and SOFFAs. Upcoming topics and surveys will be on sexuality, "only" space, hormones and rituals. *Connectivity* is available free as a community service of FORGE at www.forge-forward.org

nails just look like beach glass. But do you think that stops me from working those Blahniks and Zanotti pumps? No, it does not. EBay has great deals on big sizes for ladies with "alternative" feet, like you and me.

You have already battled so much and gone so far for someone as young and Virginian as you are. Your popularity in your community, and the acceptance from your family, should only confirm to you that your star power can change the way people think about gender, sex and identity. Opening people's minds and hearts is what we are all here to do, in one way or another. And you are doing it already by just being you.

So in the words of another immortal drag queen, "You betta work!" About your act: Learn the lyrics, don't lip sync — and if you don't do either, do such a bad job at both that it becomes a hilarious parody of bad drag. Play with makeup and clothes. IT IS SO FUCKING FUN! You don't need to spend a lot. I have bought used makeup at the thrift store, picked up old pumps from out of the garbage and scanned the obituaries for the names of fagulous old eccentrics, so that I could have a heads up on the estate sales. I'm not proud about it or anything; I'm just proving a point. Glamour is not purchased with money, but with the currency of the heart, a beauty that has no rules and love of self beyond regulation and societal control. Go over the top. You're halfway there.

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS

By Rachel Miller

Perhaps the gravest problem facing many lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered or questioning people is the fear that we are alone. It might seem obvious to the outside observer that there are many people in these situations. However, when you are mired in the midst of a discriminatory situation, there is frequently an overpowering feeling of aloneness. The feeling may not be rational, but the feeling is most certainly real.

Many of us have been treated poorly by our family, our friends, our church or our government. We think that no one knows how we feel. We think that no one knows the problems that we face. We think that no one can help us. We think that no one will support us. We think that no one will stand by us if we tell the truth. Many of us have turned to drugs and alcohol to escape the effects of this treatment. Many of us carry deep emotional scars that require strong medications to provide temporary relief. Some of us have resorted to the ultimate escape of suicide.

What we need most is someone who understands our plight, cares about us and offers support. When we find such a resource, they become a virtual lifeline for us. In recent years, the Internet has provided a growing number of such support resources. Because of anonymity and ease of access, it has become the most effective vehicle for delivering support information. It is an unbelievably powerful force to calm our feelings and help us find hope and support and peace. It is now our primary place for finding lifelines.

This message is an appeal to existing lifelines to become more robust and interconnected. It is also an appeal to encourage potential new lifelines to emerge.

Additional Documents

We need online access to as many articles, books, brochures, pamphlets, papers and speeches as possible. Any given document might speak the exact words that are needed by a hurting person at a critical time. Providing a brief extract of the contents of a document and grouping like documents in some sort of categorization scheme are also extremely helpful techniques that enable searchers to find what is of greatest value to them.

I have just finished updating my web site to reflect 5 different series of articles:

- We Hold These Truths - Confronting societal and spiritual discrimination
- Planting Loving Seeds - For Christians who feel excluded because of their differences
- The Femme Mirror - Understanding for heterosexual male transvestites
- Spouses & Partners - Helping couples deal with cross-dressing issues
- Our Gender Family - Creating a healthy and unified gender community

Would you review your web site to determine what additional documents might be included and how they might be presented in a more user-friendly manner?

Enhanced Links

Nearly every web site has a list of links to other related sites. No single site has all of the resources needed by LGBTQ people. However, I believe that all the information we need is stored somewhere on the web. The trick is how to find it. We need to go beyond alphabetical listings of related links. We need to develop strong interconnected ties with each other. Links should include a sentence or two about the contents of the linked site. Links should be grouped into categories so that comparable sites are listed together. Wouldn't it be great if an LGBTQ person could find one site and from there be able to reach every other site through a series of well-defined links?

I have just finished updating my web site to reflect links to 11 categories of support resources:

- Links to Spiritual Support Resources - Churches, ministries, TG Christians, denominational support organizations, reading list and articles
- Links to Social Support Resources - Cross-dresser support groups, professional help, support & informational resources, spouses and children

Would you invest the effort into upgrading the links on your site to bring us all closer together? If you don't currently have a web site, consider starting one even with the most basic information. Some of the finest resources started as very small sites and have grown in value over the years. Whether you are an individual or an organization, you have some information that is of value.

Remember - your actions are critical because these lifelines actually save lives!

I will be giving two programs at the Walnut Creek United Methodist Church in June. On **June 8 @ 11:00** (with my wife Marsha) - Meet a Cross-Dresser and His Wife. On **June 22 @ 11:00** - Deuteronomy 22:5 - Is It An Automatic Condemnation of Cross-Dressing?

Shirley Faire

Us!

Once again, it is our job to save the world from itself.

We saved Europe from the Nazis and Japan from the Japs. It took a long, long time, but we saved the Russians from the Soviets. We couldn't save Rwanda; but that was Africa, and it didn't even export cocoa beans, did it? Recently, we saved Afghanistan. Now we are saving Iraq. Tomorrow, who knows! Why do we do it, we ask ourselves? Because we are good. Because we care. Because...we are us.

We don't wage war for ourselves. We wage war because we care. We can't help ourselves. When we see evil, we deal with it. Just go in there and do it, dammit! That's how we are.

