

Channel is White & Read All Over!

The Channel
TGSF
TGSF TransGender San Francisco
TGSF



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	Anne Louise Mortenson
Treasurer	Brooke Jansen
Education	Kara Flynn
	Kelly Anne Marsh
Outreach	Kalani Makanani
	Marla Selby
Social	Aiyana Eveningstar
	Tommie Watson
Miss TGSF 2003-04	Rachel Hill
Mr. TGSF 2003-04	Tyler Fong

Fine Print

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FROM THE EDITOR...



My apologies to our more visually impaired readers for all the 8-point type in this issue. Couldn't be helped I'm afraid. Even had to add a couple pages to get all the good stuff in. So break out the magnifying glasses and wade on in, there's sure to be something of interest to one and all.

Due to timing or whatnot, loose ends are still being tied concerning Cotillion 2004. There's quite a list of folks and organizations that didn't get acknowledged or recognized. And significant chunks of column real estate have been devoted in this issue to rectifying that oversight. Though it's still not entirely clear what the bottom line came out to be, there seems to be some optimism that the event will gamely continue on next year, despite some sensible words from the President last month to the contrary. So I went reaching into the Wayback Machine again. For some reason, past verbiage and sentiment keep calling to me, and my digging through the archives did turn up a few nuggets pertaining to the Cotillion that seem relevant today - to me at least. To you it may be just a case of Ayme going on another of her anti-Cotillion rants again. In either case, here's what I wrote three years ago in my March 2001 column, under the title "Whacking Hornets Nests":

"...TGSF is so wrapped up in producing the annual albatross called the Cotillion, that other services (and we won't even mention the non-existent election process...), have fallen by the wayside. I mean, get real people - it's a beauty pageant! And now we're issuing thick manuals on how to produce one, and an entire year's worth of volunteer time is spent focused on that one night. Four hours of greasepaint and feathers and then the whole laborious process begins all over again. It's starting right now. But what I want to know is, how can a group calling itself TransGender San Francisco and purporting to be all inclusive, continue to support a bloated and out-of-control cash cow that does *nothing* to dispel the stereotypes that TG's are either victims or showgirls? Yes it was a fun evening - I went. I had a good time. But I could've spent less and gotten pretty much the same thing at Asia-SF."

Pretty much sums up how I feel today three years later, and I'm sure there are many of you who'll agree with me. At least we wouldn't have had to drive so far and had more to eat, eh? Although, being a judge this year did afford me an opportunity to get more involved behind the scenes a little, and that was an experience worth repeating. If I get asked to be a judge again, I'd happily accept. While my opinions about the Cotillion aren't news to anyone, I can still leave all that aside and act impartially with respect towards selecting TGSF figureheads. Surprisingly, I even empathized with the contestants and admired their individual visions and collective courage. My hat's off to 'em.

But does the Cotillion really prop us up stereotypically as either "victims or showgirls"? In March 2001 I said, "After all, that's how we're portrayed in the media and on the news. It's either Remember Our Dead, or another nightly showing of Lipsynch And Wiggle at the local watering hole, of which the Cotillion is just a puffed up and polished variation on the theme." I went on to ask, "Do you want a flashy but shallow extravaganza that soaks up an entire year's worth of work and money to pull off, or do you want to redirect those resources into what made this organization great in the first place?"

As I said last month, there are some painful decisions and changes to be made with TGSF's survival in mind. Lately, a lot of you are asking, "where's the San Francisco in TGSF?" Everything's been moved to the South Bay. If it weren't for the monthly "event" at the Blue Muse, we may as well change the bleeding name of the club again to TransGender San Jose! Well, where the leadership resides is where the group collectively hangs its hat. But if event services and facilities are less expensive in the South Bay than can be found in the City, and with the club still trying to pay off a debt from two Cotillions ago, it's a concession to economic reality that must be made, and a small price to pay to keep the club afloat and in existence.

Maybe when things get better, we can start having more events in San Francisco. It's either that or by then we'll have a President and ExCom comprised mainly of City residents. But in the meantime we gotta go with the flow and keep our heads above water. That's the most important thing. But I do need to ask those running for an ExCom slot next month, just what would be so horrific and difficult about NOT having a Cotillion in January, 2005? Couldn't we skip one year and get our financial feet back on the ground? Does that seem unreasonable? I just can't see TGSF mortgaging its future year after year in the same degrading cash-flow spiral, when we could do so many other important things with our resources to further the understanding and acceptance of the transgendered community.

As it is, we seem hell-bent on upholding time-worn and frayed traditions while viewing TGSF history through rose-colored glasses. We should be adapting the knowledge we've gained from years past to the needs of tomorrow, if not towards our very survival today. We should have learned much from our history, but it looks as if we are destined instead to keep repeating it.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Roxy Carmichael-Hart
*A Cotillion of
Extraordinary Magnitude*

Actually, it's about 4 p.m. on Sunday January 25, the day after Cotillion 2004. So much is racing through my head; so much is going through my mind. I am looking at my bouquet of roses and my Joanna Caron silver platter, somewhat overwhelmed and incredibly drained physically and emotionally. But I am happy.

I am happy with the show we did. I am gratified that we did a show that reflected proudly on this community and that the months of planning and sweating and heartache and tantrums were worth it. I am happy that I have the opportunity to be a part of this community, to be your president and to be your sister and your friend.

Where to begin? Of course, we begin by celebrating the selection of one of my favorite people, the lovely Anne Louise, as Miss TGSF. I detected something special in her a long time ago. You have read my monthly diatribes about her and you might be thinking that with all of the praise I have been heaping on her, we might be related or possibly married. Well, all the praise has been well earned and her selection as Miss TGSF certifies that praise. She will be an outstanding Miss TGSF. Her heart is pure, her passion is unequalled and her enthusiasm and dedication is addictive. I love you so much girl and I am so very proud of you. And to top it off, she also won Miss Congeniality. After coming close the last two years, this year she was a winner in spades. Of course, she always has been a winner to me.

And some words of praise for our new Mr. TGSF, Bobby Cheung. I did not meet Bobby until recently and I was impressed with his dynamic personality and character and sense of humor. After talking with him at the Celebration Brunch this morning I am even more impressed with his eagerness to get started. He is already discussing our effort in the Pride parade and eagerly promoted the Red and White Ball, for which he designed fliers. That's commitment.

I want to congratulate Kara Flynn and Siobhan Ellis for being selected as first runner up and second runner up respectively. And to all of the contestants, you are all winners. You did yourselves and TGSF very proud. You all contributed to a show that people will remember for years. You have become a part of history. And my beautiful pink porcelain doll. I love her so much and I was very touched by your gift. I cried like a baby when I opened her. I always thought that you were all special people. I didn't need a gift to prove that but your kindness and thoughtfulness was an example of the kind of people you are.

This column would not be complete without words of thanks to Tyler and Rachel. I don't quite know where to begin. It hasn't been easy and we have had our obstacles but in the end, you came through for us far beyond the realm of expectations. It is my sincere hope that the both of you will stay involved with this community and that we continue to work to broaden our base to reach out to new members. Our 2004 Mr. and Miss TGSF will need your words of advice and counsel and I know that you will help them any way you can.

I need to take a moment to thank Rachael Janelle, Carla Blair and Lenny Broberg for presenting me with the Joanna Caron award. Last year I did not know who Joanna Caron was and I did not even hear the winner's (Lenny) name announced because I was still high (emotionally, I know what you are thinking!) after the debutante walk. But I read her story and found out what she accomplished. It humbled me to receive this award. I felt very small standing next to Lenny, Carla and Rachael. To be mentioned in the same breath as those three exemplary people was numbing. I am sorry for losing my composure. I know I rambled on and probably was somewhat incoherent because I hadn't slept well in days. This touched me in a way that nothing ever has nor ever will. I am honored and will be grateful until my last breath. And although she won't like me to dwell on this, my dress and shoes for this part of the program were a gift from Carla. She also gave me another dress that I wore during the show. She never puts a price tag on friendship, never asks for anything in return. She just gives from her heart. I am proud to call her my friend and my sister.

Speaking of Rachael Janelle (don't I always?), she was a part of this Cotillion more than most people know. Not only did she donate a lot of the supplies like the nametags, the debutante certificates, printing, legwork and phone calls, she provided lots of moral support. She provided a shoulder to cry on, which I used often. Mostly, she provided her friendship and support. She kept me from getting vexed and hysterical and depressed. Although I needed to find my own way, she pointed me in the right direction. I probably did not do everything the way she would have done it but I wouldn't have known how



to do it at all if it hadn't been for her. She hooked me up with Eddie Tavares (who provided the tiara) and with Triple Crown Awards and got me in touch with others whose help was invaluable. And of course she helped honor me with the Joanna Caron award. I will help her all I can as she prepares to become Empress of San Jose.

In my opening remarks I wanted the community to know and to understand what TGSF has meant to me and to every girl that walks through our door. If it can do what it did for me, then it can do the same for others. We have an obligation to make sure that it does. We have the responsibility to make sure that everyone who wants us to exist or needs us, has us. I will do my damndest to make this happen. I will continue to work to make sure that there will always be a TGSF and I will not ever abandon this community.

I was thrilled again with the Debutante and Guys walk. Last year, it meant so much to me when I walked on stage. This year, my role was improvised the night before after consulting with Rachel Hill and Tiffany and I got a thrill from handing the certificates to those who walked. I was pleased to see so many people. Arlene, my friend from DVG, walked. Ari, Keri, Joanne and Tabu, my friends from I Love It, walked. The girls from Alaska, Philadelphia, and London walked. Pablo who came to Pacific Bell Park with us in September, walked. Sara Lee, one of our photographers, walked. Danielle, our first runner up in Cotillion 2003, who helped get the Aztec dance troupe through Pro Latino and who helped Damon on his presentation, walked. The leather boys walked. And Daddy Alan, one of the judges, walked. And Evette, who has been part of our community for 25 years, walked. And so many, many others. I could see the light in their eyes as they hugged me as I gave them their certificates. In many of them, I saw tears of joy. They all walked into the light and I am so proud of them for doing so. I want to welcome them to our family. They are my brothers and sisters forever.

I was so pleased that my friends Arlyne Camire and Wendy Schultz were able to attend. Yes they are my friends but they have also contributed to our community. I know that they received a thrill from being on stage. Next year, they are going to do the debutante and guys walk if I have to drag them on stage myself.

Thanks. How the heck do you thank everyone? It would take reams of paper. First, my thanks here corrects an oversight. Tyler's leather daddy, JD, donated the beautiful hand-made sashes for Mr. and Miss TGSF. They are gorgeous. I had intended to thank him during my recognitions but it slipped my mind. My brain was on overload. JD, from the bottom of our hearts, I thank you for the hard work and for the participation in our show, including helping to coordinate the silent auction. I also forgot to thank the Unitarian Church in Kensington for whom I thought I had a certificate of appreciation but it seems to have vanished. I was delighted to see their representative, Sarah Greeley, participate in the debutante walk.

Susan Laird and her crew - Walt, Marie, Kelly and Brooke - are to be commended for the technical effort. Yes, there were glitches (there are glitches in the Mars Rover that are costing billions of dollars), but the crew worked hard with patience to overcome them. You might not know how difficult it is to handle these tasks but when you have to create something from nothing, which is what they did, you can't help but be impressed by their efforts. They responded to the new venue as if they had worked there for ten years. Well done.

Special thanks go to Susan. She worked on the script and created much of what you saw onstage. She lined up the talent, the wonderful Aztec dancers from Pro Latino (thanks to David Castro for providing these incredibly talented dancers) and as stated above, was responsible for all technical aspects of the show. If we do another Cotillion, I want Susan Laird by my side. I wouldn't dream of undertaking a similar effort without her.

Lenny Broberg and Tiffany Woods were outstanding MCs. They worked well together and the banter from what I heard was great. We had almost no rehearsal time on the Friday night before and I know they just had to wing it from time to time. They are seasoned professionals and it showed. I just finished reading a thank you e-mail from Lenny and that in itself was a touching gesture.

We had eight fantastic judges who had the impossible job of sorting out all of the different presentations to select a Mr. and a Miss TGSF. The also took time out from other responsibilities to help us. Ayme, Daddy Alan, Ray, Connie, Judith, Gwen, Fran and Miss GAPA (I felt funny writing just "Pussy"), thank you for your donation of commitment of time and serious effort. It was obvious that you spent many long hours thinking about this contest and how to select a winner. You did an incredible job.

Madame Steele stepped in at the last minute to act as contestant coordinator. I am very thankful for her work. She got the contestants in line, made sure that everyone was where they should have been and kept things moving backstage. Jo-An Torres from I Love It also worked furiously backstage to help the contestants get ready and assisted several of her girls who did the Debutante Walk.

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TGSF ExCom MEETING MINUTES

Present: President Roxy Carmichael-Hart, Vice President Susan Laird, Secretary Anne Louise Mortenson, Treasurer Brooke Jansen, Education Co-Chair Kara Flynn, Education Co-Chair Kelly Anne Marsh, Outreach Co-Chair Marla Selby, Outreach Co-Chair Kalani, Social Co-Chair Tommi Watson. Guest: Laura Marlowe, Siobhan Ellis, Damon Helton, Bobby Cheung, Donna, Allison Laureano. Absent: Social Co-Chair Aiyanna Eveningstar. At Susan's home on February 8th, 2004. Minutes were approved.

President's Report

Cotillion Debrief. Snaps to all for their good work. Cotillion was a success. Black red or gray ink? We are in the black now \$3400. Outstanding bills. We are going to pay Susan \$1250. Tyler has some outstanding bills. Congratulations on a successful event all around. Everyone did a superb job. We proved we could buck conventional thinking and do something different. We took a chance because we knew we had to and we succeeded.

Last year we looked at the good, the bad and the ugly. Let me tell you that there was no shred of ugly in this Cotillion. Instead we are going to look at the beautiful, the things that worked well, and the things we need to tweak. I don't see anything that we can't overcome.

What worked: People working well together back stage, helping one another, the venue and cooperation of the hotel, the social area, the dressing room, the show was a success, Lenny and Tiffany were great, the after party, the certificates to the debutantes, good handle on our financial status at any given time. Promotion.

What didn't work: Food, not enough at the Cotillion, take what we did Friday for the staff and do it for the Cotillion, sound was a problem in some places, quadra sound next year, we couldn't get in till 6pm, could of promoted after party more, not wait till the end to get personal, back stage coordinator didn't show up, steps to the stage, need people back stage who can answer questions, people back stage who shouldn't be there, not enough people to strike the set.

I am also concerned about the emotional strain on the contestants. We asked them to do an awful lot of work and put them through the ringer a few times and in the end only two were victorious. I was hurt by seeing the disappointed faces and read some of the words because I know everyone tried so hard and gave all that they could. Why do we do this to good people? I am more concerned about that than I am the money.

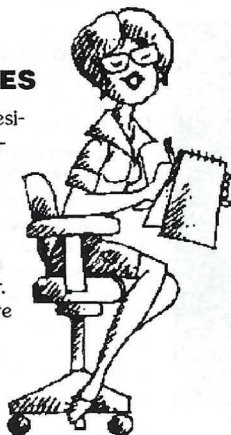
Marla said she wasn't disappointed. Roxy said you need to be yourself, you don't have to live up to anyone else's standard. Kara said when you enter a contest you have to be prepared to win or loose. Not everyone is going to win; in fact almost everyone is going to loose. Siobhan said you are putting yourself in a position that you are going to be judged. You have to be prepared for that. It would have been better at the breakfast if all the contestants would have been recognized again. Damon didn't care if he won or lost, he just loved performing. Bobby loved performing.

Tommi said the show was too long. Susan's timing was basically good. Susan said we started late and ended on time. The break went 30 minutes. Siobhan thought it was good to have the event in a hotel. She would like to see it in San Francisco. She also said that the awards could be given out at the breakfast.

Kelly suggested that any awards given at the Cotillion be approved by the Ex-Com. The Ex-Com needs to discuss the title of the award and why it's being given. She made a motion that any award given at a TGSF function need to be approved by the Ex-Com. Roxy said that the Joanna Caron award is the president's award and it decided by the president, anything else is open for discussion. Kelly agreed to the exclusion. She said we need to know at the Ex-Com meeting before the event what we are officially going to give as the TGSF organization. This would also exclude personal awards. Personal awards could be given as personal awards such as the snap awards. Roxy asked that we amended the motion that Kelly come up with a process for award selection. The motion was seconded and passed with the amendment. There was one person who abstained (Roxy).

Daddy Ray Tilton would like to come to the next meeting. He's interested in helping planning the next Cotillion. Roxy suggested that we wait until the next Ex-Com is elected because they will have the responsibility for the next Cotillion.

Next events for Mr. And Mrs. TGSF. The Coronation on the 28th of February. Roxy put in a motion for getting a table for \$180. The motion was passed. Kelly, Marla and her wife, Roxy and several others will come. March 13th is the San Jose Coronation.



Roxy introduced her ideas for changing the by-laws
VI. OFFICERS.

A. Officers of TGSF -

1. TGSF shall have the following officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Social Committee Co-Chairs 1 and 2 (two maximum), Education Committee Co-Chairs 1 and 2 (two maximum), and Outreach Committee Co-Chairs 1 and 2 (two maximum).
2. The above officers shall constitute the only members of the ExCom. See Section IX Executive Committee.

B Eligibility - Any member in good standing may be an officer in TGSF.

C Holding One Office - Only one member may hold one office at one time.

D Co-Chairs -

1. Co-Chairpersons may fill the Social, Education, and Outreach Offices.
2. In the event only one person runs for either the offices of Social, Education or Outreach, the Co-Chair for that particular committee shall not be filled for that term, unless deemed necessary by the ExCom.

E Terms of Office - Officers shall serve two year terms as follows:

1. The terms of President, Treasurer, Education Co-Chair 1, Outreach Co-Chair 1 and Social Co-Chair 1 shall begin on May 1 and end on April 30 of even numbered years.
2. The terms of Vic-President, Secretary, Education Co-Chair 2, Outreach Co-Chair 2, and Social Co-Chair 2 shall begin on May 1 of odd-numbered years and end on April 30 of odd-numbered years. EXCEPTION: Beginning in May, 2004, the terms of the above offices will be for a one-year period ending April 30 2005, at which time the two year terms will take effect.

F. Removal -

1. **Reasons** - An officer may be removed for, but not limited to, any of the following reasons:
 - a. Gross violation(s) of any part of the Bylaws,
 - b. Breach of confidentiality,
 - c. Breach of fiduciary trust,
 - d. Intentional misrepresentation of official TGSF policy, and
 - e. Any misconduct resulting in liability against TGSF, and
 - f. Missing three meetings during one calendar year.

Discussion; Kara was concerned that people would be reluctant to take on a two year commitment to serving on the Ex-Com. Roxy said that people could still resign anytime they would like. It would give the organization more stability by having continuity over more than one year. She was not putting this out to the Ex-Com for approval but to ask that it would be put out to the membership for consideration. Kelly thought we'd get good feed-back from the membership. Marla made a motion for it to be put out to the membership for a vote. The motion was passed. It will go out with the ballot for the next election.

Resolution of Rachel Hill debt. Requested motion to approve Rachel Hill's proposal. Rachel agreed to a payment of half the debt which would be \$750. And when Rachael Janelle gets her coat back we will have eliminated \$1500 worth of debt. Roxy made the motion and Marla seconded it. Roxy will go get the coat and return it. Motion passed.

Vice President's Report

Susan reported that the database and web data has been passed on. Susan will be doing tech support for the next year.

The Cotillion went well. Susan would like to be technical director next year but we really need a regular director the Cotillion. We have a good script now and we have to make some of the changes we talked about today. I'm happy and we made money on the event. Maybe we can go ahead and maybe go to bigger venue. She was happy with the Marriott. Kelly said they bent over backwards for us. Roxy will praise them in the Customer Service Questionnaire.

Treasurer's Report

Brooke said we have a cash balance of \$4000 and our only outstanding debts are \$600 to the Design Center and \$1250 to Susan. She has to go through all the payments and bills before she can make an accurate assessment. Will give Rachel Hill her money next month. More money in the bank than we have in debt.

Secretary's Report

We need to figure out who is going to be in charge for the database. Kelly suggested we have a separate person for the database. Roxy said that this is the Secretary's job and that if she doesn't take care of it, she can delegate it to

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We had donations galore. Not just donations for the silent auction which was a big hit, but donations of necessities for the show. In addition to the aforementioned JD, Gloria Polo of Printwise donated the program layout (didn't the program look great?), Michelle Fiore and Tommy Benefield donated the flowers for the contestants and my bouquet and corsage, Carla Blair donated gifts for the contestants as did John and Joanne Handa, MAC Cosmetics donated about \$600 worth of makeup and did free makeovers for show personnel (and let me hang in their room before the show). Dawnne Woodie of Castro Gulch donated the door prize. Michael Healey constructed the lovely stage pieces with our butterflies. Everywhere you looked, someone stepped up to ask "Can I help?" And let's not forget the most important donation of all. Time. Most of us are fortunate to have a full time job but took time to perform some role or function for this show. As always, Jackie (the winner of the Rachael Janelle Light award), Laura and Pammy looked beautiful at the front door to welcome our guests.

Carla and Akiko Ellis helped me through my multitude of costume changes. They skillfully maneuvered my delicate dresses through my plethora of jewelry. No small challenge. Carla touched up my makeup and poofed my wig. Akiko helped me with my pink heels - yet another challenge. They made sure that before I went on stage, I looked my best. I think that, thanks to them, I looked better than that.

The San Mateo Marriott was at our beck and call. They helped us every which way they could and when we needed something, it was usually there by the time we hung up the white phone. During this whole process, they worked with us to meet our needs and at the same time, showed incredible sensitivity to our financial situation. I find it interesting that a huge international corporation was more sensitive to our needs than a local San Francisco venue. Something is definitely wrong here. The Marriott provided free rehearsal space, free hospitality suites and free snacks for the MAC suite. And what made it very nice was that the entire hotel staff was very cordial and professional and accepting. I developed such a connection to many of them that when I said good bye this morning, I felt like I was saying good bye to family. I hope we can return for another Cotillion.

So where do we go now? I would like to handle that another time. Today was about celebrating the job well done, about being proud of doing something that everyone liked and something that was a wonderful reflection on TGSF and our community. That's what I am happy about.

What I am most proud of is this: When we took office, our ExCom made a conscious decision that we needed to change for our long-term survival. We made it a number one priority to find a venue that would not financially break us but would preserve the artistic and technical integrity of the event. We succeeded. We were told people would never come to a Cotillion outside of San Francisco. We were sure that "if we hold it, they will come". And come they did. We filled the room. We took a chance and it paid off. Had it failed I was prepared to accept all of the responsibility. And now I happily share that success with all of the ExCom and the Cotillion Planning Committee. In addition to the ExCom that committee included Siobhan Ellis, Silia Hurst, Angela Borges, Walt, Tyler Fong, Jamie McConnell, Sara Roberts, Wendy Schultz and Stephanie Ann Blythe. And I know that I forgot some. I may have forgotten your names but never your contributions.

Today (Wednesday) I drove by the San Mateo Marriott and smiled a winsome smile, just kind of hoping to keep the good feeling going. I know that during the course of the planning, I wished for the Cotillion to be over and done with so that I could get my life back. It's not that I don't have a full life already but I do kind of miss the excitement of planning for the show, the hustle and bustle, and the printer whirring away. I am proud of what we did; proud we made a difference, satisfied with our efforts. We look to hard decisions and new challenges in the next year but for now the good feeling is here and I think it is going to stay for a while. "Come Together" may be over but the good feelings it produced will last forever.

Thank you one and all for a Cotillion of Extraordinary Magnitude! You have our gratitude!

HEY!

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Beauty Boost

by Wendy R. Schultz

WHAT'S YOUR TYPE?

How knowledgeable are you about your skin type and the products you use to care for it? Have you ever had a reaction to a product because it was irritating, drying, or just plain filmy? Knowing your skin type is crucial when choosing skin care products. A product formulated for one skin type can be irritating to another and can cause further problems.

Oily

If your skin becomes oily as early as 10:00 a.m., even after cleansing, then you probably have oily skin. Oily skin has more sebum (oil), and is characterized by visible pores. The oilier the skin, the larger the pores are. It is impossible to shrink pores but is possible to temporarily minimize their appearance with makeup and toners. While this skin type needs moisture like all skin, products in gel form are best, as they don't deposit extra oil on the skin.

Dry

This type of skin has either very small or almost invisible pores. Less sebum is produced, and the skin can be tight, itchy, or flaky. Creamy gentle cleansers and heavier moisturizers are ideal for this type of skin.

Sensitive

This type of skin is very reactive. Even something as innocent as water can make it turn red instantly. People with this type of skin will find that even products labeled gentle may cause irritation. Unscented products are best because fragrance itself can be an irritant.

Combination

This skin type is very common. Most people have some form of combination skin that can contain patches of dryness, oiliness, or sensitivity. A light moisturizer can be used all over, and extra moisture can be applied to the dryer areas. When choosing a cleanser, go with one that isn't necessarily over drying or moisturizing, to keep things in balance.

Normal

Normal skin is the ideal skin type. Younger skin tends to be in the normal range. The pores aren't visible, and the skin produces just enough sebum to keep it from being too dry, yet it manages to keep from being too oily. Products especially formulated for normal skin keep it in balance.

Never the Same Forever

Interestingly, our skin never stays the same all year or throughout life. Skin that tends to be oilier during the summer months can be drier during the winter. Normal skin that you had when you were younger may now be drier. Those with very dry skin may find that as they age, their skin becomes very sensitive. Hormones, age, climate, and health all play a part in how our skin behaves. Knowing what products to buy will help keep your skin in the best possible shape.

Next month - choosing the right product for your particular skin type.

Questions? Feedback? Need help finding products? Send me an email - 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.



Sunday / March 7 / 4:00pm

TGSF ExCOM MEETING

The Next ExCom meeting will be held on **Sunday, March 7** (not October!) at 4 PM at the home of our Vice President, Susan Laird, at 2222 Pruneridge Avenue, San Francisco. A busy agenda is planned and volunteers are needed! Please join your ExCom and help out!

Saturday / March 13 / 5:30pm

AN ENCHANTED EVENING AT THE MYSTERY MANSION

The Imperial Royal Lion Monarchy, Inc Coronation 2004! Doors at 5:30pm, Show at 6:00pm. Mediterranean Room, Hyatt San Jose. See notice on Page 8 for more information!

Saturday / March 20 / TBD

SPRING FLING: TGSF FUNDRAISER AT CARLA'S

Hosted by Carla and the Billy DeFrank Center as a fundraiser for TGSF and the IRLM Court. No further information available at press time, but there may be a flyer accompanying this issue.

Thursday / March 25 / 7:30pm

TGSF END OF MONTH EVENT

The Blue Muse, 409 Gough Street, San Francisco.

Becky from RGA will be coming to the next end of the month to talk about California Dreamin.

As a TGSF Member
*Exercise Your Right to
Vote!*

For all the details on the upcoming election,
please see the notice on Page 14!

Lana's Esthetics

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March's Birthdays

3/00	Jennifer Stroud	3/20	Donna Freeman
3/01	Dusty Prentiss	3/20	Geri Handa
3/02	Nicole Kucera	3/21	Jackie Conner
3/08	Susan Flowers	3/21	Kalani Makanani
3/08	Erika Carter	3/22	Joyce Patterson-Rogers
3/09	Aiyanna Eveningstar	3/23	Shelly Cohen
3/09	Katherine Kramer	3/27	Kathy Ann
3/11	Lucy Ann	3/27	Telzey Ann
3/13	Joan Roughgarden	3/27	DiDi Mau
3/14	Roxanna Rochette	3/28	Evette Roque LaRay
3/19	Mina Schwartz	3/28	Marga Meyers
		3/29	Staci Maria

Happy Birthday To All!

Cosmetics

Nails

Wigs

Lingerie

Cosmetics

Lingerie

Shoes

Fem Fashions

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Wigs

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Serving the Cross Gender
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Calendar - March 2004

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 5:00 PM CCHH 7:00 PM PISSR General Meeting 8:00 PM DVG	2 7:00 PM SCT	3 7:30 PM MPTG	4 7:00 PM DVG RCC	5 8:00 PM PacCtr 8:00 PM RGA	6
7 4:00 PM TGSF: ExCom Meeting	8 5:00 PM CCHH	9	10	11	12 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr	13 5:30 PM IRLM Coronation 2004! 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
14	15 5:00 PM CCHH 8:00 PM DVG	16 7:00 PM SCT	17	18 7:00 PM DVG RCC TG Legal Clinic	19 8:00 PM PacCtr 8:00 PM RGA	20 Spring Fling @ Carla's
21	22 5:00 PM CCHH	23 7:30 PM SCOUT	24	25 7:30 PM TGSF: EOM @ Blue Muse	26 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr	27 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
28	29 5:00 PM CCHH	30	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 Member at a TGSF Social.

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

Update!

TRANSGENDER VETERANS MARCH TO THE WALL

The Transgender American Veterans Association (TAVA) will gather veterans at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, in Washington, DC, on Saturday, May 1, 2004. Organizers hope to draw a significant number of supporters to honor the many transgender people who served our nation with pride and honor.

Individuals or organizations who wish to make donations may do so through the TG Fund. Diane Dale, Co-Founder of The Transgender Fund says, "Through this march, the TAVA is making a profound statement to all that transgender Americans are, and have been since the beginning, an inseparable part of the fabric that made this magnificent democracy what it is today. We at The Transgender Fund are proud to be associated with this event." The main address for the TG Fund is: <http://www.tgfund.org>, and the page specifically for donations to the TAVA event is: <http://www.tgfund.org/page5.html>.

Several outstanding national and local organizations have come forward to publicly support the event, including the Human Rights Campaign (HRC,) the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition (NTAC,) the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN,) and the Puget Sounds, New York City and DC Chapters of the American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER.) Some have already supported this event with donations, including the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF.)

Individuals or organizations wishing to donate services may contact TAVA Special Projects Director, Angela Brightfeather at: projects@tavausa.org. She says, "It is very heartening to see the support from the GLBTS community for the TG Veterans making this March to the Wall. It is a wonderful example of respect and unity that will form a foundation for many more such ideas and goals. This is very special for all of us and especially those TG Veterans who sacrificed so much for our freedoms."

Monica Helms, President of TAVA, encourages anyone – whether transgendered, gay, lesbian, bisexual or straight – who wishes to join this event to register your participation and for a hotel room by going to http://www.geocities.com/tg_vet_march_to_the_wall.

TGSF Thanks Our Cotillion Donors!

Great cotillion! Here's the list of silent auction donors and items. No particular order of importance. Even though we didn't get bids on all the items, we think they should ALL be included:

- MAC (Makeup Arts Cosmetics) 5 gift baskets valued at over \$600
- JoAnne Handa - 3 gift albums (didn't get any bids)
- Denaë Doyle - DVD and VHS "Feminine..."
- Clare Deland - silk scarf (didn't get any bids)
- Dr. Barbara Anderson, Ph.D, LCSW - certificate
- Carla Blair - wig (didn't get any bids)
- VIP Hair & Wigs: Mary Katebl, owner - certificate
- Cameo electrolysis: Angie Cianfichi, owner - certificate
- Siobhan Ellis - DVD player, massager
- Tyler Fong - UC Davis symphony tickets (SOLD), tuxedo (didn't get any bids)
- LeatherSmith: JD Smith, owner - 3 T-shirts
- Gotham Piercing and Tattoo - two certificates
- Our titleholders for 2003 Rachel Hill and Tyler Fong received a thank you gift from JoAnne Handa.
- Our titleholders for 2004 Anne Louise and Bobby received a gift of congratulations from JoAnne Handa and boy tyler.
- All the contestants in Cotillion 2004 received a thank you gift certificate at Different Light Bookstore from boy tyler.
- The sashes for Mr. TGSF 2004 and Miss TGSF 2004 were designed and embroidered by Daddy JD Smith, owner of LeatherSmith, Palm Springs.
- And the winners of the active, formal, talent and final question competitions were presented with a \$20 Macy's gift certificate donated by Roxy Carmichael-Hart.

March 13th!

Rachael Janelle Light is a candidate for the 34th Empress of San Jose IRLM Court.

I'm very honored and excited about being a candidate for Empress. Please come and vote if you are a Santa Clara county resident. If not, just come and have an evening of fun. If you have any questions please call me at 408 509 2321. Thank you for support.

Rachael Janelle Light

The Imperial Royal Lion Monarchy, Inc

Coronation 2004

"An Enchanted Evening at the Mystery Mansion"

Saturday, March 13

Doors at 5:30pm, Show at 6:00pm

Mediterranean Room, Hyatt San Jose

\$25.00/person in advance, \$35/person at the door or at hospitality, Tables of 10 may be reserved in advance

Voting for Emperor and Empress 5:00-7:00pm
in the Mediterranean Center Lobby

California Dreamin is back!



April 22-25, 2004
at
Carla's
and the
Hotel De Anza
in downtown San Jose

Scheduled Speakers include:

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Dr. Joy Shaffer Dr. Stephen Braveman
Dr. Douglas Ousterhout Theresa Sparks
and many more . . .

www.california-dreamin.org



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Meeting Minutes...

Continued from Page 4

another person. The critical thing now, is that we have to find that person now because of the impending ballot for Ex-Com members. Siobhan stepped up to take care of that. She'll work with Susan and Roxy on training.

Kara is getting the mail but won't be down in the San Jose area for a while. Tommi was given the key and will get the mail. Kelly will do the next Ex-Com profile. Bobby and Anne Louise will put something in the Channel as well. Allison Laureano was introduced.