It's like the movies, see, or Dagnet, and we are the good guys, the cops, the peacemakers. We are the good guys because we don't blow ourselves up to blow others up. We give candy bars to starving children and urge them to brush after every meal. When we bomb, we only destroy military infrastructure. Sure, every now and then we have a "whoops!", but our only purpose is to kill the evil dictator and obliterate his weapons of mass destruction with ours.

The rest of the world is jealous. They wish they could go into any country they wished and bend it to their will. They wish they were us. But only we can be us, because only we are us. Because we are us, everybody else is them. Because we are us and our hearts are pure we can judge which countries are fit to be left to fend for themselves and which require our guidance. And which must be bombed into the Stone Age to be saved.

Everybody, all the rest of them, certainly need our guidance, but not all to the same degree. Most are capable enough to struggle along on their own using us as a model for how they should be. They may protest, but we know better. We are us. And that makes all the difference.

There was a time when there wasn't any us. Everybody was a them. The world was a bleak place. People did not know how to live because we weren't there to tell them. They made terrible mistakes and never seemed to learn. They had kings and emperors and witch doctors and everybody had a stick stuck in his nose and got terrible infections, or sported a powdered wig on his noggin and never took a shower, or something just as silly. A turban. Whatever. The best you could say for them is that they were ignorant. They didn't know better because we weren't around to tell them.

Yes, some of them had the Bible, but they were illiterate or misguided, like children driving automobiles. Dangerous to themselves and everybody else.

Thank God for the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and all that back in seventeen something something, because, well, now we are here, and everybody is much better off, whether they want to admit it (which they would if they had any sense), or not. If they did, they would be like us, which is still not the same as being us. Which they're not. And so, from time to time, we must save them from themselves. It can be a thankless job, but we're used to it. After all, we're us.

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: soozn@141.com

PROFILE - Theresa Sparks

TRANSGENDER SAN FRANCISCAN MAKES HISTORY AS WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Ray Delgado, Chronicle Staff Writer

It was quite an entrance by anyone's standards. A silence fell over the crowded floor of the state Assembly in Sacramento last week as lawmakers and their staffs slowly realized what they were about to witness. Heads turned as Theresa Sparks nervously made her entrance along a walkway on the Assembly floor, the first transgender woman ever to be honored as an Assembly "Woman of the Year."

As uncomfortable as she was to break down that barrier, it was a journey that the Nob Hill resident was more than happy to take as part of an ongoing battle to raise transgender awareness for people in the mainstream. "After my bio was read, there was no question that I had 400 pairs of eyes on me," Sparks said. "There was an instant where I was uncomfortable but my position is to never be ashamed of who I am. I made it a point to make eye contact with people, on both sides of the aisle."

Sparks, 53, was relieved to see big smiles and thumbs up from various lawmakers, many of whom made it a point after the ceremony to congratulate her on the distinction. But she also saw a few heads quickly turn away as she made eye contact while walking down the hallway, a reaction she has come to expect during the eight years she has lived as a woman.

Sparks never intended to become an activist when she made the decision to shed her life as a husband and father of three, but it's a position she has embraced after becoming more comfortable in her life as a woman. Born and raised in Kansas City, Sparks enjoyed dressing up in women's clothing from a very early age but fought those urges as a young man.

A Vietnam veteran, Sparks got married in 1971 and had three children before he told his wife about his inner turmoil in 1980. Sparks and his wife quickly separated and later divorced. He began a process of intense therapy and an electric shock treatment in an attempt to suppress his desire to live as a woman.

Many counseling sessions and another marriage later, Sparks finally realized the only way he would find inner peace would be to live as a woman. A trial period led to a full-time existence as a woman by 1997 and Sparks traveled to Thailand three years later for sexual reassignment surgery.

She settled in San Francisco in 1997 to blend in easier, increase therapy and find work. She ran up against what she perceived as discrimination when she was turned down for at least 100 jobs during the dot-com boom, despite her background as an environmental services executive.

"I thought with my experience, I would be able to find something really quickly," Sparks said. She eventually found jobs as a taxi driver, a bank teller and a census taker before landing her current job as a financial manager of Good Vibrations, a \$15 million corporation that specializes in sex toys and publishing. She found love along the way, settling into a three-year relationship with a freelance journalist.

Sparks became an activist soon after her move to San Francisco and compiled an extensive resume of causes that resulted in her state assembly honor. Since 1999, she has lobbied the San Francisco Board of Supervisors for transgender rights and medical benefits, chaired a task force that addressed issues of police sensitivity toward transgendered people, organized vigils for transgendered murder victims and founded the Transgendered Political Caucus in 2000 to advise local politicians about transgender issues. She currently serves as co-chair of the Alice B. Toklas LGBT Democratic Club after lobbying the group to have its name include the words "bisexual and transgender."

Her extensive work for transgender causes prompted Mayor Willie Brown to appoint her to the city's Human Rights Commission in early 2001, where she serves as chair of the LGBT advisory committee. "She has a lot of knowledge about gender identity discrimination and was very instrumental in drafting new (sensitivity training) protocols for the police department," said Larry Brinkin, co-manager of the committee.