Anne Louise had some ideas for the Pride Parade Float. The theme could be Mid-Summer's Night Dream. Siobhan gave her the idea. She has a friend who does flower shows who would help her. The float would basically be made of foliage and with possibly an arbor. Once we have that we'll have the basic float. She asked Bobby if he liked the idea, since Mr. and Mrs. TGSF usually choose the theme. He said yes. She'll contact Rochelle about the availability of a truck.

Siobhan mention that it's critical that we have more safety monitors. We were lucky to pass last year. Marla could drive next year if she's needed. Anne Louise said the other important thing is the budget. Susan last year said that a typical budget is \$3000. The receipt last year came to that. This is beyond the cost of the truck. Siobhan suggested we have a fundraiser before in order to get money to have the float. She also has some interest from MAC for sponsoring the float. Susan suggests that this is the time to put together some guidelines as to what the size of the sponsors sign would be. It's not necessarily cut and dry but we should have some answers ready.

Anne Louise said we might not have a great expense because we may have a lot of materials donated, we also have the "lawn" from last year and the benches. Susan says we have a good sound system. Roxy said we need to make sure we have monitors and people to staff the possible beer booth and the booth for information. Also manpower for building the float on the Saturday before. Anne Louise suggests Bobby play Puck.

Education

Kara visited a Laser Clinic nearby and is planning an event in March. They belong to a chain and have a history in the transgender community. Kelly has been asked to speak at a class at City College this next Tuesday.

Outreach

Kalani has arranged an outreach presentation on February 12th at De Anza College. It's going to be four sessions, all the way from 9:15 to 1:20. It's going to be a sexuality class and we'll be talking about TGs. Kalani and Nicole will be speaking. We're getting paid for it. As far as next Cotillion, Kalani has two people interested in helping us financially. One will be matching Kalani's donation of \$500.

Marla is trying to get memberships. She needs to always have membership applications or the Channels with them in it. Marla will be checking on the Hot Line. Roxy and Siobhan will help with any problems she has. Siobhan asked if there were ever any training with outreach. Kalani said Sandra Brewer has done some.

Social

Red and White Ball. Susan will set up her audio equipment and lights. She would like a percentage at the door of 30% of net. There was consensus that this would be all right. She'll provide some mikes for the entertainment.

Music and Entertainment. Roxy will be MC. Siobhan will do stand up comedy. We're going to have Tom from the Transcendence Choir, Marla, Kelly and Anne Louise will be doing a novelty musical number. And then at the end Laura is organizing a birthday celebration for Carla. Carla has donated prizes for the Dance Contest.

Food and Drinks. Tommi will be able to help organize food with Carla and Jackie. Carla knows we have a very limited budget this time. Carla wants to go ahead and have a dinner so she'll be making a lasagna. We have wine and beer left over. Need more volunteers for bartending. As for drink tickets, we'll have two tickets for one alcoholic drink and one ticket for a soda or a water. Everyone will get two tickets when they come in.

Decorations. Christmas lights, rope lights and streamers for the Hall. Butcher paper for valentines in Kitchen area - who has magic markers- bring them to party! Need volunteers for putting everything together. Laura said it was important not have food in the large Hall.

Laura had put the information about the Ball on the web. Kelly has it up on our site. Brooke will collect money, she likes it. Roxy will help organize ticket takers. Tommi will make sure we have change for ticket takers. Susan will probably be able to start set up at 1 pm.

Becky from RGA will be coming to the next end of the month to talk about California Dreamin.

Anne Louise has been working on a Social Calendar so we can plan future events. We have to start thinking of what we want to do next. Kelly had a prospect with Uncle Charlie's which is up in the air right now. There is an event on March 20th being organized by Carla which isn't a TGSF event.

Old Business

Kelly asked if we have a criteria for getting a photographer. We had no official photographer but Roxy did ask Autumn. But we didn't hear back from Autumn. Rickie Squires and Sara Lee were in the program. However there was no official TGSF photographer.

Kelly was concerned about a proposal we had from Eve about a party she planned to have that would benefit TGSF. Kelly read the proposal from Eve and thought we potentially lost hundreds of dollars. Kelly proposed that we have the original copy of a proposal given to the Ex-Com members before we make a decision. Roxy said we didn't have a lot of time to make a decision because the idea was given to us a week before the Cotillion and that she had e-mailed each ExCom member the proposal. Susan added that anyone coming to us with a proposal must do so far in advance of the Cotillion. It was added that the night before the Cotillion was a bad time for a fund raiser because at least 50 to 60 people could not attend as they were involved in the show.

Kelly noted that we were given two hospitality suites. One of those was handed over to a for profit organization and they in turn may have been making money. We as a non-profit could jeopardize our status by having a for profit company use space donated to us as a non profit to make money. It was reported to Kelly that there was a sign in one of these suites that had prices on it. Kelly was very concerned that because we have a beautiful and caring community that we treat everyone equally.

Allison said that anything that is donated can not be used for profit for another organization. No advertising or money can be made in association with the donation. If we pay for the facility it is different. Kelly suggested that we help get a deal for a for-profit organization for a suite and then let them assume the responsibility for whatever they want to do. Susan said we must make sure we protect TGSF from any legal problems whenever we organize an event. We can hire someone to provide a service but we must pay them not have them charge. Roxy stressed that everything had been done this way in the past and no one seemed to make an issue of it before.

New Business

Siobhan would like there to be an article in the Channel that would ask for people to send in photos of the Cotillion. Laura and Bobby have photos that they can give to Siobhan. Siobhan would like to get any pictures of TGSF events in the future. Susan has older photos on her hard drive.

Roxy wants to get the Mid Peninsula group started again. We can get a room for \$100 at the Marriott and Roxy will pay the cost herself. Roxy wants some help from TGSF; \$25 a month to help get it started. It will be on first Wednesday of the month. There was some discussion of where it could be held. People have been looking and haven't been able to find another venue. There was a motion made. It will be a TGSF function at first. The motion was passed.

New prospects for the Ex-Com: There will be an announcement in the Channel which Roxy will write and will give dates for applying for those who wish to run. March 25 is the deadline. Allison is interested in the Outreach chair; she wants to establish educational programs that target organizations like police and fire departments in the Bay Area. Damon is considering either Outreach or Education. Siobhan is interested in being Secretary. Eve and Dawnne are interested but were not present.

Existing Ex-Com: Tommi, Social, Kalani, Outreach, Kelly, Outreach. Kalani suggested that we could have 4 chairs for Outreach, one for different areas. Allison would like to see as many chairs as people who have the ability to reach out. Roxy noted that there are only two positions established in the bylaws. Kara, Outreach. Brooke will run for Treasurer if needed. Laura is willing to run for Vice President. Anne Louise, Social.

Damon has put a presentation together that will be presented at Stanford, April 27th, it's a Tuesday at night, 7 to 10 pm. Stanford has two weeks at the end of April that are Queer awareness weeks. Damon will represent FTM, Danielle will represent MTF, Tyler is going to represent the leather community, Jay is going to do intersex. It's free. It's going to be at the LGBT center.

Next meeting - March 7th, 2004 at Susan's 4 PM

Significant Other Support - East Bay

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

Wasn't Tomorrow Wonderful?

By Roxy Carmichael-Hart

"And if you haven't had enough of me, buy the record album, tape or CD" - from "Tapeheads"

You may see a lot of me and my writing in this Channel. Sometimes, I have a lot to say.

We continue to face many challenges in this upcoming year. We have made significant progress in many areas but there are still many things that must be accomplished. I am going to lay out a plan of action for you which is where I hope to take this organization over the next two years (if the bylaws change is approved). During the course of this discussion I am going to name several candidates for your ExCom that I feel are well-suited to meet these challenges. This does not imply that others could not do the job, but this is the team I feel is best to undertake the vital work that we need to do.

1. Continue to get out of debt. We have made significant progress but we are still at least \$2,000 in the hole. We are going to need to hold fund-raisers and moneymaking events, such as the Halloween Party. I will be looking to the Social Committee for leadership on this task. Fortunately, we have two extremely capable individuals running for these positions. First, Anne Louise Mortenson, our Miss TGSF. You already know how I feel about her so I won't repeat all of my gushing praise. However, I feel that it is imperative that Miss TGSF is a part of our inner circle and part of the ExCom. Anne Louise's experience and dedication and commitment to TGSF are unmatched. She has been a vital member of this organization since being appointed to ExCom and we need to have her continue her work. Second, Tommi Watson, one of our current social chairs. Tommi has worked with Anne Louise on the Halloween and Red and White events and is always ready willing and able to do whatever is necessary to get the job done. Tommi is the first with her hand up to help out and to volunteer to assist with Channels. Please support both of these individuals.

2. Cotillion 2005. Since Cotillion 2004 was such a smash, there is sentiment for doing another. In spite of my reservations, I am ready to take on this task. There is even some support for returning to the City. Fine, if it can be done cost-effectively and in way that will provide us with the same advantages that the Marriott did. We did a lot of research and we found that the Marriott was by far the best deal around. The challenge for the new ExCom will be to make as wise and as careful a decision as this ExCom did. Fortunately, we have in our new Vice-Presidential candidate, and individual who is fully capable of leading us in the right direction. Laura Marlowe, president of California Dreamin' 2004, is a level-headed, rational thinker who is going to serve us well. Laura has taken the lead in resurrecting this important event. I have been impressed with her approach on this effort and we will be fortunate to have her as our Vice-President.

3. Continue to reach out to other groups. TGSF must continue to be an organization that welcomes and accepts all who want to be a part of our group. We have been extremely fortunate to have the involvement of Tyler Fong as a conduit to both the FTMs as well as to the leather community. As you saw from their participation at the Cotillion, these groups have supported us. Damon Helton, one of our Mr. TGSF contestants, has stepped forward as a candidate for Education co-chair. Damon has been very involved conducting educational events for students and for the general community. He helped organize an event at Stanford for the end of April, at which I will be speaking. He has exceptional enthusiasm and determination and would be an outstanding addition to our ExCom. His election would also be an example of the diversity within our organization, since he may be the first FTM on our ExCom. I would love to be able to work with him over the next year.

4. Continue and expand outreach and support efforts. As you know, this has been a priority of mine. I am currently working to re-establish the Mid-Peninsula support group and I expect this to start in April or May at the Marriott. Many other individuals have also recognized the importance of outreach and four of them have stepped up to run for our two chairs (though the two not elected have stated they will remain involved). Kalani, Miss TGSF 2002 and current co-chair, has organized an outreach session at

Continued on Page 13

CONFESSIONS OF A DANGEROUS MIND

Parte Troix

By Roxy Carmichael-Hart

Last night I awoke from a fitful sleep, tossing and turning, when I heard the voice. It was soft at first, so I said, "I'm sorry, I can't hear you. You'll have to speak into the microphone". And the voice boomed. "Roxy, you have to tell people the truth". "About what?" I asked. The voice replied. "You must go forth and tell people the truth about what is going on and what the problem with this organization is." "But I'm not Moses for God's sake". "Well I'm not God" the voice replied. "So what does that have to do with it?" "But why me?" I asked. "Because you're the president dummy", said the voice. "You write a column that is read by dozens of people. You speak at meetings and at other groups. You have the power to do what is right." I thought for a minute and said "ok".

Yes I plagiarized some of this from "Network" (and from "Family Guy"). But I did and I do lie awake at nights thinking and worrying about TGSF and the future. It's not so much the organization that concerns me. It's the people who are part of it. The people who need this organization that worry me. What will happen to them if we are not here? What will happen to them if we close up because we can't pay our bills? And where will they go if we cannibalize ourselves out of existence?

I got a lot of compliments on my Cotillion welcoming speech. Many told me that it was moving and inspiring. That is what I had intended. But it was not what I wanted to say.

This last year has taught me a lot and not all good. I had such goals and hopes and dreams all done in by jealousy and ego. Despite the title of the Cotillion, we didn't come together. Far from it. The jealousies and fractures are just as wide and as deep as when I started.

So I decided that at the Cotillion I was going to lay it all on the line. Like Howard Beale, I was tired of the bullshit. I was sick of the cliques and the fights. And so I prepared a wonderful speech. And then, I saw the rehearsal for the Cotillion. I saw that people were working very hard to put this event on. There were no cliques. We were a team. And then I realized that maybe an indictment of the negative was not the best choice for my Cotillion speech. And so at 2 AM the morning of the Cotillion, I rewrote the speech. In my head.

But I am still troubled by the divisions and I do feel the need to say something. So now, I present to you the unedited and uncut version of my speech. In the first part, you will have to imagine me pointing to different members of the audience.

"You are different. And you are different. You are a cross-dresser. You are a TS. You are full time. You are part time. You belong to DVG. You belong to RGA. You are pre-op. You are post op. You shop in that store. You're in the closet. You're out of the closet...."

Labels. We are all fond of labels. Why? To show how "different" we are. But here is the irony. We are quick to celebrate the diversity in our society, and just as quick to reject it in our community. We condemn apartheid in South Africa and Zimbabwe, and we practice it in our own community. Instead of turning to each other for support, we turn on each other because they are "different". Do you know what happens to a species when it cannibalizes itself? It becomes extinct. And that is where we are in danger of heading.

Perhaps no one would care if we became extinct. Perhaps you can get everything you want from the internet. But here is one thing you won't get no matter how hard you try - a hand reached out to you in friendship and support. A hand that will hold you and hug you and guide you as you walk into the light.

If I had not been presented with that hand, I would not be here tonight. I would not have met Rachael Janelle or Jackie or Carla or Jo-An or Donna or all of the others that not only have made me a better woman, but have made me a better person. That is why we must continue to exist and why we must hold out our hands to welcome, accept and love everyone who walks through our door. For every one of you in the audience tonight, there are probably at least five who aren't. Five who will not receive that hand of friendship and may never get to discover what many of us have.

Please look in your program tonight. You will see the individuals and businesses that have supported this show. They are all "different". Some are cross-dressers, some are TS's, and some are genetic women. Some are TGSF members; some are members of other groups. Some are gay, some are FTMs, and some are part of the leather community. They are all races and creeds and genders. They all have one thing in common. They cared enough about this community, they cared enough about this show, and they cared enough about you, to want to bring it to you. They deserve your appreciation and your applause.

So tonight, I want you to remember three other labels. Community, family, sisters. Tonight, let's put aside our differences. Turn to the person next to you and give them a hug and tell them that you are happy that they are here. Tonight, let's all work together. Tonight, let's all be together. Tonight, let's all proudly, come together.

Cotillion 2004. We'll be right back with more "stuff", but first here's Tiffany."

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Ride on the Pride Day Parade Float

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PATRON LEVEL: \$1000

Recognition & Benefits:

Recognition in all TGSF Programs / Channel / Website

Two complimentary tickets to the Cotillion

Framed Recognition Certificate

Ride on the Pride Day Parade Float

Paid Annual Membership in TGSF

ANGEL LEVEL: \$500

Recognition & Benefits:

Recognition in Cotillion Program

One complimentary ticket to the Cotillion

Framed Recognition Certificate

Paid Annual Membership in TGSF

CENTURY LEVEL: \$250

Recognition & Benefits:

Recognition in Cotillion Program

Framed Recognition Certificate

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Recognition & Benefits:

Recognition in Cotillion Program

Recognition Certificate

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From Mr. & Miss TGSF 2004...

THE HARDEST PART

By Anne Louise Mortenson

There's a sadness that follows me around. It's not about loneliness but it has to do with it. It's about the past, about who I once was. It goes to a jazz tune I heard recently from an old Miles Davis recording: "Blue on Green". There's something about that song that always wants to make me cry. It has to do with mourning the life that I once had. I can't go back and hold my newborn daughter in my arms, see my mother bend down to be my height. It's still here but it's gone.

The "Blue on Green" was playing on a rickety old tute table in my small almost claustrophobic room when I was a lonely adolescent. There were those stainless steel windows that I used to look out that were so cold in the winter. I did a drawing of them which I called "the eye". You could see telephone lines and steel gray skies. But I even miss that time and the clandestine dressing. There must be something good about being alone. A truth in being able to live with yourself.

Two years ago, when I was preparing for my first Cotillion as a contestant, Rachael Janelle gathered us all together in the Blue Muse after the Interview. She told us about how she had prepared for the Cotillion the year before. She had decided to run after the one the year before and spent all that year preparing. She told us about all those hours, the dream of becoming Miss TGSF. She began to cry. We all gathered around her. I knew when that Cotillion ended what she had been talking about. I had not been chosen as Miss TGSF or as a runner-up and did not come first in any category. It was wonderful to be in the pageant but it did hurt to feel left out at the end. Afterward, my good friend Karen would say, "Oh well, I didn't win but I was first runner-up." And then it would hurt again. And I didn't want to say anything to her about how it hurt.

My second Cotillion was better and worse. I had learned from the first and I think I was better in everything I did except maybe the interview. I still hadn't learned that you can't go into that interview cold. The interview before the Cotillion is worth 40 points, worth more than any other event. I told them I was shy and I needed to overcome my shyness. I was very honest. I could see why with my limited involvement and experience that I might not be considered the best candidate.