Sparks also worked extensively on election campaigns for Assemblyman Mark Leno, D-San Francisco, the man who named Sparks the "Woman of the Year" from his district, calling her a trailblazer.

Although Sparks has been recognized for her work in various San Francisco circles, her trip to Sacramento last week was the first time she had left the comfort of her home town to be paraded in front of a slightly more conservative crowd. The anxiety was worth the payoff, she said.

"The community really needs some type of figures or models to look at and to understand that it's OK to do this and to live your life how you feel," Sparks said. "I think role models are very important."

JAY LENO, NBC FUEL 'DEHUMANIZING' OF TRANSGENDERS

The National Transgender Advocacy Coalition (NTAC) issued a statement today, criticizing the National Broadcast Corporation (NBC) and Tonight Show host Jay Leno today for highly insensitive remarks disguised as humor in his nightly monologue.

Calling it "Prime time dehumanizing of transgenders," the chair of NTAC, Vanessa Edwards Foster, admitted that Leno might not write all of his material for the monologues. "However, he does have final decision over material that he feels is inexcusable," she added. "In this instance, Jay Leno felt it was okay to belittle transsexuals."

Last month, MSNBC hired blatantly homophobic and transphobic talk show host Michael Savage. Savage is a radical conservative who fires potshots at anyone not straight, white male and staunchly conservative. But the recent comments from Leno indicate a mainstream trend of acceptance of insensitivity toward the transgender community.

In his March 31 monologue, Leno, arguably the country's best-known late night talk show host noted a male-to-female transsexual honored in as Woman of the Year in California Assembly District 13 by Assemblyman Mark Leno (D-San Francisco). The talk show host is no relation to the openly gay assemblyman.

In his monologue Jay Leno commented that the California Assembly "awarded a man who had a sex change as its Woman of the Year. When 'he' accepted the award, 'he' said there was a part of 'him' that didn't want to accept it ... but that's gone now."

In a statement, NTAC board chair, Vanessa Edwards Foster said, "In a country where no positive accomplishments of transgenders are ever reported for fear of promoting a "transgendered lifestyle," it's curious that belittling humor of these same people is openly welcomed. Jay Leno's remarks took what was a historic recognition for an accomplished transgender community leader and summarily diminished them with insensitive humor.

"We're a community that's afforded few heroes, and little hope. Destroying what little positive impact our community makes, simply for the purpose of gratuitous laughter, serves to objectify transgenders and crushes individuals' hope.

Foster acknowledged that Leno does not write all of his material. "But he does have the final decision regarding what he uses," she said. "Leno obviously felt it was okay to belittle transsexuals." "Coupled with the bombastic blasts from the Michael Savage show on MSNBC, it is easy to denote a trend of dehumanization being broadcast to the nation from this network. It speaks to transgenders that we're deemed 'different' enough to be fair game for any cheap shots fired at will. For others who take umbrage with such 'different' groups as transgenders, it also leads to a ready detachment of humanity.

"Some of this detachment of humanity was evident at a house party last October in the murder of a transgendered California teenager, Gwen Araujo. Pre-trial testimony of the case showed that 17-year old Araujo was brutally beaten and bludgeoned by four young men. At one point, as she sat battered and bleeding on the murderer's couch, she was ordered to get off of it because she was dirtying it with her blood.

"Even though the teen, a male-to-female transsexual, pleaded to have her life spared, she was beaten with a frying pan, choked, strangled with a rope, and had her head smashed with a shovel. Her killers then drove to a remote area near Lake Tahoe, buried her body in a shallow grave, and then stopped at a fast food restaurant for breakfast. None of the partygoers alerted authorities.

"As Gwen's mother Sylvia Guerrero lamented, they treated Gwen as if she wasn't human. Indeed this was inhuman violence, but it is only the end effect. The cause begins when one is allowed to detach humanity from transgenders and other minority groups. NBC with their choice of programming, and Jay Leno's choice of seemingly harmless humor, implicitly perpetuate this lack of any human quality allowed transgenders.

"We implore NBC, and its parent corporation General Electric, to exhibit more responsible concern in their choice of programming. We also request Jay Leno and his writers on the Tonight Show to practice more responsible awareness in their choice of material, and more sensitivity to the impact that has on the targets of such humor. As one wouldn't make tasteless public commentary about other political, ethnic, religious or even sexual groups with blithe disregard, we simply ask to be provided the same consideration."

TRANSGENDER RIGHTS BILL APPROVED BY CA ASSEMBLY

Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist of the Lambda Letters Project, expressed his delight that AB 196 was approved by the California Assembly on a preliminary vote of 41 in favor, 34 opposed and 6 abstentions. The opposed and abstention votes may change, but the 41 votes are rock solid. So the bill now goes to the California Senate. AB 196, introduced by Assembly Member Mark Leno (D of San Francisco), would ban employment and housing discrimination against transgendered people in California.

Hinman noted that Lambda Letters has been pushing for this legislation since 1998. It has cosponsored three bills to ban discrimination against transgendered people. The first two bills (AB 2142 introduced in the year 2000, and AB 1649 introduced in 2001) were approved by the Assembly but failed in the Senate.

This year the members and friends of the Lambda Letters Project have delivered over 9,500 letters and E-mails to the Assembly in support of the bill. Hinman vowed that Lambda Letters will continue to deluge the legislature and the governor with letters in support of the bill. He added he is hopeful that, this year, the bill will become law.

The Lambda Letters Project is California's oldest statewide organization lobbying on behalf of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and intersexed community. It helps people write letters to elected officials on these issues and also on HIV/AIDS, issues of concern to people of color, and women's issues. It delivers well over 200,000 such letters each year.

People wishing further information on the Project may visit the Project's web page at www.lambdaletters.org, send a request to LambdaLP@aol.com or call (916) 728-1261.

Federal Appeals Court Says Schools Must Protect Gay Students from Harassment

SAN FRANCISCO - In a case brought by the ACLU of Northern California, the national American Civil Liberties Union and the National Center for Lesbian Rights, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals issued a historic decision today which holds school officials liable for failing to protect students from anti-gay harassment. The court held that a school must take steps to eliminate harassment when it learns that lesbian, gay and bisexual students are abused at school.

"This decision affirms that in the public schools, all students deserve the same protection from school authorities," said ACLU-NC staff attorney Ann Brick. "This decision is long overdue. Finally, it's clear that schools can no longer stand back and turn a blind eye to the kind of debilitating harassment that so many lesbian, gay and bisexual students face every day," said Kate Kendell, Executive Director for the National Center for Gay & Lesbian Rights. Matt Coles, Director of the Lesbian and Gay Rights Project of the ACLU added, "The court made it very clear that going through the motions is not enough. Schools have to really deal with the problem of anti-gay harassment."

The decision comes in a lawsuit brought on behalf of five high school students in Santa Clara's Morgan Hill Unified School District who charged that school officials refused to take any action to protect the students from ongoing anti-gay harassment. The students, four girls and one boy, were repeatedly abused both physically and verbally. One student was hospitalized after a group of male students shouted "faggot" and other homophobic slurs while hitting and kicking him at a school bus stop in full view of the bus driver.

A female student, Alana Flores, found a pornographic picture taped to her locker. A handwritten note attached to the photo read, "Die, Die, Dyke, bitch, Fuck off. We'll kill you." When Flores sought help from the school and asked for a new locker, the principal said, "Yes, sure, sure, later. You need to go back to class. Don't bring me this trash anymore. This is disgusting."

The case, Flores v. Morgan Hill Unified School District, will now return to the federal district court for trial. The students are represented by James Emery and Jill K. Ginstling, of Kecker & Van Nest, LLP, the ACLU-NC, the National ACLU Lesbian/Gay Rights Project, and the National Center for Lesbian Rights.

HMO SUES CA OVER SEX REASSIGNMENT ORDER

by Matt Johns

365Gay.com Newscenter, Los Angeles Bureau

(Los Angeles, California) One of the largest health care providers in California is suing the state to prevent paying for a transgendered woman's sex reassignment surgery.

Health Net Inc. was ordered by the California Department of Health to provide the woman, identified in court documents only as P.M., with the surgery after the company turned her down.

P.M. appealed to the Department of Health and an administrative law judge agreed with her doctor that the surgery was necessary. That decision was upheld by the Department of Health and Health Net was ordered to proceed with the surgery.

The company is under contract with California to provide health care under the state's Medicaid plan. Health Net suing the state to have the order reversed. The company says sex change operations are not medically necessary.

Brad Kieffer, a spokesman for Health Net, said private health insurers routinely exclude coverage for gender reassignment operations. "Under these circumstances, we think it right and appropriate for us to seek a reconsideration."

A Los Angeles Superior Court judge will decide if the case can go ahead. Until then P.M.'s surgery is on hold.

TG SUES ASHCROFT

by Doreen Brandt

365Gay.com Newscenter, Washington Bureau

(Washington, D.C.) A transgendered government worker is suing Attorney General John Ashcroft and others for job discrimination.

Tracy Nichole Sturchio who works as a Border Patrol specialist says she is not permitted to wear a dress to work, is denied the use of the women's bathroom and has been subjected to continual sexual harassment and workplace discrimination.

Sturchio has filed a discrimination suit in U.S. District Court in Spokane, Washington. She names Ashcroft; Border Patrol Chief Gustavo De LaVina and Michael Garcia, commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Sturchio has been employed by the Border Patrol since 1991 and has worked at the Spokane office as a telecommunications specialist since July 1998. She has undergone sex reassignment surgery but her suit does not say at what point during her employment that occurred.

The lawsuit seeks \$500,000 for compensatory and punitive damages, along with an unspecified amount for mental anguish and emotional distress.

FIRST TG CANDIDATE TO RUN IN JAPAN

by Peter Hacker

365Gay.com Newscenter, Asia Bureau Chief

(Tokyo) In a landmark decision a transgendered woman will be allowed to run for office in her corrected sex, even though under Japanese law she is still considered a male.

She will be listed on the ballot for Tokyo's municipal government under her chosen name of Aya Kamikawa. When Kamikawa, 35, presented her candidacy documents to an election administration committee she left blank the box for sex.

Local officials referred the question to the federal government, which ruled she could run as a female, but all official reports and records of the poll will refer to her as a man.

Kamikawa is on a hospital waiting list to undergo sex reassignment surgery later this year. But even after the surgery is complete she will continue to be officially recognized as male on her family register, the official document the government uses for all identification.