Before the Cotillion I sent all the contestants an e-mail about the hardest part, the part when Miss TGSF is chosen. "You guys are more important to me than awards. For me being there for one another is what TGSF is about."

I played my heart out. It was wonderful except for the end again. The e-mail helped me prepare but it was still so hard. I never felt so all alone when Rachel Hill dropped my hand and rushed to the center of the stage to become Miss TGSF 2003. I knew she would be a great Miss TGSF but I looked around in a daze. There were only five of us girls. Rachel and two runner-ups and Roxanne and I. Roxanne and I were left behind, she was cuddling her Miss Congeniality award. I just stood there quietly watching her. Rachael Janelle came up and pushed forward into the crowd around Rachael and Tyler.

After the Cotillion last year, I e-mailed Rachael Janelle and Rachel Hill and said, I didn't see any reason why I couldn't go ahead with my agenda this year even if I wasn't Miss TGSF. I could be involved and help girls take pride in being TG. No one had to be ashamed of being transgendered. And I did and it was a wonderful year for me.

For this Cotillion, I took to heart everything I had learned from the others. Worked even harder but through it all I remembered the hardest part. Roxy and I talked about it again and again. It's so hard to put your heart into this show and be left behind on the stage. All the contestants know they are all winners but the person who becomes Miss TGSF does get all the glory. This is some deserved light for Miss Congeniality but still it's Miss TGSF who is the center of attention. Everyone seems to work just as hard, cares just as much, but it's as if only one person gets the credit.

Before the show started that night, I went around to all the contestants and requested that we have a group hug as soon as Miss TGSF was announced. Just to let everyone know that they are important, we all put on the show and we all cared. After the show when I won Miss Congeniality, I was so proud, I knew I would feel alone out there for the first time but I knew I still had to be there for others. So I quickly put the award down and help hands again with the other girls and guys.

When I did win, I felt overwhelmed. To win both honors was incredible but I had learned through the other Cotillions what I need to do and I hugged



A Message from Mr. TGSF 2004

by Bobby Cheung

First off, I want to thank the people who attended the cotillion last month, and those who planned and produced the event, and the fabulous MC's and judges. Since I have been out as a queer person, I always wanted to attend one of these cotillions and check out the trans-ladies who are running for Miss TGSF. I never knew that a trans-guy like me can be a contestant until I ran into Tyler Fong, Mr. TGSF 2003, last year at the Folsom Street Fair. Now here I am, being Mr. TGSF 2004, what an honor to have this title. On top of that, I had the opportunity to present my performance art, Alligator Wrestling, on stage for the first time in front of an audience of transgender people and allies. As an artist and as a FTM for the past five years, this was an amazing experience for me, and I will wrestle an alligator for you any time.

Reflecting on the night of the Cotillion, it was definitely one of the most memorable moments of my life. One meaningful thing that I got out of this event is that all of the contestants have one thing in common, which is having the passion to advocate and to represent for the transgender community. Instead of looking at this event as a competition, we all worked together to put on an entertaining pageant show for the audience, and left the decision for the judges to decide who were going to have the titles of Mr. and Miss TGSF 2004.

Being backstage amongst other contestants, I realized something very special. While I was happily shooting photos backstage, I observed that all the transgender people who were preparing to be on stage truly enjoy being in the gender that they are in now. While I was prepping myself for my talent show by doing a massive amount of push-ups, other trans-women were spending their time putting on their make-up, fixing their hair, and carefully putting on their gorgeous outfits. It was almost like a little ritual to celebrate transgenderism.

Best of all, the wonderful audience had made this cotillion more eventful. Everyone were all dressed up, and looking beautiful and sharp. I remember seeing people who are on the transgender spectrum - FTMs, MTFs, cross-dressers, genderqueers, etc., people who are on different stages of their transition, and people of different sexual orientation. Besides transgender people, I also saw family members, friends, and allies. I can recall seeing smiles on people's faces, and feeling love in the air. This cotillion was truly inclusive, and coincided with the theme of the event, "Come Together."

With this title, Mr. TGSF 2004, I look forward to advocating for the transgender community. I will devote my time and energy to recruit more trans-guys to join this wonderful organization, and to outreach to other transgender people in different communities, like the FTM, people of color, and Asian Pacific Islander community, and to continue to speak on gender diversity panels, and educate the public on transgender issues. I also want to assist the community to grow and progress by bringing together queer people of all ages, and ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds. Lastly, as we come together, I hope that we not only focus on our struggles, but to also bring forth positive thinking within ourselves, and positive images of transgender people.

each of the other contestants. That's what I had to do. I wanted to let them know how important they were, not just to me but to everyone. Without the people who put on the show, without the contestants without the audience, Miss TGSF is no one special. Bobby and I walked down the runway with Rachel Hill trying to keep that tiara on my head and when we finally turned, I looked for the other girls and they were gone.

What can I say? They played their hearts out. I sing my praise for them and all the girls who have had the heart to get out on that stage before all of us and let us know how strong we are as a community. The hardest part is not winning but the Cotillion is about transgender pride, about all of us together making a difference. I've talked to all the contestants and they all enjoyed competing and it was hard for some of them. All of them are going to be involved this year in helping the community.

I think back on myself being alone on that stage. I can go back there anytime. The lonely girl who was a lonely boy. The sadness is there in that moment like the sadness in the victory. I can go back there, but I can never live those moments again. The brilliant green and blue, the golden moments I'll always remember.

Congratulations to all the other contestants of Cotillion 2004: Damon Helton, Siobhan Ellis, Silia Hurst, Marla Selby, Bobby Cheung, Chrysanthemum Hyphus, and Kara Flynn.

ExCom Profile

Hi, I'm **Kelly Anne Marsh**, Co-Chair of Education

I guess you could say I'm an original southern bell from North Carolina, (with a twist). I'm from just outside of Charlotte. I've been living in the Bay area for about 10 years now. I've spent most of that time in the East Bay in San Leandro but last year moved to Santa Clara. My next move I hope will take me to the City itself. I came out as myself about 2 & 1/2 years ago and it has been the most freeing thing I could have imagined! At this point, I'm a "Non-Op" T on Hormones for a few months now. I'm very satisfied with this arrangement at this time. Since discovering just who and what I am, I've not only been more at peace with my self, but I have been very blessed at all the beautiful friends I have made. You know we are a gorgeous group of people, aren't we. Ha-Ha. Seriously, I truly do appreciate being a T.



In spite of the slings and arrows we so often suffer, I can't imagine any group I'd rather belong to. Like most of us, my gender struggle has been lifelong. Had it not have been for a very special relationship, basically kicking the closet door open for me, I don't know where I'd be right now. I have always believed that when we are ready on a spirit level for new information, or for answers to old questions, that is when the info or answers are revealed.

At that point it is up to us to walk in denial or to accept and make the best of the truths at hand. This is pretty much where I am. I not only love myself more than I ever have. I also love outreach. I enjoy informing and helping others to understand that we may look different on the outside, but we are really not much different than anyone else. We all live, we Love, we laugh, we cry, we feel, we die. Other than that, we just tend to be better looking! Ha-Ha! It only makes since to me that while we're all on this little planet together, that we accept each other and get along as best as possible. It's a chore at best but it can be a Loving one.

For fun, I love to hang out with friends. I enjoy ether listening to or playing music. I've played the harmonica for about 20 years now. It's a fun instrument and I've been fortunate to have been in a couple of bands. I love art and live performances as well though I don't have the opportunity to attend many galleries or plays. I like to go to the movies and play some video games as well. As far as my family, I have 4 children, one sister, plus mom & dad. They do tend to scratch their heads from time to time, but are for the most part are supportive. For this I am most thankful.

In closing, I thank each and every one of you for being who you are! You are all beautiful. Be proud and walk tall!

Take Good Care of Yourselves & Each Other,
O's & X's

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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.

Wasn't Tomorrow Wonderful?

Continued from Page 10

DeAnza College and is arranging sponsors for the next Cotillion. Kara Flynn and Kelly Marsh, current Education co-chairs, and important members of the current ExCom, are also running for Outreach co-chair. Allison Laureano, a very impressive and dynamic woman, has also expressed her interest. Allison approached me several months ago with some ideas about interacting with the LGBT Center and already has plans in place for outreach efforts.

5. Keep database and website updated. Susan Laird, our current Vice-President, has been maintaining the database, which is the Secretary's job. At the same time, she has been responsible for Pride and the Cotillion, far too big a load for any one individual. I am sorry that Susan won't be part of ExCom next year but she is going to provide critical support nonetheless. Siobhan Ellis is running for Secretary and has already taken over some of this task. She has a great deal of experience working with databases and is also going to work on the website, another area of need. During this last year, she has also helped with the hotline and with the MAC events, so she has been an integral part of this organization.

6. Financial Management. We must always know the status of our finances and have up-to-date records so that we can do the necessary organizational planning. Pamela Gray, the current treasurer of California Dreamin', is running for TGSF Treasurer. She has an excellent handle on the finances of that group and has proven adept at negotiation with the host hotel. Her experience is important for TGSF to have. She is also responsible for the bylaws of that group and I would like to solicit her assistance on cleaning up our own bylaws.

7. Pride 2004. The plans are already underway. Anne Louise is busy at work already on float ideas, with Mr. TGSF Bobby Cheung. These ideas are very creative and inventive and I believe our float this year will be just as beautiful as last year's. There are many consideration such as getting our outreach booth, beer booth and contingent monitors squared away, and this will be a team effort. We will need help from all over the community. You came through for us on the Cotillion and we hope that we can count on your support again.

There have been a couple of others who have expressed an interest in being on ExCom but haven't finalized their plans. But, after reading the above, I believe you will agree that we will have perhaps the strongest ExCom ever ready to meet the needs of our community. They and I would appreciate your support.

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Announcements!

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS NEEDED!

2004-2005 ExCom Takes Shape

Several individuals have stepped forward and expressed an interest in running for the 2004-2005 Executive Committee:

President	Roxy Carmichael-Hart
Vice-President	Laura Marlowe
Treasurer	Pamela Gray
Secretary	Siobhan Ellis
Education	Damon Helton
.....	Dawnne Woodie
Outreach	Kalani
.....	Allison Laureano
.....	Kara Flynn
.....	Kelly Marsh
Social	Anne Louise Mortenson
.....	Tommi Watson

As you can see, we have four outstanding candidates for Outreach, a critical TGSF function. So, for the first time in a while, we will have a contested election. But it is important to realize that one does not need to be a chair to work on Outreach. Siobhan is currently assisting with the hotline, for example.

All candidates for the 2004-2005 ExCom must declare their intentions in writing prior to or at the March 25, 2004 End of Month Event. Declarations must include name, e-mail address and office for which the individual is running. Any declaration which does not meet these criteria will be rejected.

Ballots will go out shortly after and will be due by 7:30 p.m. at the **TGSF Annual Meeting on Thursday, April 29, 2004**. Election results will be announced at the meeting. Ballots may be delivered on April 29, 2004 to the Blue Muse, 409 Gough Street in San Francisco. Ballots must be received by 7:30 p.m. in order to be counted.

For more information or to declare for a position, please send an e-mail to Roxy at roxy72903@aol.com. Please be specific in stating for which office you would like to be considered.

In addition, members will also be asked to approve two changes to the bylaws – one provides two-year staggered terms for ExCom members and the other adds an attendance clause as a reason for which an officer may be removed. The full text of the bylaws change is as follows (at right):

COTILLION LOST AND FOUND

Lost - Lenny Broberg's suede jacket, lost in ballroom on Friday January 23.

Lost - Two TGSF banners that were on the registration table and the outreach table. These were gifts to TGSF from the leather boys in San Jose.

Found - Two white-fringed scarves/shawls, backstage after the show.

Please contact Roxy at roxhart27903@aol.com if you have any information on any of these three items.

Thank you.

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VI. OFFICERS.

A. Officers of TGSF -

1. TGSF shall have the following officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Social Committee Co-Chairs 1 and 2 (two maximum), Education Committee Co-Chairs 1 and 2 (two maximum), and Outreach Committee Co-Chairs 1 and 2 (two maximum).
2. The above officers shall constitute the only members of the ExCom. See Section IX Executive Committee.

B. Eligibility - Any member in good standing may be an officer in TGSF.

C. Holding One Office - Only one member may hold one office at one time.

D. Co-Chairs -

1. Co-Chairpersons may fill the Social, Education, and Outreach Offices.
2. ~~The Co-Chairs will be chosen from the highest vote recipient and the second highest recipient for that office.~~
3. In the event only one person runs for either the offices of Social, Education or Outreach, the Co-Chair for that particular committee shall not be filled for that term, unless deemed necessary by the ExCom.

E. Terms of Office - Officers shall serve one-year term beginning May 1 of the current year and ending April 30 of the following year. two year terms as follows:

1. The terms of President, Treasurer, Education Co-Chair 1, Outreach Co-Chair 1 and Social Co-Chair 1 shall begin on May 1 and end on April 30 of even numbered years.
2. The terms of Vice-President, Secretary, Education Co-Chair 2, Outreach Co-Chair 2, and Social Co-Chair 2 shall begin on May 1 of odd-numbered years and end on April 30 of odd-numbered years. EXCEPTION: Beginning in May, 2004, the terms of the above offices will be for a one-year period ending April 30 2005, at which time the two year terms will take effect.

F. Removal -

1. **Reasons** - An officer may be removed for, but not limited to, any of the following reasons:
 - a. Gross violation(s) of any part of the Bylaws,
 - b. Breach of confidentiality,
 - c. Breach of fiduciary trust,
 - d. Intentional misrepresentation of official TGSF policy, and
 - e. Any misconduct resulting in liability against TGSF, and/ or
 - f. Missing three unexcused meetings during one calendar year.

Should the bylaws changes pass, the President, Treasurer, and one each of the Education, Outreach and Social chairs will be elected for two years. The other officers will be elected for one-year terms, and next year will be eligible for re-election to two-year terms. Should the bylaws changes not be approved, all officers will be elected for one-year terms as at present.



TG GOLFER MAKES HISTORY

by Peter Hacker
365Gay.com Newscenter
Sydney, Australia Bureau

(Sydney) A transgendered woman will make golfing history next month when she tees up for the Australian Women's Open. Never before has a transgendered woman played in a professional women's tournament. "It's a dream for me — I've been playing golf since I was eight, but I turned professional only in August last year. So, it's been a long time coming," said 37 year old Mianne Bagger.

Bagger admitted that while most women on the golf course accepted her sex-change operation, some still found it hard to come to terms with. "I have made a lot of great girlfriends through golf, but there are some women who find me hard to accept," Bagger said. "To most people, I am just another one of the girls out there playing."

She said she went through two years of hormone replacement therapy before surgery in 1995. "There seems to be a misconception in society that one day we (transsexuals) just wake up and think, 'I'm going to have a sex-change today'," she said. "I have always known there was something different about me since I was young — we are born this way."

A Women's Golf Australia spokesperson said the WGA welcomes Bagger in the tournament and has been following her progress since the 1990s when it formed a policy to allow her to play in, and win, the South Australia amateur championship.

"Mianne has been playing for years in our amateur tournaments where we have no rules against transgender players," the spokeswoman said. "There is no reason why she should not continue her golfing career in the professional tournament."

Bagger said she one day hoped to move on from being seen as "the transsexual" golfer. "My sexuality is just one of the obstacles I am going to have to face," she said. "What people have to realize is that plenty of men and women out there are transsexuals."

Another Silicone Death

via WALB News, Albany, GA

Albany— It's a procedure called "pumping" and it's already killed one Albany man. A 23-year-old transvestite from Alabama had silicone directly injected into his breasts, cheeks, and buttocks so he would look like a woman. But the silicone leaked into his blood stream, and that killed him.

Now, Jazzmyn Braxton, also 23, lies in his bed, an oxygen tank helping his breathing. Too sick to walk, "Jazz," who is a man, but prefers to be called a woman, is taking a variety of heart and lung medicines. Jazz said "The Doctor say he don't see me living past 26." A transvestite from Savannah, Jazz says two years ago she hired a lady from Atlanta to inject silicone into her body, to make her look more like a woman. "I loved the look. I got a lot of compliments. And got paid a lot on stage, because I was an entertainer."

Over time, Jazz paid the woman from Atlanta more than \$7,000 to make her face, breasts, buttocks, and hips more feminine. The plaques Jazz won in drag queen pageants decorate her walls, thanks to the dangerous injections. "[It's done] Without a bag, loose silicone [is injected] into your tissue." Jazz said "Word of mouth, and everybody been doing it. You've seen people do it for years." But that silicone in the human body is absorbed into the blood stream, and many transvestites like the Alabama man have already died.

Now the Dougherty District Attorney's office is investigating this practice. If they find the woman who gave the injections, she could face murder charges. Jazz says the woman who gives the silicone injections lives in Atlanta, but travels across the Southeast.

Jazz says pumping is a wide spread practice by transvestites. "Other drag queens who want to look like a woman. A lot of people can't afford real plastic surgery. So if you can get your breasts done for \$15,000 instead of three to six thousand dollars, you will go ahead and do it."

Jazz thinks many transvestites will continue pumping, even risking death to look more like a woman. In November, a Florida man was sentenced to 30 years in prison after a woman died following a similar back-alley cosmetic procedure.

LADS' TV EMBARRASSMENT...

Meet Miriam. All the men fancy her. In fact, six of them have been filmed for TV competing to seduce the stunner. Only Miriam is a man. And the blokes in question - including a former Royal Marine Commando - tried to get the show pulled to hide their humiliation.

Finally, they agreed to let Sky One show the programme - There's Something About Miriam - after the company reportedly offered them £125,000 each. Now the men's embarrassment will be shown in six, one-hour shows, starting on Sunday, February 22.

The six, including a chef and an actor, spent two weeks trying to pull the model - who has not yet undergone a sex-change operation - while staying at a villa on Ibiza. A £10,000 prize was on offer. One show insider who spoke to The Sun newspaper said: "When Miriam revealed she is actually a pre-op transsexual, they were so shocked that one of the lads was sick." The lads threatened court action to stop the programme being shown.

Sky denied paying them £125,000 each. But a joint statement said: "Following the concerns recently raised by the contestants in Brighter Pictures' production of 'There's Something About Miriam' for Sky One, the parties are pleased to announce that these have been addressed and the matter is now resolved. "It was never the intention of Brighter Pictures or Sky to upset the contestants and they are sorry for any upset caused."



SF Trans Health Care Called 'Discriminatory'

Patrick Letellier, Gay.com / PlanetOut.com Network

Despite protests from transgender activists and the San Francisco Human Rights Commission, the San Francisco Health Service Board voted Thursday to continue offering benefits to transgender city workers that activists say are blatantly discriminatory.

"Because other cities are carefully scrutinizing San Francisco's controversial health plan — the first of its kind to offer benefits to transgender city employees — yesterday's vote slows down the process, and make it more difficult for transgender people across the country to get the benefits they need and deserve," said Marcus Arana of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission (SFHRC). "It's dreams deferred, treatment deferred and equal benefits deferred," Arana said.

Under the city's current plan, health benefits — including hormone treatment, psychotherapy and surgeries — are all made available, but with clear restrictions that apply only to transgender employees.

Specifically, transgender employees must be enrolled for one year on the health plan before accessing the benefits; there is a \$50,000 cap on treatment; and — most distressing to activists — transgendered employees are not allowed to seek treatment with the city's three HMOs (Blue Cross, Blue Shield and Health Net). Instead, they must use the "city plan," a health plan with expensive co-payments.

Under this last provision, Arana says, a nontransgendered city employee who needs a mastectomy can be treated under any of the HMOs and not pay out of pocket for the procedure. But a transgendered city employee who needs a mastectomy must use the city plan and make a \$3,700 co-payment. "This is appalling to me," Arana told the board.

Blue Shield and Health Net representatives at the meeting said their companies were ready to accept transgender patients immediately. A Kaiser representative said that company would be ready by July. But the board was unmoved. Members voted to eliminate the one-year waiting period and the \$50,000 cap, but insisted that the benefits still not be offered by HMOs.

As a result, Arana says, HMOs are denied the opportunity to determine how much the benefits actually cost. And information about cost is what cities across the country are waiting for. "They're afraid there will be this unbridled flood of transsexual people breaking the back of the city plan," Arana said, "But that is not what has happened here."

City officials estimated that the benefits would cost the city approximately \$1.75 million per year. But in the three years the benefits have been available, only seven procedures have been done, at a total cost of \$156,000. "They keep saying, 'We can't afford it,' but the numbers don't bear that out," said Arana.

"We are trying to send this plan out to the rest of the country, so we have to make sure we don't discriminate," HRC's senior compliance officer Larry Brinkin said to the Board. "I'm disappointed that discrimination will continue."

Reviews!

Film Review:

BEAUTIFUL BOXER

By Kirk Honeycutt
Reuters/Hollywood Reporter

BERLIN (Hollywood Reporter) - "Beautiful Boxer" tells the amazing real-life story of Nong Toom, who captured public fancy in Thailand as a transsexual kickboxer. While he discovered he had a talent for the brutal sport — which deflected charges of being a "sissy" and helped support his family of poor itinerant farmers — in his heart, Nong Toom was always a woman trapped in a male body. His sex change operation happened in 1999.

This first film by Ekachai Uekrongtham, one of Thailand's leading stage directors, does not play his story for camp or sensationalism, but rather is an artistic investigation into a divided soul. The film not only calls into question ingrained notions of what constitutes masculinity and femininity but the degree to which the distinction between athletics and show business has blurred.

Certain to become a must-see on the festival circuit, "Beautiful Boxer" has the smarts and imagination to gain wide theatrical distribution around the world, initially as a curio, of course, but news of its artistic achievement will draw a much wider audience to this fascinating film. The movie almost writes its own taglines: "He fights like a man to become a woman," or "'Rocky' with lipstick."

The film gets off to a poor start with a cheesy B-movie opening in which a journalist wanting to interview Nong Toom (the remarkable Asanee Suwan) gets trapped by a gang of toughs, and his interviewee, a glamorous woman in high heels, comes to his rescue and kicks the hell out of the punks. Once the journalist's tape recorder gets rolling, though, and the movie flashes back to Nong Toom's early childhood, the story, written by Uekrongtham and his co-writer Desmond Sim Kim Jin, kicks into gear. (The movie continually refers to Nong Toom as a "transvestite," but more accurately he is a transsexual.)

As a small boy, Nong Toom loved to paint his face with makeup and deliver performances to his family like those by female entertainers seen at county fairs. His dad worries about this, but the family is too busy traveling up and down the country in search of work. When the family resettles in the north, the now-teenage son is strangely drawn to kickboxing, a sport whose violence repels him, yet the idea of self-defense brings him comfort.

Thrown into a ring on a dare, he wins a bout quite by accident. He comes under the tutelage of a demanding trainer, Pi Chart (Sorapong Chatree), who spots his budding talent and pushes him to achieve his goals. Encouraged by prize money he can give to his hard-working parents, Nong Toom wins a number of small-town bouts before making his debut in Bangkok. But his femininity creates terrible inner conflict, and he only partially conceals his sexual identity from fellow boxers.

Then his trainer realizes that makeup and costumes would make a terrific gimmick that could earn the fighter bigger matches and prize money. Nong Toom enters rings with increasingly exaggerated makeup and feminine attire, which infuriates opponents and some fans but wins over many more. Seemingly the more makeup he wears, the harder opponents fight and the harder he fights to prevail.

Gradually, however, this "act" turns the sport into a travesty. The boxer is left to wonder when he turned from athlete to circus clown, yet another split in his troubled personality.

Uekrongtham illustrates the boxer's inner turmoil in fantasy sequences, in which he sometimes sees his other self and dreams of the day he can quit the ring to become a woman. The fight choreography has raw energy, which the director often slows down to catch the exact moment when the fight belongs to Nong Toom. This also produces a ballet-like quality to the violence that only underscores the masculine/feminine dichotomy to the action.

Suwan accomplishes the difficult feat of suggesting the male and female sides to this character while performing the boxing maneuvers with superb dexterity. Here is a person fighting larger and more frightening demons outside of the ring than in. He will only find inner peace when he can change the shape and nature of his body to correspond to what is in his heart and mind.

Book Review:

THE GENDER FRONTIER

by Gwendolyn Ann Smith

Having grown up as the child of a professional photographer, I feel a certain connection to the photographic image. Through the lens of a camera, we can capture moments and memories that would otherwise be lost to time.

This can be especially true for the transgendered community. While things are evolving, decades have passed with few taking notice of our triumphs and tragedies, and our history runs a day-to-day risk of vanishing into the wind. It's with this in mind that I look at a book like Mariëtte Pathy Allen's latest book, *The Gender Frontier* (Kehler Verlag, 2003).

I purchased her first book, *Transformations: Crossdressers and Those Who Love Them* (E.P. Dutton), way back in 1993 or so, while I was still self-identifying as a crossdresser. At a time when most of the published texts on transgender experience were in the medical community, and where few transfolks were really willing to be shown visually, her book managed to capture voices and images of so many strong people.

The Gender Frontier is not so much a follow-up to *Transformations* as it is a book that shows how much the community had shifted in the last decade. For example, rather than focusing solely on crossdressing, many of those in the new book display a great diversity in transgender presentation, including a sizable number of female to male individuals.

Another big difference from Allen's first book is the shift from portraits taken in seemingly safe environments to photographs captured at trans rights demonstrations and such. This parallels how the transgender community has shifted in the decade-plus since Ms. Allen's first work. We've started to show a more transgressive, more visible face, and she is there to capture this shift.

Those pictured represent the more politically active and strong voices of the transgender community over the last decade. The James Greens and Nancy Nangeroni's of the nascent transgender movement.

Allen's photos are as compelling as some of those seem in her first book, yet show a maturity in her art. I also find myself glad that *The Gender Frontier* does not have near as much text as the previous book: the photos really can speak for themselves. While so many of the images in *Transformations* were static portraits — interesting in their own right — *The Gender Frontier's* photos tend to tell a complete, complex story in each frame.

There is an East Coast bias to the book, and I note a few missing folks from the overall mix. No Kate Bornstein, no Loren Cameron, and so on. A focus on Southern Comfort conference shots and a good smattering of D.C. and right coast politics, but a dearth of things elsewhere tend to make it seem as if "transgender" is an East Coast phenomenon.

I know that Ms. Allen can only be in so many places at a time, and the book is not so much a "comprehensive" view as it is a personal chronicle. Nevertheless, I still wish there were shots — for example — of San Francisco City Hall when the transgender health benefit package was passed. This is a small complaint about the book, and one that doesn't truly mar the work as a whole.

The book deserves a spot in any list of valued transgender-themed books, and will be one I will gladly recommend for some time to come. I also will have to make sure to share it with my own father, knowing that while he may be uncomfortable with the theme, I am assured he'll appreciate the photography.

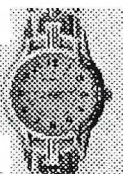
Gwen Smith is a transgendered writer, activist, lecturer and designer, thought not necessarily in that order. You can find her on the Web at www.gwensmith.com

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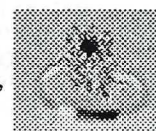
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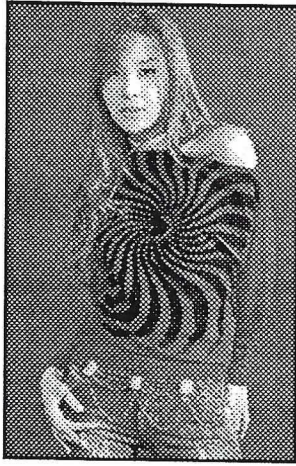
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HARISU: WOMAN REVEALED

Korean Herald
By Krista Kim

Gorgeous. That is the only word that comes to mind when face-to-face with Korea's first transgender singer and actress - now a regular TV star and model in Taiwan and China - fast becoming one of Asia's hottest entertainers. Her name is Harisu, 28, and her show name is coined after, "Hot Issue."

Harisu, a.k.a. Lee Gyeong-eun, will be celebrating her 29th birthday next week, on Feb. 17. She has many other reasons to celebrate this month, as she recently won a court battle with her ex-management company, TTM Entertainment, over the ownership and use of her show name - Harisu terminated her two-year recording contract with them last October. TTM Entertainment produced her debut album, "Temptation" in 2001, then her second al-

bum, "Liar" in 2002.

"Just like the Korean fable character, Hongildong, who wasn't able to call his father, 'father,' nor his mother, 'mother'... if I were unable to use my name, it would've been a sad story. Everyone knows me as Harisu since my debut - everywhere - so it's a justified decision," Harisu said in an interview with Korea Herald. Also this month, Harisu has released her third album, "No. 1", featuring the song, "Foxy Lady": an LP with renewed zest and Harisu's authentic sound. This Foxy Lady has business savvy; her new record was released under her new independent record label, G&F Entertainment, a company that she established after ending her relationship with TTM. Hence, the new album title, "No. 1" is a bold statement, suggesting a new beginning in her career.

"I left the old company, and through my relationship with them, I've been able to make a name for myself, but now I am on my own, and showing my true colors, doing exactly the kind of music that I've always wanted. Therefore, this is my third album, but I wish to release it as my 'first,' as a fresh new start for my career," Harisu explained.

Having learned the dealings of the entertainment business over the past two years, and taking advantage of her international star power, Harisu's future prospects as a businesswoman are lucrative. This year, Harisu will be releasing the Taiwanese and Hong Kong versions of her new album. She will also make promotional stops throughout Asia and local TV guest appearances. Eventually, she plans to produce other recording artists, but she is busy with her own gigs for the time being.

"I didn't want to sign a contract with another management company. With other management companies, you're forced to do work that you don't agree with. Now, I can make my own decisions about the kind of work that I do. I can do things that perhaps aren't profitable, but support causes that I believe in. I feel more satisfied in the end," said Harisu.

Since her controversial legal gender change at the Korean citizenship registry, Harisu enjoys the recognition of becoming female, by law no less. The traditional gender roles and sexuality scripts of Korean society still limit her because of she is still caught 'in the middle' of either category. This is also a result of the aggressive marketing scheme for her debut, which focused on her transgender-ness.

In other countries, Harisu has the opportunity to mould her image without prejudice, and her career is now following a path that she has always wished for. She starred in a TV drama in Taiwan, which finished late last year, and she has already signed contracts to star in another upcoming drama, "Hi, My Love" in April, which will be syndicated throughout China and other parts of Asia. Harisu is breaking through barriers of gender and language; her lines are spoken in Korean and then dubbed in Chinese.

"In Taiwan, people know me as an actress more than a singer. They first identify me as an actress from the Taiwanese TV dramas that I starred in - unlike Korea, where I am pigeonholed as a 'transgender' before my other skills. In Taiwan, they accept me as an actress first, so that's why I get more acting roles abroad. I am also modeling there. I am sorry about that stereotype that traps me in Korea, like the movie I starred in, 'Blonde', where my character was also a transgender," said Harisu.

Women as career-oriented and successful as Harisu will agree that there is very little time to invest in marriage. Though she is optimistic about her prospects for 'tying the knot', Harisu is making her career come first. "Sure, I want to get married, but not until I'm 35. I have so much work to do, as my immediate focus. I think work should be successful in order for love to be possible," she said.

Because of her controversial fame and beauty, we may set different standards of the "ideal man" for Harisu, but she blatantly admits that she's just like any other woman in her taste of men.

"My ideal man cannot smoke, and he must love me only, and listen to me. He can't have smelly feet, bad breath and he can't have athlete's foot, and he can't be critical," Harisu said. "It's really the kind of man that all women like... I have very common taste. I don't like them too fat...to skinny, too tall, or too short. I like a natural man."

Gaywatch: INTERVIEW WITH A "SOLDIER'S GIRL"

by Christine Champagne

With the recent VHS/DVD release of "Soldier's Girl," which premiered on Showtime last May, Gaywatch spoke with **Calpernia Addams** to get her thoughts on the film. Addams, who now lives in Hollywood, where she writes, acts and runs a production company called Deep Stealth Productions with business partner Andrea James, actually served as an advisor on "Soldier's Girl," which depicts the events that led up to the murder of Private First Class Barry Winchell. Winchell was beaten to death in 1999 by a fellow soldier who thought Winchell was gay because of his romance with Addams, a transgender woman working as a nightclub performer at the time.



I was amazed by how wonderful "Soldier's Girl" was. It depicted the dangerous climate the "don't ask, don't tell" policy can foster, but it also presented a beautiful love story. What was your reaction to the film?

The whole process of making the film was very surreal, and it brought up a lot of good and difficult memories. Seeing the finished film, I thought it was brilliant and beautiful, and I was so happy, because I had been worried throughout the whole process. What if they did what everybody else had done and take the transgender element of the story and make it into some kind of Jerry Springer shockfest or something? In movies people have just historically used transgender women as either prostitutes or punch lines or psychos. So to see a movie that shows a transgender woman who is a normal person worthy of love, and independent, not a prostitute, not a drug addict, I thought that was really groundbreaking. And I also felt like the film was a real honor to Barry's memory, because it really comes across what a sweet and gentle man Barry was. From that, you see what a terrible tragedy losing Barry in that way was.

I know you advised the producers of this film, and the film so clearly benefited from your involvement. But I understand that initially you were nervous about getting involved. Why?

After the tragedy, I was so in mourning and dealing with a lot of

Continued on Page 19

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Man-Turned-Woman Identified As Female In National ID

www.chinaview.cn

BEIJING, Feb. 13 (Xinhuanet) — "It's so amazing! I got my ID as a female for real!" cried out Lili Chen, a former male, holding "her" national ID issued by Nanchong local police bureau in Southwest China's Sichuan Province on Wednesday afternoon. The 1.73-meter-tall Lili, formerly named Yongjun Chen, is now a stunning fashion model in southwest China's Chongqing Municipality.