Japan is one of the few major industrialized nations which does not have transgender rights. The term transgender is not used. Rather, TGs are referred to as people "suffering gender identity disorder."

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B.C. Must Pay For Sex-Change Surgery

HUMAN RIGHTS TRIBUNAL SAYS TRANSEXUAL DISCRIMINATED AGAINST

By Neal Hall, Vancouver Sun

A transsexual B.C. man is pleased that the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal has found the provincial government discriminated against him by refusing to pay the cost of completing his gender-reassignment surgery.

Tribunal member Judy Parrack ordered the health services ministry to pay almost \$30,000 for previous operations done in California, plus the cost of completing the surgery and \$6,500 compensation for injury to the dignity of the complainant, Louis Waters. Waters, 44, is a female-to-male transsexual who lives outside the Vancouver area with his wife and two adopted children. He is self-employed and has lived as a man since the early 1980s.

He estimates it will cost \$93,028 Cdn — in addition to the \$30,000 the government has already been ordered to pay — to complete his gender-reassignment surgery in California. Female-to-male surgery is not performed in B.C. The cost to be paid by government for the final stage of surgery is to be negotiated, Waters' Vancouver lawyer Allan McDonell said Thursday. "He's very pleased," the lawyer said of his client, who declined an interview request. "He's actually spent more than \$100,000 Canadian so far." That includes flights to and from California, drugs, operations and post-operative care in California.

McDonell said his client wanted to remain anonymous, but Waters filed his complaint to get proper compensation and hoped to set a precedent for other people seeking to have female-to-male surgery. "He didn't want anyone else to go through what he's gone through," McDonell said.

Waters and his wife had to borrow heavily to pay for the first- and second-stage operations, he added. Waters wasn't able to complete the surgery because he couldn't afford it. He testified at the tribunal that once he started the process of gender reassignment, he realized there was "no going back" but never thought he would be left without a penis.

After participating in the required gender identity clinic program at the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry in Toronto, he was approved for gender-reassignment surgery, which involves a number of steps, including phalloplasty — the creation of a penis by plastic surgery. He went to California for the first and second stages of surgery, but the B.C. health ministry would only pay the physicians' fees at the rate as if the surgery had been performed in B.C., which was substantially less than the amount Waters paid.

Waters filed his complaint to the tribunal in 1997, alleging that the B.C. Medical Services Plan discriminated against him and denied him a service or

facility customarily available to the public because of his sex and sexual orientation, which contravened Section 8 of the Human Rights Code.

The tribunal found there was discrimination and ordered the health ministry to pay Waters \$29,749.21 Cdn for medical services already received, \$644 Cdn a day for the days Waters was at the Recovery Inn in California, \$1,000 for legal expenses incurred as a result of the contravention and \$6,500 for compensation for injury to Waters' dignity.

The government is reviewing the decision before deciding whether to appeal, said Tara Wilson, a public affairs officer with the ministry of health services. The tribunal was told that B.C. provides coverage for male-to-female reassignment surgery, but considers phalloplasty to be experimental surgery and does not provide coverage for female-to-male surgery not performed in B.C. This is not the case in Alberta, which provides coverage for phalloplasty (\$24,740), penile implant (\$8,095) and testicular implants (\$2,845).

Most provinces across Canada do not provide coverage for phalloplasty, although Quebec provides coverage in exceptional circumstances approved by the minister of health, and Newfoundland provides coverage on an individual approval basis if a candidate is assessed and recommended by the Clarke Institute.

The tribunal heard evidence that Waters had a difficult childhood and adolescence, including depression and two suicide attempts, one after he moved to B.C. in his late teens. Since he reported being uncomfortable with his body, doctors recommended reduction mammoplasty, which he had in Victoria in 1981, paid for by MSP. But the surgery didn't help, Waters testified. He felt he was a man, so he began living, dressing and working as a man. He changed his name in July 1985. In March 1988, he was issued a new birth certificate reflecting his sex as male. On June 18 of that year, he married.

When Waters was told that no surgeons were doing phalloplasty in B.C., he began looking in other provinces. Unable to find anyone doing the surgery in Canada, he contacted a California surgeon, who provided a quote of \$47,000 US for the required surgeries, provided there were no complications.

He submitted the quote to MSP, which said in a March 1, 1995 letter that it would pay an estimated \$2,998. After consulting the California surgeon in July 1995, Waters received further, higher estimates, due to complications: \$29,200 US for the first stage of phalloplasty and \$37,650 US for the second stage. In September 1995, Waters had the first-stage surgery and testicular implants in California.

When Waters returned to Canada, his lawyer wrote to MSP seeking reimbursement of \$41,563 Cdn in medical expenses, which was only a portion of what Waters had paid. On Feb. 12, 1997, MSP said it would only pay for physician services up to B.C. rates. Waters said the restriction to medical services being paid at B.C. rates did not apply to him because phalloplasty was not being done in B.C., so he filed his human rights complaint.

COURT DENIES TRANSGENDER CUSTODY

By Gary Barlow, Staff writer
Chicago Free Press

Illinois transgender advocates called a Cook County judge's decision April 8 denying custody of a child to a transgender man "unfair" and "sad." "It's sad that transgender people have to go through all of this," said Lorraine Sade-Baskerville, founder and director of transGenesis Social Services. "We are still invisible."