Chen underwent the sex change operation last November in east China's Shandong Province, and picked up the new name "Lili", inspired by a popular Korean male-turned-female star "Harisu", or in Chinese "He Lixiu", who is her idol. "I could not be happier now, as my female status has become protected by the law," said Lili, with her ID received only two days after the application.

The Nanchong police authority gave the "green light" to Lili's request after she handed in sufficient materials on Feb. 9, including her photo, residence booklet and sex change proof issued by the hospital. The national ID reads: legitimate name, Chen Lili and gender: female.

Lili was very introverted as a male kid in Nanchong. He lived with his grandma after his mother committed suicide and his dad remarried. Lili liked imitating girls' behaviors and wearing colorful clothes when he lived with his grandmother. Most of his neighbors indeed took him as a girl. But the secret was let out when he was 13 and one day his trousers were taken off by some boys accidentally.

Unable to deal with the pressure, he left home soon. His performing talents were discovered later. He became a male fashion model in Chongqing, and meanwhile performed in nightclubs as a girl. Sick of the male body, he rejected to claim a national ID.

The story and dizzying beauty of the Korean transsexual star Harisu inspired him. He decided to pursue the "real girl" dream and finally lay on the operation table last November. After becoming a real woman, she decided to seek recognition by the law.

This January, Lili went home for the Spring Festival for the first time in 10 years to visit her family and applied for the ID at her hometown. The gray-haired grandma had heard so much about her "grandson", but still, when "a pretty granddaughter" appeared to her astonishment, she said, "It is all fine, as long as you have been good and safe," she said.

Lili said she has not thought of marriage. "I am studying performing arts and is fascinated in the life of a model. I am sure that I will become China's Harisu."

UK Trans Bill Passes Lords

by Peter Moore

365Gay.com Newscenter, London Bureau

(London) Legislation offering legal recognition to an estimated 5,000 transsexuals has cleared a major hurdle. The bill which would allow the transgendered to have their birth certificates reflect their correct sex, has passed the House of Lords and now heads to the Commons where it is expected to pass. The government said it hopes to have the law in force early next year. The peers passed the bill 155 votes to 57.

The Gender Recognition Bill would allow transsexuals to marry in their "acquired" gender. Currently the transgendered are unable to marry because their birth certificates show the incorrect sex, and same-sex marriage is illegal in Britain. But churches would have the right to refuse to conduct such a marriage. It also allows sports governing bodies to make special rules for transsexual competitors.

The legislation sets up a gender recognition panel of legal and medical experts to assert that the person seeking to amend their record is indeed transgendered. The panel would not require that applicants had undergone a sex change operation.

Registrars and their staff, and other professionals involved, would be under a legal obligation not to divulge the fact that a person had changed gender. A separate Bill, allowing civil registration of gay marriages, is expected to be introduced in the Lords next month.

Calpernia Addams...

Continued from Page 17

things emotionally, and a lot of people approached me wanting to make films — at least seven different people. At that time, I just felt like I didn't know if this was going to be respectful of Barry. I wanted to make sure I was doing the right thing, and I didn't feel like I was in a good mental state to make a decision, so it took me about a year to decide to work with Showtime. Looking back, I'm really glad I did, because they did such a sensitive, respectful, beautiful portrayal of this story.

It seems like all too often filmmakers who make films based on real events mold the story to serve their own purposes, but I got the sense the makers of "Soldier's Girl" strove to tell your and Barry's story and really listened to your input. Do you agree with that take?

I do. They spent a lot of time interviewing me. They came to Nashville and videotaped the club, and they had me on set in Toronto for most of the filming. I went out to breakfast with the actors, and Troy Garrity really got to know me on the set. He told me he felt like that really made his portrayal of Barry easier. At the end of the shoot, he gave me a big hug, and said, "I see why Barry fell in love with you." That was just so touching and sweet of him to say.

Was it hard for Troy to talk to you at first? I can imagine that he wouldn't want to bring back painful memories for you.

I think all of the actors were really nervous about meeting me when I was coming onto the set, because in the past, when movies have been made based on real-life people, there have been a lot of circumstances where the real-life person was a bit of a disruption on the set. And I'm sure they were also just nervous about meeting me. Lee Pace wondering: Am I getting her right? What is she going to think of my portrayal of her? And Troy Garrity just thinking: Am I doing Barry correctly? But I'm not the kind of person who storms onto the set and says, "This is horrible." I offered my insight, and they were really good actors in that they took that insight for what it was worth.

Did you talk to Lee a lot in particular to give him insight into your life?

Lee and I became fast friends on set, and he's come to stay with me here in L.A. We still talk. But I did not give Lee a lot of practical advice about, this is how you walk in heels, and things like that, because he could learn that himself from the dance instructors and all that. What Lee and I did was, we just talked about life in general, and he just sort of observed me and other women and how we go through daily life. In our becoming friends I think he picked up a lot about me as a person, and I can see that in the role. He got so much right in terms of how at first I was wary of letting Barry into my life. I was always wary of letting any man into my life because of the way transgender women are treated, but eventually I was won over. I think Lee showed a lot of that just so right on.

So he really expressed the essence of your personality?

I really believe he did — shyness coupled with a showgirl personality. It's a weird combination. Onstage and offstage were two very different sides of the same person, and he really showed that.

What was Barry like? Why did you let him into your life?

As a showgirl in the largest gay-owned and operated club in the United States, I got a lot of attention from men, and I was actually a surprisingly reserved person in that I didn't drink or smoke. I didn't even really cuss. Being raised in such a religious background, I had a lot of habits from that, and so I sort of ignored most men's advances and lived a pretty solitary life, aside from a few friends. But Barry right off the bat just seemed to look right at me when he looked at me and saw me as just a regular girl who he thought was cool and interesting. On our first date at my favorite coffeehouse, he didn't talk to me about things that I consider inappropriate like, "So did you get breast implants? How many hormones do you take?" ... the weird, gross questions that men often ask transgender women. Barry asked me questions like, "So what was your family like? What do you do for fun? What kind of movies do you like?" I just really for the first time in a long time felt hope that maybe here was a normal guy who was going to treat me like a normal girl, and we could just have a relationship.

It must have felt pretty good to meet a nice guy.

It did. At first I was slow to believe it, but once I accepted that Barry was a real person, it was one of the most beautiful experiences of my life. It was something I really needed at the time because I wasn't very sure of myself yet as a woman. Barry provided the love I needed to grow.

Was working on this film and then watching it incredibly painful for you, or cathartic, or maybe both?

The whole media side of Barry's murder has been very difficult to relive. It's been very difficult to relive his murder over and over and over for four years now. Normally, if you lose somebody, you mourn that loss with your friends and family, and then you move on, keeping them in your heart. But for most people who've seen "Soldier's Girl," to them it's like it just happened. They watched the movie, and then they're like, "Oh my God. This guy was just murdered, and so when they talk to me, it's like Barry was just murdered over and over and over again. And I have to tell the story, because I feel like it's a way to honor Barry's memory, and it's a way to ensure that things like this don't happen again. So I do tell the story. But I look forward to a day coming soon when I can be more vocal about my activities, like the production company I started, Deep Stealth Productions, to improve transgender portrayals.

For more information on Addams, you can visit her Web site at www.calpernia.com.

Takin' Care of Biz...

TGSF ASSETS, LIABILITIES, AND EQUITY as of 20 February 2004

Assets

Cash	\$3,245.24
Event Equipment	
Decorations	\$1,000.00
Food Service	\$200.00
Office Supplies	\$50.00
Total Assets	\$4,495.24

Liabilities and Equity

Accounts Payable	\$1,793.74
Equity	\$2,701.50
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$4,495.24

Statement of TGSF Income

Revenue

Memberships	\$120.00
Donations	\$300.00
Advertising	\$166.67
Red/White Ball	\$950.00
Total	\$1,536.67

Expenses

Newsletter	\$500.00
Telephone	\$50.00
Red/White Ball	\$600.00
Miscellaneous	\$230.00
Total	\$1,380.00

Net Income \$156.67

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Nuances Of Gay Identities Reflected In New Language 'Homosexual' Is Passé In A 'Boi's' Life

Rona Marech, SF Chronicle Staff Writer

First, there was the term "homosexual," then "gay" and "lesbian," then the once taboo "dyke" and "queer." Now, all bets are off. With the universe of gender and sexual identities expanding, a gay youth culture emerging, acceptance of gays rising and label loyalty falling, the gay lexicon has exploded with scores of new words and blended phrases that delineate every conceivable stop on the identity spectrum — at least for this week.

Someone who is "genderqueer," for example, views the gender options as more than just male and female or doesn't fit into the binary male-female system. A "trannydyke" is a transgender person (whose gender is different than the one assigned at birth) attracted to people with a more feminine gender, while a "pansexual" is attracted to people of multiple genders. A "boi" describes a boyish gay guy or a biological female with a male presentation; and "heteroflexible" refers to a straight person with a queer mind-set.

The list of terms — which have hotly contested definitions — goes on: "FTM" for female to male, "MTF" for male to female, "boydyke," "trannyboy," "trannyfag," "multigendered," "polygendered," "queerboi," "transboi," "transguy," "transman," "half-dyke," "bi-dyke," "stud," "stem," "trisexual," "omnisexual," and "multisexual."

"The language thing is tricky," said Thom Lynch, the director of the San Francisco Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Center. "I feel sorry for straight people."

Tricky, maybe, but also healthy and empowering, said Carolyn Laub, the director of the Gay-Straight Alliance Network, which links gay and lesbian student clubs in the state. "We in society and in our generation are developing new understandings of sexual orientation and gender identities and what that means to us," she said. "We don't really have enough language to describe that; therefore, we have to create new words."

For those back in the linguistic dark ages still wondering what's wrong with "homosexual," the evolution of queer identity language has progressed something like this: "Homosexual" sounded pathological and clinical, so activists went about creating their own words, starting with "gay" and "lesbian." That was well and good, but terms like "dyke" and "queer" had an appealing spikiness and served double-duty by stripping the sting from words that had heretofore been considered unspeakably nasty.

The adjustment took time for some: As recently as 2002, visitors at the San Francisco community center routinely complained about a sign proudly pronouncing it "the queerest place on earth," Lynch said. But in the Bay Area, in the age of "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy," that sort of sensitivity is beginning to seem almost quaint. Even some straight people have adopted the word because they have gay parents or an affinity for gay culture.

These days, "queer" is especially handy because it's vague enough to encompass just about everyone. The word and its newfangled linguistic cousins have become indispensable as the transgender population in the Bay Area has grown exponentially — into the tens of thousands, advocates say — and sexual identities have become increasingly complicated.

"If you're not a man or woman, words like 'gay' or 'lesbian' don't fit you anymore," said Sam Davis, founder of United Genders of The Universe, a support group and speakers bureau. "The words from just a few years ago aren't adequate to talk about who we are, where we're coming from and who we like."

Dee Braur, a 17-year-old with a tuft of greenish hair, calls herself "half-dyke." "I'm bisexual but I lean more toward women than men," she said. Men, she added, annoy her. "Trisexual" also works, she said with a snicker: "I'll try anything once and if I like it, I'll try it again and again and again."

Andy Duran, 19, said: "People are feeling like, what's the point of labeling? If I must label, let me create my own."

That said, Duran uses "queer" — among others — because "it's the one that leaves the most for discovery. ... It's not really limiting. I can date a woman or a man. I can date someone who's transgender or genderqueer."

Tiffany Solomon, who is 19 and technically a lesbian, is put off by the word "lesbian." "I think of a short-haired woman who wears flannel. It's bad to a degree, but it's something that becomes embedded when you're young and queer and look on TV and you only have stereotypes to go on," she said. She calls herself a "metrosexual" — the word used to describe straight men who have a gay sensibility when it comes to fashion and grooming — because she also identifies with gay male culture.

Justin, who is 19 and didn't want to use his last name because he's not out to his family as transgender, calls himself a "boi" — with an "i" — because he feels like a boy — with a "y" — but "I don't have the boy parts, as much I wish I did." "I'm still learning the ropes of just being me," he added.

Lynn Breedlove, a musician and author, spent years as a "butch dyke," but nowadays, he prefers to interchange pronouns and, depending on his mood, goes back and forth between the old label and "trannyboy." "Because I'm like Peter Pan — eternally youthful but I'm always played by a girl," Breedlove said. "It's more a faggy aesthetic thing. I don't want hair on my face and chest. Ooh, I don't want to be transman — that sounds really furry."

While Breedlove is old enough to have an age complex — he explained his refusal to divulge his age as a "rock star thing" — a lot of the identity fluidity, name mania and word invention is bubbling up from the next generation of queer youth.

"Now that community resources are in place and public acceptance has increased, it's more feasible for adolescents to come out during adolescence," said Caitlin Ryan, a researcher at San Francisco State University who has studied lesbian, gay and bisexual youth. "What we're getting in the LGBT community is the power of youth. It's their expression and exuberance and energy and also their contribution to the culture."

It makes sense that youth, in particular, are coming up with new words and trying them on, considering that "identity development is one of the most important developmental tasks of adolescence," she said.

Growing acceptance of gays and lesbians has also encouraged idiosyncrasy, Ryan said. "Identities are very personal. That was much less true 20 years ago, when identity was more around community. Now that there's a community, a vibrant one with resources, there's more room for personal identity. Before, the tribe was so much more important," she said.

To further complicate matters, race and ethnicity affect who is using which words. Some people of color prefer the word "stud" to "butch," meaning a masculine-identified lesbian. Which makes someone who falls between a stud and a femme — a more "feminine" lesbian — a "stem."

And genderbending and genderqueerness aren't as prevalent among people of color, said Mateo Cruz, who's Latino and a staff member at the Pacific Center, Berkeley's LGBT center. In these communities, "queer" and the terms it spawned have a reputation of being "white," so some shy away from them in favor of "same-gender-loving people" or "men who sleep with men," or — among Spanish-speakers — "homosexual," which is also a Spanish word.

"A lot of the stereotypes of what a 'queer' person is supposed to be, especially in mainstream media, is always a white person," said Solomon, who is African American. "A lot of issues people of color have with their families is their parents are saying, 'If you're gay, then you want to be white.' Because that's all they see. So yeah, 'queer' is not a word that a lot of people of color use."

No wonder Cruz sometimes grows frustrated when he leads discussions about appropriate language in anti-homophobia workshops. It can take an hour for his savviest students to list the "hundreds" of words they know for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. Then the discussion about what the words mean, who can use them and whether they're polite, often drags on ad nauseam.

When Cruz's coding system — circles, big X's and dotted lines to connote cool, uncool, and sometimes-cool terms — inevitably breaks down, he throws up his hands. "However people self-identify," he tells students, "we have to respect."

What it all means

Definitions of many words in the gay lexicon are hotly contested. Here is a sample:

Genderqueer: Someone who views the gender options as more than just male and female or who doesn't fit into the binary male-female system.

Transgender: An umbrella term for transgression of the binary gender system. May include surgical, hormonal or nonhormonal changes that result in a gender identity different from the one assigned at birth.

Pansexual: Someone attracted to people of multiple genders.

Trannydyke: A transgender person attracted to people with a more feminine gender.

Trannyfag: A transgender person attracted to people with a more masculine gender.

Boi: A boyish gay guy or a biological female with a boyish presentation.

Heteroflexible: A straight person with a queer mind-set.

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I HATE TRANSSEXUALS

by Jaime Ray, Save T Youth

More than one person I have talked to recently has expressed this sentiment, but wait! These same people are dealing with a trans issue of their own; what's up with that??

It seems that a common denominator among many people who have their sights set upon transitioning between the sexes or who are transition curious, is the experience of a strong repulsion toward others who are either part way or already on the other side of a sexual reassignment. At first, I thought that repulsion was too strong of a word or that repulsion would be more appropriately associated with those people who had a strong moral conviction conflicting with the whole idea of changing one's sex. Wouldn't hatred aimed at people who are transsexual be more likely from a homo or trans phobic individual fighting the desire to rid the world of the transsexual scourge?

Once I regained my footing, I moved on in our conversations and listened carefully as people explained as best they could these honest and difficult feelings. Mixed together with a general disdain for others in the same categories of conflict are guilt and shame that they would turn on someone else who like themselves are doing the best they can to right a deeply felt personal wrong.

"I just don't identify Transsexual I am a girl," said one 19-year-old MTF. "Those people, some of them much older than me look like men in dresses, ew!" The youth scrunched up her nose as she came too close to her uncomfortable feelings. "I know I have a penis and facial hair but I'm a girl and I haven't had sex with a woman or fathered a child. I just think that it's different for someone like me." She continued.

Many young people would agree with her perception and perhaps it's true that to a degree, not just genetics or hormones, but also life experience and achievement shape a person's sexual identity. I listened carefully as she continued.

"I don't like to listen to men in dresses talking about their divorces and problems with child support. It's not for me to understand how they feel or what they are going through. I am a young girl trying to pull my life together and I guess there is just too much that stands between us for me to relate to where they are coming from. It grosses me out!" The young transgender sank in her seat feeling guilty for strong emotions that were surprising even to her self.