The case involved a couple, not identified by name to protect their child, who married in 1985. The husband reportedly did not disclose to the wife prior to their marriage that he was a transgendered man who had received hormone therapy but had not undergone surgery to alter the female genitals with which he was born.

The couple remained together even after that was disclosed and in 1992 had a son through artificial insemination. Both parents were listed on the insemination contract and birth certificate. The couple separated in 1998 and the child, who lives with his mother but has continued to spend time with his father, says he wants to live with his father. Cook County Public Guardian Patrick Murphy, who reviews custody disputes on behalf of the children involved, argued in court that the man is the better parent and the child loves him and wants to live with him.

But Cook County Circuit Court Judge Gerald Bender said the man's gender identity was relevant. The husband was a woman under Illinois law, Bender said, and since same-sex marriages are illegal in Illinois, the couple was never married and the father has no legal standing to seek custody. "The parties' purported marriage is invalid because the Legislature has determined that a marriage between two individuals of the same sex is prohibited in Illinois,"

Bender said. Bender nonetheless ordered continued regular visitation between the boy and his father.

Neither the father nor mother commented after the ruling but Murphy said he plans to appeal, arguing that the couple signed an insemination contract to have the child and raise him. Murphy said that contract and the boy's best interests should dictate the outcome of the case, not the issue of same-sex marriage. "We're disappointed," Murphy said. "It was a very complex case."

Catherine Sikora, a transgender advocate on the board of Equality Illinois, said American society and the legal system aren't keeping up with evolving family structures. "We'll see a lot more of these cases," said Sikora, a transgendered woman who is also a parent. "It's not as simple as this nuclear family, Donna Reed thing. When we go to parents' meetings at the school, there are gay parents, straight parents, single parents, transgender parents. The culture's changing and social institutions like the courts may not know exactly what to do."

Sikora noted female-to-male surgery is more difficult and less successful than male-to-female. Having surgery, she said, should not determine what gender a person adopts anymore than biology does. "That's an ancient model," Sikora said. "What if you say, 'I don't want to have surgery but I want to live this way.' Why shouldn't that be acceptable?"

Sikora said her daughter has no issues with her gender identity and expression—"She's blind to it." "It's terribly unfair for this man who's been raising this child," she said. "It's just not right."

Sade-Baskerville said the ruling highlights the need for legislators to remedy discrimination based on gender identity. "They can take our tax dollars," she said. "But we can't get married. We're still not recognized. Why should we have to beg for protection?"

NTAC Applauds El Paso TG-Inclusive ERA

The National Transgender Advocacy Coalition (NTAC) applauds the El Paso City Council, which voted unanimously on Tuesday, April 9, to expand its anti-discrimination ordinance. The amended ordinance will ban discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, which Rep. Sumrall described as "one's gender being misidentified at birth."

The city council set out to amend the ordinance to add "sexual orientation" to its protected categories in the nondiscrimination code after a city council representative mentioned that a grant the city was seeking required certain language protecting gay and lesbian citizens. She explained that a number of companies require a prohibition against sexual-orientation-based discrimination before they will provide grants or donations. Lisa Turner, a transgendered city council candidate, asked the council for the additional coverage of "gender identity. The council agreed, and the gender identity amendment faced no opposition.

The newly passed ordinance declares it unlawful to "refuse, deny or withhold from any person, for any reason directly or indirectly relating to the race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, color, religion, ethnic background or national origin of such person, any of the accommodations, advantages, facilities or services offered" to the general public.

"The fact that I have been attending city council meetings and participating in those meetings for the last two years made it easy for them to accept the gender identity addition," stated Turner, a steering committee member of the Texas Gender Advocacy & Information Network (TGAIN). "It was during this time that all council members and the Mayor got to know me," she added.

"This is what I believe allowed the gender identity provision to be added without opposition. Even my opponent for the District 8 seat on city council [Anthony Cobos] was for it and did an interview on TV saying [that] we cannot discriminate against the citizens of El Paso."

"Lisa has been a pleasure to know and work with," said Rep. Sumrall, who has visited with Turner often, since Turner's announced campaign for city council. "I felt this was the right time [election season] to put this on the agenda - it passed 8-0," she added.

"Let this ordinance serve as a reminder to everyone," said Rob Knight, president of El Paso's LAMBDA GLBT Community Services. "[that] we should focus not on differences but instead emphasize our common humanity." "We took a small but important step yesterday," said a modest Turner, preparing for her upcoming campaign in El Paso.

"NTAC celebrates the El Paso City Council for taking a courageous stand to make all El Pasoans equal," said Vanessa Edwards Foster, Chair of NTAC. "The ordinance victory with gender identity included was testament that equal consideration for all people is what resonates with Americans - even in archconservative Texas."

All three nondiscrimination ordinance votes in Texas since 2001 - Houston, Dallas and now El Paso - have included gender identity and passed with healthy support. Houston's ordinance only extends to city employees. "The El Paso City Council showed what leadership, vision and principle are all about," Foster added.

Underscoring El Paso's commitment to its citizens, Rep. Sumrall added that coverage for domestic partners on the city's insurance plan will begin in January 2004. "I am thrilled and honored to have been the one to lead the charge on this very important addition to our discrimination ordinance - at last, all members of our community have equal protection," said Rep. Sumrall about the ordinance victory.

"It was only the right thing to do."

HAWAII HATE CRIME LAW TO COVER TGs

by 365Gay.com Newscenter Staff

(Honolulu, Hawaii) By a vote of 39-8, the Hawaii House of Representatives has passed legislation adding "gender identity or expression" to the state's hate crimes law. The bill has already passed the Senate and Governor Linda Lingle is expected to sign it this week.

Hawaii's existing hate crimes law covers race, religion, disability, ethnicity, national origin and sexual orientation. Anyone convicted under the statute would automatically receive a longer sentence.

"The victory in Hawaii is a victory for the entire gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) movement," said Lorri L. Jean, Executive Director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. "It shows that legislators really do care about the rights of everyone in our community and that trans-inclusion does not hinder a bill's passage."

The NGLTF Transgender Civil Rights Project worked with state activists including "Civil Unions - Civil Rights Movement," the Hawaii GLBTQI advocacy organization which led efforts to pass the bill.

"Today, from the mainland we celebrate another victory for transgender people this legislative session," said Lisa Mottet, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's Transgender Civil Rights Project Legislative Lawyer. "This year may be the best year yet of passing transgender-specific and transgender-inclusive laws at the state level."

Earlier this session, the New Mexico legislature passed two transgender-inclusive bills, an anti-discrimination bill and a hate crimes bill, which now await signature from Governor Bill Richardson. Other transgender-inclusive bills are making progress in California, Illinois and Washington State.

Last year, Pennsylvania passed a transgender-inclusive hate crimes law and New Jersey passed a transgender-inclusive safe schools law. Also last year, fourteen local jurisdictions, with a total population of 18.4 million people, enacted anti-discrimination laws with transgender protections or added transgender protections to existing anti-discrimination laws.

New Investigation Launched In Philly TG Murder

by 365Gay.com Newscenter Staff

(Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) After months of inaction by Philadelphia police District Attorney Lynne M. Abraham has announced an investigation into the killing of a transgendered woman. Nizah Morris, 47, was found unconscious on a downtown street last December. She died of massive head injuries two days later in hospital.

Facts about the case have been hard to come by. What is known is that Morris had been picked up outside a local gay bar by a female police officer who said that the woman was drunk. She offered her a courtesy ride home but the officer said Morris wanted to get out of the car at a downtown intersection. She was found near death on the street a short while later by another officer.

Police ruled the death a homicide but gay community leaders say police have done little to solve the killing. Gay activists accused investigators of doing a sloppy job, while police have said they just have no clues and no witnesses.

Hundreds attended a vigil held in Morris' honor in January. Abraham's decision to open the case follows a series of hard hitting articles in Philadelphia Gay News. The paper asked why Morris was given a ride by cops, if she was not under arrest. They also reported that the officer who gave the ride did not file a police report. Another question that remains is just how drunk was Morris that night? Police have refused to release toxicology reports

Morris' mother, Roslyn Wilkins, said she hopes this new investigation reveals some answers. "Nizah was a human being and she was murdered," she said. "I am very anxious to find out what the investigation will bring." The problems surrounding the case have prompted the police to revive a committee designed to advise the police commissioner on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues.

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Remember Gwen Araujo!



ARAUJO DEFENDANT SEEKING BAIL AGAIN

By Robert Airoidi,
Argus STAFF WRITER



HAYWARD — The attorney for one of three men facing murder charges in the death of Eddie “Gwen” Araujo has filed a motion to get his client released on bail again.

Michael Magidson, who was released on \$1.68 million bail Feb. 7 but ordered back into custody March 18 after the conclusion of an eight-day preliminary hearing, is trying to get that order revoked. Michael Thorman, Magidson’s attorney, filed the motion last week in Oakland Superior Court. Oral arguments are expected later this month.

Deputy District Attorney Chris Lamiero, who has been assigned to the case, said he hasn’t seen the petition. “(I’m) not in position to comment,” Lamiero said. “I’m not aware of the specific issues raised.”

Meanwhile, Magidson, 22, of Fremont, and Newark residents Jose Merel, 23, and Jason Cazares, 22, pleaded not guilty Wednesday to murder charges that include a hate-crime enhancement. They were ordered last month to stand trial for the murder of Araujo, who was killed six months ago during a party at Merel’s Newark home.

The transgender teen was punched, kicked, kneed, hit over the head with a can and a frying pan and beaten with a shovel after the three men discovered Araujo — also known as Lida — was biologically male.

“Everything went as expected (today),” Lamiero said. “There were no surprises.”

A fourth man, Jaron Nabors — who turned 20 Wednesday — accepted a deal with prosecutors in exchange for his testimony at the preliminary hearing and during the upcoming trial. He has pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter and will serve 11 years in prison.

Magidson, Merel and Cazares are scheduled to return to court April 23 to discuss scheduling for any motions defense attorneys may want to file and possibly to discuss trial dates.

Lamiero wants the trial to start as soon as possible. “I would like to see it get out to trial within a year,” he said. “The sooner the better.”

The Superior Court judge in Oakland could deny the bail motion, or send it back to Superior Court Judge Mark Kenneth Burr for reconsideration. Burr ordered Magidson back into custody in March, calling him the “primary actor” in the killing.