Before I could form the words based on thoughts of a community that would turn against itself, I realized that this young person was experiencing real pain. I wanted to say, "It's ok, sweetheart, you don't have to talk to scary people if you don't want to, it's your right to choose who you want as your friends or who you will allow close to you." I realized that I was talking to a very young girl, perhaps younger than her chronological age might suggest, another hallmark of the transgender's developmental sketch.

Who could blame such a young woman for trying to retain her innocence and deliver her own inner child safely into a more normal adulthood free from all the conflicts and strife found in the lives of so many transgender people, particularly those with more life experience than she has had living in the opposite sex role than their true gender identification. What becomes apparent is that there are some people who have gender identity disorder (GID) who do not identify with the movement or community as captured by the terms "Transgender" or "Transsexual." Instead they would self identify in more specific terms such as, "I am a female with an anatomical error." Of course this discussion is inclusive of the FTM population who may also experience similar feelings about their masculine identities.

So how does a person who is fighting one of these gender conflicts find himself or herself fitting into any community with an identity or body

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TALKING ABOUT MARRIAGE

By HRC President Cheryl Jacques

Since I started at the Human Rights Campaign, I have had the opportunity to talk with gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people nationwide about the path to equality. Foremost in the minds of many I have been honored to meet is this question: why is marriage so important?

If you're wondering this, you're not alone. According to a Harris Interactive poll we recently commissioned, half of all GLBT adults think civil unions are the same as marriage. Unfortunately, that's just not true.

Simply put, civil unions do not provide any of the more than 1,000 protections or securities afforded under federal law through a marriage license. They are recognized today in only one state - Vermont - and provide only the state benefits of marriage. If two men in a civil union travel across state lines, they carry with them none of the rights or protections that they have in Vermont.

These critical distinctions boil down to unfairness. With every paycheck, GLBT employees pay into the Social Security system - allowing spouses and children to access Social Security survivor benefits when a loved one passes away. These benefits can easily total more than \$1,800 a month. (See www.hrc.org/familynet for examples.) But couples in a civil union have no access to these benefits. Even if you have no desire to marry, you're still paying into a system that discriminates against same-sex couples.

Couples in a civil union have no access to the federal laws like Family and Medical Leave Act, to equal immigration rights, to continued health care coverage. Under federal law, same-sex couples are strangers.

Some also feel that civil unions are a necessary compromise, given the public's struggle with marriage. But civil unions are not the solution. Even if civil

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part that disqualifies them? The Internet has facilitated many young people who assume an identity and sex role that runs its course unchecked. They may not even participate in any "Trans" communities, feeling instead that it would be more appropriate for them to associate only with communities of people born to the genetic phylum to which they experience themselves to belong.

So how does the world become a safer place for post-op men and women who have gone this route and not participated in pride parades or LGBT community centers and the litigations associated with the gender rights movement? If everyone were to slip into the sex and gender role to which they ascribe while the world is left none the wiser, wouldn't we still have all the same ignorance, prejudice and discrimination?

Where do young people with a gender conflict find support for the many issues that they must navigate? Surely a chat room filled with high school aged females from a local soccer team can't offer much in the way of insight to a transsexual peer who has to sort out the complexities of a first day of transition at the locker room. Are individual sessions with a Gender Therapist enough? What about all the young people from families who can't even afford a Therapist?

"In an ideal world, I would be able to transition as a very young child and attend school in my correct gender and sex. Nobody needs to know. I don't want to ever go through a portion of my adult life with male body parts or assume a man's life and role," the 19-year old-continued.

What will happen when our young friend grows up and is dating or newly wed? Will she possess the skills and experience to live life out of her closet? Transsexuals who are not "out" are living a life of stealth, which many describe as terrifying. Looking over their shoulder, they express fears such as "What if someone one day finds out, or what will my partner say when they find out from a family member or some otherwise unexplainable past experience which comes back to haunt us?" Some gender activists who comment on such strategies have said that individuals who go stealth have jumped from one closet to the next. The best way to live life is honestly and in complete acceptance of who and what we are, and that should be okay in society. Exchanging one lie for another, going forward in denial of our past is both unnecessary and dangerous.

Still, while so much hostility and violence prevails in much of society toward transgenders, who could blame them for living in stealth or disidentifying, even distancing themselves with the trans community? Maybe one day the world will be very different and because of those who are fighting to win acceptance and the human rights battle, there may be a safe place for a future generation of transsexual youth who can proudly wear this label for as long as it applies and then fit in with the other members of their felt gender and sex.

Born in Sacramento, CA in 1959, Jaime Ray grew up and was educated in the S. F. Bay Area. She obtained her Masters Degree in Counseling, graduating from the University of San Francisco. Together with her son Dan Ray, she began efforts to inform the public about subjects related to persons with sexual identity issues and their family members in 1999. Jaime presently writes for and co-moderates two yahoo based forums with more than 300 members that are also focused on issues of sexual or gender identity. Her other interests are mountaineering, rock climbing, skiing and birding.

MAN OF THE HOSE - PART TWO

(continued from February, 2004 Channel)

From stockings to sequins, Studio Lites has cross-dressing covered.

By Laura Bond

(Denver) - The first time Bill came into Studio Lites, he looked around the store, then ran out and didn't return for a year and a half. Now he's one of its most loyal customers, coming in about once a month for a makeover. His wife isn't crazy about his cross-dressing; it's something they've worked through in their marriage. But Bill's wife has met Rick and Chris, which helps. They've even gone to Bill's home for dinner.

"I was in the closet for fifty years," Bill says. "For me, it started when I was a little kid: having an interest in my mother's clothes, maybe buying one or two items at Christmas as I got older, saying they were for my wife. You always feel ashamed doing it, like there's something wrong with you, but you can't stop. Studio Lites helped me realize how many other people there are who do this. It's helped my wife realize that, too."

"A lot of the wives have a really hard time with it," Rick says. "We'll get calls from women who are looking at their credit-card statements; they want to know what this place is. I always tell them, 'That's something you'll have to talk to your husband about.' It can be very confusing for the women, which I understand."

"Your average cross-dresser is not gay," Chris continues. "That's the major misconception. People ask me for advice all the time: 'Is my boyfriend gay? I found him dressing up in women's clothes.' That's the number-one assumption that most women make, but in reality, about 99 percent of cross-dressers are straight. It's not a sex thing for them; it's a femininity thing — opening a window. But I always tell them that one of the rules is that they shouldn't look prettier or more glamorous than their wives. Because then you can introduce resentment, then there's a rivalry there, and that's only going to compound the problems in the relationship. 'The whole goal is to go in somewhere, sit down and blend. It's an experience, a pleasure moment, the whole thing.'"

But some customers pay a heavy psychic price for that pleasure moment. A few customers ride the bus in order to avoid parking their cars in the Studio Lites lot. One client, whom Chris describes as a "high-profile local politico," will come to the shop only after normal business hours.

"Some of them are terrified at the notion of being seen here," he says. "They'd rather hop a fence than have their car spotted back there. But who knows? They could be coming in to get a wig for their mom, or a hairpiece for their dad. Some of them will explain, when they walk up to the counter with some ruffled panties or whatever, 'Oh, um, these aren't for me. They're for my girlfriend.' And my thing is, I don't care who they're for, I just want to make sure they fit."

Studio Lites fits seventy-year-old Flora Lee Curly just fine. Diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor in April, she'd lost the motor skills necessary to brush and style her own hair and spotted the store while riding the bus down Broadway. Since then, she and her husband, Dennis, have bought three wigs.

"If I had to go anywhere else, I think I would just stop wearing wigs," Flora Lee says. "Christopher and Rick are just the sweetest, most caring, loving people you've ever met. The first time we came in on the bus, they insisted on driving us home after we'd shopped. I had planned to buy a blond wig, because I've always been a blonde, but Chris suggested a darker one, and I tried it on, and he cut and styled it just right, and it was just perfect. I love it."

"My appearance was always important to me when I was younger," she adds. "And now that this has happened to me, I'm just taking each day as it comes and waiting to see what happens. But these two young men have helped me continue to look good and to feel good, and it's just a wonderful thing."

Flora Lee isn't the first customer to visit the Studio Lites wig room for medical reasons. The space also stocks breast forms for women who've undergone mastectomies. Rick, who has a degree in gerontology and worked in a Navy chemotherapy lab used by military men and women and their dependents, helps out with many of the shop's customers who have medical needs, some of whom are referred to Studio Lites by their doctors.

"We'll take time to get to know them, if that's what we feel they want," he says. "We'll try to figure out if they've had a treatment before, how it's going for them. We'll sell them a wig, then maybe they'll come back in another six months to get a different style, because everyone likes to make changes in their look. We might teach them something about changing their makeup, because some chemo treatments will take the color out of your skin. We'll give them some red tones, some lip color. Maybe they've had radiation and they've lost all of the hair on their body. We'll sell them eyebrow pencils, eyelashes if they want them."

"When you've got a chemo patient coming in, you'd better be ready with that box of tissues," adds Rick. "It takes an understanding of where they're coming from psychologically. It's almost an unspoken thing: For many of them, if they can feel that they look good on the outside, they automatically feel better on the inside. You can see them change right before your eyes. When they leave, they're beaming."

The medical clients rarely cross paths with the cross-dressers. "A lot of our customers — our strippers and drag queens — they don't even move before noon," Chris explains. "So a medical client may not even see them or have any idea that we cater to them."

"Studio Lites is probably one of the most unique places I've ever set foot in," says Maris the Great, a performance artist who's never seen out of his elaborate, and macabre, zombie costume — complete with green face paint and lots of fake blood. "I buy all of my makeup there, and I'm always wearing it when I go in. Those guys never even flinched when they saw me. They have an incredible ability to pick up on things about their customers. They know exactly how to treat each person. And they love to talk and tell stories. I always tell them, 'This is the place that I come to get freaked out.'"

And there are some parts of the business peculiar to cross-dressing. For example, Rick says, "We had to install a vent system because there were so many men coming in here, so nervous they were just sweating profusely."

Then, too, there's the pantyhose issue. "A very good percentage of the guys who come in here already have pantyhose on," says Rick. "When we first started, I had to go on hose-wrapper duty in the parking lot, because where are they supposed to put their hose on? They can't do it at home. They don't want to do it at work. They'll come here, buy a pair, then go out in their car and yank them on."

"There used to be a mechanic shop next door, and I heard that one of them said something like, 'You know, it's the oddest place, because you could have one car pull in, and out comes a man. Then two hours later, you see this very tall woman with big hair come out, get in the car and drive away.'"

Right now, there's a real woman with a long ponytail in the lingerie room, carefully studying the merchandise. Chris asks if she needs any assistance. "I'm looking for some multi-colored hair extensions that I can braid into my hair," she says. "I really want to find something I can take home to freak my parents out." Chris leads her by the arm into another room. He's got just the thing.

Bill's transformation complete, Betty and Chris leave the shop and head down Broadway to the Atrium Bar and Grill, a neighborhood beer joint that Chris is slowly turning into a cabaret club. Last month it began hosting drag shows, burlesque and other performances under the name Studio 554. The Atrium's owners have entrusted Chris to reshape the place into a meeting ground for the same eclectic mix of people served by the store: gay, straight, cross-dressing, transgendered, he-males, she-males — everyone.

But tonight it's still got the feel of a run-down dive. And when Chris and Betty walk in, men with scraggly beards and smudgy glasses of draft beer stare, both buzzed and confused. Betty paces the room in a catwalk Bill perfected with Chris's help but never makes eye contact with any of the people at the bar. Betty didn't come here for conversation; she came to look good, and she does.

"Betty is one of my biggest challenges, because Bill is large and very manly," says Chris. "But we always manage to make him look great. He's so enthusiastic. He loves it. I swear, sometimes he races down the mountain to get here. He can get to Studio Lites from Evergreen in fifteen minutes. He just loves it so much; it makes me feel so good."

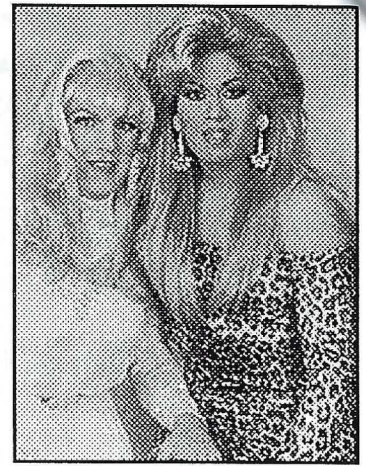
"I do think I look good," Betty says. "I think I have pretty nice legs. It's like va-voom! It's just like everything else that you worry about in your life just goes away."

But reality will cut this night short. Bill's wife has a dead battery, and he needs to shift back into man mode, drive to the suburbs and give her car a jump. So they return to Studio Lites, where Betty goes into the ladies' room, emerging as Bill, dressed in a heavy coat and worn jeans.

"Sometimes I think I just want to dress all the time," Bill says. "But that's another thing that Chris does for you. He puts the brakes on. He says, 'Keep it a fun thing. Don't let it take over your life. You have too much too lose.' Still, it's sad to take it off when the night's over."

Bill puts a baseball cap on his head, climbs into his truck and revs the huge engine.

He's left his pantyhose on.



Boys will be girls: Rick Smith as Bianca (left) and Chris Gradford as Morganna.

THE CORSET GOURMET'S GUIDE TO WAIST-TRAINING AND HAPPY EATING

(c) by Ann Grogan 2004

President, ROMANTASY Exquisite Corsetry

Excerpt from *Corset Magic: A Fun Guide to Trim Your Waist and Figure*

To be published 2004 (available now for sale in manuscript form, www.romantasy.com) If you already know the short—and long—term body-reshaping benefits of consistent, moderate restriction of your waistline in a custom corset, you likely also know that eating can present quite a challenge when you corset!

Four simple keys outlined below, will steer you clear of hearty cases of heartburn when you corset. After all, you don't want to look your corseted, curvy best in a smashing new gown, but feel your worst at the same time! And if you're wearing that corset at home to achieve permanent waist reduction, you don't want to sabotage your goals by senseless acts of over-indulgence. When you're squishing your innards with a corset and trying to bear up for some hours at home or out on a date, you just have to reexamine how you eat. The "how" is at least as important as the "what" you eat in waist training. In *Corset Magic*, we take a broad look at both issues, including your lifestyle, and give you a multitude of tips to improve your chances of happy eating while corseted. Here are some of them.

Key One - Pay Attention to What You Put in Your Mouth

The first step for happy eating while corseting is to focus on and understand exactly what you put in your mouth and how much.

Dr. Miriam Nelson of Yale University, agrees. "One of the themes of this book (*Strong Women Eat Well*) is that we need to be aware of what we eat. Awareness is not vigilance, and the obsessing over food can be as unhealthy and as reckless as indifference to it." She also says "Awareness of what you eat and delight in eating are the keys to managing all your nutritional needs."

This process of becoming fully conscious of what you're doing and why can be beneficial to your entire lifestyle, not just to times you corset. It may well solve any problems you have of general overindulgence when you aren't wearing a corset, or eating too much when you are.

I remember a dangerous habit of chewing on my inner lip that I decided to break when I started my profession as a lawyer. My dentist had warned me several times of the consequences should I persist—cancer! Yet the stress of law school, finding a job, then surviving the first years of my practice were immense and I continued to periodically and unconsciously chew my lip.

One day I called a psychiatrist who advertised that he was certified in hypnosis. I set up an appointment a week later and received an immediate homework assignment to prepare. He asked me to post a list on the refrigerator and in my Day Timer calendar, and bring it to my appointment. Every time I caught myself chewing my lip I was to note the time of day, where I was, and what I was doing. In addition, on a scale of one to ten with ten being most stress, I was to record my level of stress. I hung up the phone and dutifully started the list. Four days later I called the doctor and canceled my appointment. To my surprise if not to his, I'd solved my problem and I never again chewed my lip. The mere step of becoming conscious of my bad habit, bringing it fully to my attention, helped me to abandon it. How can you become more conscious? Try these tips.

Refuse to recount tales of woe about office coups or political plots at the dinner table because, if you do, you'll be distracted from what you're eating and tend to revert back to normal bad eating habits. Choose only pleasant, non-stressful dinner topics if you eat with a companion. If you eat alone, beware of eating while watching television. It's better to listen to soothing music. Create a romantic or at least restful atmosphere for mealtime.

Watch out for stress in general. The media, and several of my email correspondents, reported how many of us reacted to unimaginable stress after September 11, or the start of the Iraq War: we ate . . . and ate! As you pick up your fork to take a bite, intentionally look at the food on your fork. If the quantity of food in the bite looks normal to you, then put the fork down. Take half as much on your fork, until you get the hang of taking small bites each and every time.