Sylvia Guerrero, Araujo’s mother, said everything is going as expected. The three were ordered to stand trial and Magidson is back in custody. Now she wants the trial to start soon. “The sooner the better so my family can begin to heal,” she said.

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TRANSGENDER MURDER TRIAL WILL BE CLOSELY WATCHED, LAWYER SAYS

MICHELLE LOCKE, Associated Press Writer

The trial of three men accused of killing a transgender teen in a fit of rage moved closer Wednesday when the defendants pleaded innocent to murder charges.

A judge found probable cause for the three men to stand trial last month, leading to their arraignment Wednesday. Trial could start nine months to a year from now, said Gloria Allred, attorney for the victim’s family.

The case arises from the Oct. 4 killing of Eddie “Gwen” Araujo, a 17-year-old who was born male but lived as a woman. The killing took place after Araujo’s biological identity was unmasked at a party at the home of Jose Antonio Merel, 23, in Newark, a San Francisco suburb.

According to testimony at a preliminary hearing last month, Araujo was slapped, choked, beaten with a skillet, tied up and strangled in an attack that lasted for about two hours. Her body was driven to the Sierra foothills about 150 miles east and buried in a shallow grave.

Attorneys for the three men argued that they were carried away by passion after finding out that the beautiful girl they knew as Lida was a man. Two of the defendants had had sex with the teenager believing her to be a girl, according to court testimony. It was after those encounters that suspicions arose about Araujo’s gender, leading to the Oct. 4 confrontation, witnesses said. However, a judge rejected those arguments.

Merel, along with 22-year-olds Jason Michael Cazares and Michael William Magidson all face charges of murder in a hate crime. A fourth man, Jaron Chase Nabors, 20, was also charged in the murder but struck a deal to plead guilty to voluntary manslaughter in return for testifying against his friends.

Once the trial starts, it likely will be closely followed, Allred said. “Many transgender youths are in the closet. They live in fear. They are persecuted. They are humiliated. They are the victims of discriminatory acts and sometimes of violence,” she said. “So there will be many people in this country who are looking at this case and are hoping for justice in this case.”

Sylvia Guerrero, Araujo’s mother, said she is ready for the trial to begin.

PERFORMANCE BENEFITS THE ARAUJO FAMILY

By Rob Kuznia and Robert Airoidi, Argus Staff Writers

NEWARK — Six months after the slaying of Eddie “Gwen” Araujo, the transgender teen’s family is struggling not only emotionally but financially. “It’s an ongoing (financial) problem, but through the grace of God we’re making it,” said Sylvia Guerrero, Araujo’s mother. “We’re not starving, but we’re not rolling in money either.”

Guerrero, 39, still hasn’t gone back to work and is relying on charities, donations and disability checks to pay rent and bills. Meanwhile, students at Newark Memorial High School are doing what they can to ease the pain.

On Friday night, a cast of about 10 performed a talent show featuring nearly 40 songs, dances and poetry acts to raise money for the Eddie “Gwen” Araujo Fund that benefits the family. Titled “One night ... One reason: Gwen,” the show is intended to raise money, but it may also help assuage some of the mental anguish the family has suffered.

Anxiety and post-traumatic stress have caused Guerrero to miss work, she said. She and her two sons are undergoing therapy. The boys, 14 and 11, seem to be doing reasonably well, considering the circumstances, she said.

“I don’t know how they do it,” she said. “I’m having a hard time.” On Friday, performers will begin the 8 p.m. show with a hip-hop song and dance that attempts to capture a “heavenly feeling,” said Weldon “B.J.” Hatter, the 1998 Newark Memorial graduate who is organizing the event.

Choreographed by students Victor Cruz, Kate Lyness and Marcy Shaw, the song entitled “My Pain” captures the silver lining of the tragedy, he said.

“During a break in the song, (they sing), ‘From the bottom of my soul on the feeling of loneliness, I come down to earth,’” he said. “We feel it’s Gwen telling us she’s coming down.” The show may provide Guerrero’s family an emotional break from the stresses of recent developments in the case.

Last month, three men were ordered to stand trial on charges of murder and a hate-crime enhancement when a judge ruled there was probable cause to believe they killed Araujo — also known as Lida — after discovering the teen was biologically male. Michael Magidson, 22, of Fremont, and Newark residents Jason Cazares, 22, and Jose Merel, 23, have pleaded not guilty. A fourth man, Jaron Nabors, 20, pleaded guilty in March to voluntary manslaughter in exchange for his testimony against his three friends. Nabors will be sentenced in May to a maximum of 11 years in state prison.

Araujo’s death has altered the family members’ lives in every way, Guerrero said. The once-avid movie-goers haven’t been to the theater since the killing, she said. “We used to go camping all the time,” said Guerrero, who is on disability through May 5. “I don’t think I’ll be able to do that for a long time.”

Araujo’s body was found in a shallow grave in the Silverfork Campground east of Placerville. “It’s like everything’s at a standstill and the pain in my heart hasn’t left,” she said. “This was my child taken from me and it still hurts.” Hatter said he wants to do everything he can to help.

“The family is going through so much right now... we want something positive,” he said. “We want Gwen to be remembered.”

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