Key Two - Be Aware of How Your Body Reacts to Food

"The body never lies." — Martha Graham. A person who corsets must pay close daily attention to his or her body to avoid distressing experiences that force you to take your corset off. Sometimes these experiences overcome you very quickly if you aren't tuned in to your body's signals. By becoming aware of the messages your body is sending regarding food and corsets, "waist reduction will work with you instead of against you" advises ROMANTASY's famous corset maker, Ruth Johnson. (*Corset News Letter*, No. 35, page 2, November 1989, formerly published by Ruth and Lewis Johnson.)

Talking About Marriage...

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unions provided all the same legal protections of marriage - which they don't - they would still be a separate and unequal system.

Ten years ago, many said that domestic partnerships were unrealistic. Five years ago, civil unions were cutting-edge. We are at a moment in history where marriage is a reality. We must not cede that right just because people are uncomfortable. Sure, there are many of us who may not be ready to settle down now. However, our poll reflects that 78 percent of our community wants to be able to marry. For the 22 percent who don't, this should still be their personal choice to make, not the government's.

Speaking of the government, President Bush is prepared to enshrine this unequal treatment in our nation's Constitution. And the press is reporting that he will endorse the Musgrave anti-family amendment to our Constitution. This would not only forever ban any state from allowing same-sex couples to marry but could strike at the heart of a state's ability to provide even limited legal protections or civil unions to same-sex couples.

Officials said Bush was planning to announce this as a way to "to start the general election campaign on a fresh issue." Make no mistake, President Bush is trying to win this election on our backs. He is playing politics with our lives and our families. It's intolerable, it's shameful and it's an ugly way to run a campaign.

It's time for us to speak up. That same Harris poll showed that the majority of us don't talk to family, friends and colleagues about the impact of discrimination on our lives. We are depriving the people who love us most of the opportunity to fight for us, to vote for us and to end the discrimination against us.

This silence is a barrier to our equality. I personally know the difficulties of coming out. But being out and being able to discuss these issues with your friends and family is so important.

Generally, our friends, families and colleagues don't know that we can't get married. They don't think we can be fired in 36 states for being gay or in 46 states for being transgender. They don't know that we could be blocked at the hospital room door. Or that we can't get Social Security benefits. We need to tell them.

Poll after poll shows that people who know openly GLBT people are far more likely to support our equal rights - in the workplace, in marriage rights and in all the areas we lack critical protection.

Some may say that our greatest enemies are extremist groups like Focus on the Family - who are dangerous, loud and well-funded. But at this moment, our greatest challenges are silence, ignorance and apathy. The majority of Americans care about equality. Most just don't know we lack it. It's time for us to do some talking.

If you're new to corseting and waist training, knowing your specific body and its reactions to food and drink may not be as easy as it sounds. You might not yet know that when you wear corsets, "The body is not exactly the same every hour of every day. Stress, diet, and weather all cause changes in how the body reacts to tight-lacing." (CNL, No. 35, page 2, November 1989.)

We also might not recognize our feelings and body's messages when we have them. Such recognition requires paying attention and thinking about your feelings and your body. Male corset clients typically have a more difficult time with this concept than my female clients. This is likely because, historically, it's not been socially acceptable for a man to admit to feeling poorly or to spend much time doting on his feelings. Pumping iron, bearing up under adverse conditions, thinking, and risking—all these are socially acceptable activities for a man.

Consequently, it will take more time and be more important for a man who corsets to become conscious of how different foods affect his body and sense of well-being. Likewise, it will be more urgent for a man than a woman to attend to incipient pains experienced from the corset and not overindulge out of a masculine habit of pushing the limit. If you know you have an acidic stomach, beware of what you eat. Raw fruits and vegetables while tight-laced, as well as vinegar-based salad dressing, can cause distress. I love eating fresh salads with dressing while corseted, but one of my models finds them excruciating to her tummy. Ruth Johnson suggests substituting nonfat yogurt for salad dressing on salads and baked potatoes. (CNL, No. 35, page 2, November 1988.)

Also beware of coffee and any beverage containing caffeine, as well as excessive consumption of alcohol. Wine, especially, contains high levels of sugar and acid, and alcohol can make you exceedingly thirsty. Coffee contains certain acids. These beverages on an empty and corseted stomach can be murder.

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Corset Guide To Waist-Trainingæ...

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I remember an extremely uncomfortable morning in Marseilles, France, that involved coffee but no corset! For breakfast I ordered a pitch-black demitasse of espresso coffee and drank it down before the waiter brought my croissant. I hardly had time to take one bite of the sweet before I bolted out of the door and ran for my hotel room, almost doubled over in pain. My distress was caused by strong black coffee on an empty tummy!

If you corset, it's best to limit your alcohol intake and restrict yourself to a cup of coffee during or after your meal. Try herbal teas such as chamomile, fennel, mint, and ginger, known for years if not centuries to soothe the tummy and provide a great substitute for that after-dinner cordial or cup of coffee.

Key Three - Eat Half as Much as You Normally Eat

We're talking here about two things: temptation and portion control. The fewer temptations you put in front of yourself to overeat, the more success you'll have in cutting down the quantity of food you eat. One of my successful transgendered waist-training students, GiGi, lost 3 inches around her waist in three months of waist-training. She controlled her tendencies to overindulge in the following way: "I cope by limiting my exposure to such situations."

If you're lucky enough to have someone prepare meals for you at home, negotiate their solemn promise to put half as much food as you normally eat on your plate. That's especially hard if you have a mother like mine. When I'm on a diet or waist training, I avoid visits with her because invariably she forgets my request to not force-feed me like a holiday goose! If you can't avoid visits with friends and family who are convinced it's their solemn duty to plump you up, steel yourself to let them overload your plate, then push half of it to the back of your plate and eat only the remainder at the front. If you can get away with it, cover the back half of your plate with a napkin.

One approach with a loving parent trying to do her best, might be to stress that by not force-feeding you and by encouraging you to eat veggies she is actually contributing to your health. When Ron C. came to order a waist-training corset, he told me he came from a traditional Chinese family. His mom felt it her duty to keep her son well fed, especially since he was supporting the family. But Ron was uncomfortable with the 20-plus pounds he had added to his medium-sized frame, primarily because he had been diagnosed with elevated cholesterol and told to cut down on calories. I advised him to sit down with his mom for a serious conversation and rely on the authority of his physician to convey the danger to his life and to emphasize his desire to change his diet to low-fat, high fiber. It worked!

As a child, you might use this "tough love" approach with your doting parent. Try your best not to give in. I hope you do a better job than I do in those circumstances, especially when it comes to Mom's home made desserts. If you cook for yourself, plan to wear your corset before you begin, and beware tasting the ingredients before you actually sit down to eat. Instead, drink a full glass of water and eat one piece of fruit, preferably one that contains a lot of water such as an apple, before you starting cooking and at least 30 minutes before you eat. This works well before any meal to minimize your appetite.

Switch to using smaller plates, cups, and glasses. When I was trying to get control of my tendency to drink too much morning coffee, I noted that I reached automatically for my favorite, artistically decorated, ceramic mug and that it was just huge. Furthermore, it was black inside and I couldn't see the amount of coffee I was pouring. You've seen these gorgeous mugs at coffee shop chains or department stores, where I've also seen commuter coffee mugs that contain twice as much as my favorite mug.

I immediately reached for a half-size delicate glass mug on my shelf, which clearly revealed the amount of coffee I had poured and reduced the quantity. I also "trick" myself by filling my cup half-full because I hate to drink cold coffee. By pouring only a half cup and making myself get up to get a warm-up, I also cut down on what I was drinking. You can also cut your portion sizes by this simple trick. One morning when I was contemplating eating a particularly delicious almond-flavored plumped-up American version of the English scone, it dawned on me to simply cut it into slices about one-quarter inch wide. I then arranged what would fit, only one-half of the scone, in a semicircle on a dessert plate with a dab of my Mom's homemade Santa Rosa plum jelly in the middle. It looked to me as if I were eating a whole scone for breakfast! You can do the same with super-sized caloric muffins and even pieces of carrot cake you purchase at coffee shops to accompany your afternoon coffee.

If you must go out to a buffet for dinner or to a holiday party with tempting high-fat, high-calorie treats, sit far away from them and face away from the food table. Other holiday strategies suggested by Kelly James-Enger in Family Circle magazine were helpful: At family get-togethers, bring a low-fat dish such as vegetarian chili or a fruit plate. (December 12, 2000). Decide in advance what favorite to splurge on and fill up your plate with high-fiber treats such as fresh fruit, raw veggies, turkey, or whole-wheat bread. "By incorporating more lower-calorie foods into your menu plan, you can actually lose weight without feeling hungry," says James-Enger.

I remember one particularly tempting party hosted by a lady from Dubia, Arab Emirates. The feast she presented was fit for—well, you know. . . and I was tightly corseted! I want you to know that I managed to try almost every single dish she set out, but I did so in tiny portions and with repeat trips to the buffet table from 6pm when I arrived to help set up, until I left at 11pm. The trick is to take one shrimp, not five at a time, or two meat balls, not ten at a time, and keep coming back!

If you eat out where only one entree will be ordered, so long as you're not dining in an exclusive restaurant, be sure you wear your corset and ask the waiter when he or she takes your order to deliver a doggie bag with the basket of bread or your first drink. Better yet, skip the bread! When your dinner arrives, immediately portion off one-half or more and slip it into the doggie bag, close the bag, and put it out of sight in your lap or purse. If your eyes don't see the food, your tummy will think it's eaten a complete meal as normal, plus you have something to look forward to the next day.

Key Four - Slow Down When You Eat

A few simple changes in your mealtime habits will help you slow down when you eat. "I advocate slow eating, especially for people who are trying to lose weight," says Professor Sherman Dickman in Pathways to Wellness. Fast eaters consume way too much before their cerebral cortexes get the message that sufficient food has been eaten. If you're wearing a corset and you don't pay attention to this fact, you are in for a tough time. In addition, the slower you eat, the longer your enjoyment, says Dr. Dickman.

But how to do it? Just follow these simple, effective steps, even if you are not corseting during meal times:

1. Always sit down and never, ever eat on the run (never! . . . just thought I'd add that for good measure!)
2. Set your fork down between bites every single time without fail
3. Chew each bite or food at least 30 times or more, and count to yourself to make sure you do
4. Don't mix different foods in one bite. Rather, eat a bite of meat, set the fork down, chew well and swallow, then eat a bite of vegetable and continue this pattern throughout dinner.

And men—yes, you, who have otherwise honed the fine art of feminine presentation, but who are still subject to the caveman habit of shoveling food at the fastest rate possible from plate to gullet, please, please, keep your head up and lift your fork from the plate to your mouth! Don't dip your head to within inches of your plate to make the process go faster. Think of eating as "fine dining," not feeding time at the zoo. After all, we should be eating to corset well and look our best, not living to eat!

Conclusion

For those who temporarily corset or who permanently trim their figure through corset waist-training, as well as for those who do not, healthy eating habits and food (not diets, pills, or supplements) is where the process of nutrition starts. I've come to believe that taking care of ourselves by good nutrition and healthy eating habits is one crucial pathway to a happy life. I hope you agree.

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



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Study: Genes May Trump Nurture With Intersex Kids

Randy Dotinga, Gay.com
PlanetOut.com Network

Sex-change operations aren't just for grown-ups. A tiny number of newborn baby boys go under the knife when their genitals are so malformed that surgeons figure it's better to raise them as girls. But a new study suggests that switching genders is hardly so simple.

Researchers found that eight of 14 boys who grew up as females later declared themselves to be male. Nurture, it seems, couldn't beat out nature, at least in most of the children. "It certainly will make doctors think twice before rapidly performing genital surgery on intersex children," said Dr. Eric Vilain, a genetics expert at the University of California at Los Angeles. "Hopefully, the doctors will wait to see which gender develops before performing surgery."

The fate of so-called "intersex" children has long been a major topic of debate. What do you do with babies who are born with birth defects that make it difficult to recognize their gender? About one of every 3,000 babies has a more serious problem — severely malformed or so-called "ambiguous" genitalia. The gender of the child may not be obvious, and the babies often appear to be both male and female.

In the past, influential psychologists theorized that "gender identity" had everything to do with environment: Raise an intersex boy as a girl, maybe with the help of surgery and hormone treatments, and he — she — will grow up to think and act like a woman. This approach didn't always work. In a famous case documented in the book "As Nature Made Him: The Boy Who Was Raised as a Girl," a Canadian boy who suffered a botched circumcision was operated upon and raised as a girl. He suffered through a tortured adolescence and later chose to live as a man and get married.

In reality, "Nature as well as nurture affects your gender identity," says Dr. Melvin Grumbach, a pediatrician and professor emeritus at the University of California at San Francisco. "It's not all one or another — and in an individual, you can not be sure what is the deterministic factor."

In the new study, researchers spent several years following the lives of 16 children who were born with a defect known as cloacal exstrophy that left them without normal penises. All the children are genetically male; all but two underwent surgery to remove their testes (which were inside their bodies) and create female genitalia. The findings of the study appear in the Jan. 22 issue of the New England Journal of Medicine.

The two children with intact testes were raised as boys and continued to think of themselves as males. The other 14 were raised as girls, and even their birth certificates reflected their new genders. Eight of the 14 later declared themselves to be male, and six of them said they wanted to undergo sex-change surgery to gain penises. All 14 had some male traits: They had trouble interacting with girls (but not boys), and they reported little interest in playing with dolls or playing house.

"In normal genetic and hormonal males, there's a rather distinct likelihood that their brain has been masculinized, both in terms of their behaviors and their identity, how they see themselves," said study co-author Dr. William G. Reiner, a pediatric urologist at University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

Experts said the study provides more evidence that psychologists and doctors need to tread carefully as they decide whether to "assign" an intersex child to a particular gender at birth. "What's critical for all of us as surgeons is to operate when operations are indicated," Reiner said. "If we don't know if they're indicated, we should be careful about doing them."

Transcending Transgender

Sponsored by
City of Refuge UCC Outreach Ministries

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



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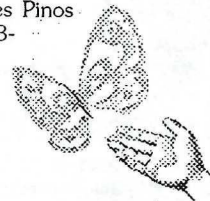
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BOYS WILL BE BOYS DESPITE SEX-CHANGE SURGERY

By Karla Gale
Healthy Pages.co.uk

NEW YORK (Reuters Health) - Boys born with a rare disorder in which the penis is missing often undergo surgery at birth to make them full-fledged girls. However, new research reveals that over time, many of these children assume a male identity, despite hormonal treatments and rearing practices designed to bring out their feminine side.

"The idea that you can raise a child from birth as a particular sex and the child will become that sex is an extraordinarily new idea," co-author Dr. William G. Reiner told Reuters Health. "For genetic males exposed to normal amounts of male hormones in utero, it looks like a substantial number of them are going to recognize that they are male, no matter what you do."

Dr. Reiner and Dr. John P. Gearhart, both at Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions in Baltimore, assessed the outcomes of 16 boys born with the rare disorder, known as cloacal-exstrophy.

About 1 in 400,000 children are born with the condition. Although the disorder involves an absent or tiny penis, the testes are normal and, as a result, so are testosterone levels. By removing the testes and giving female hormone injections, doctors had been hopeful that boys with the disorder could be successfully treated by changing them into girls.

In the current group, 14 of the boys had their testes removed and their genitals reconstructed to resemble those of females. The remaining two boys were reared as boys because of parent preference. When the children were between 5 and 16 years old, the authors questioned the parents and the children regarding their psychosexual development and sexual identity.

Eight subjects had "unwavering male identity" — four after being told about their disorder and four spontaneously between ages 7 and 12. One refused to discuss sexual identity after being told about the birth condition.

Those wishing to live as males used male restrooms when they were away from their families and school, and all eight expressed a desire for surgical penis construction. Moreover, parents found that children seemed to be happier since undergoing transition back to the male sex.

Five subjects, none of whom were told of their birth status, maintained a female identity throughout follow-up. They kept their female names and always used female bathrooms.

However, all 16 subjects displayed "moderate-to-marked male-typical behaviors," the investigators write.

For example, they were more aggressive, they did not play with dolls and they had difficulty fitting in with girls, but not with boys. The children did not want to dress in girl's clothes after about age 4.

Reiner, currently at the University of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City, recommends that genital reconstruction surgery be delayed in these infants. "You're making enormous assumptions in a newborn that you can't substantiate," he said. "The only way to substantiate anything in a newborn is to wait until they're older."

Waiting also means that more of these patients will have their natural testes, he added, thus avoiding the need for lifelong hormone replacement therapy.

In an editorial, Dr. Daniel D. Federman, from Harvard Medical School in Boston, notes that these findings point "strongly to a hormonal role in the sexualization of the brain."

Laws Can't Define "Man" Or "Woman", So How Can They Ban Gay Marriage?

William O. Beeman
via Pacific News Service

The Massachusetts Supreme Court advisory, stating that nothing short of marriage for same-sex couples would satisfy the state constitution, has sent legislators throughout the nation as well as President Bush scrambling to define marriage as between "one man and one woman."

These legislative attempts are doomed, because there is no clear, scientific and strict definition of "man" and "woman." There are millions of people with ambiguous gender — many of them already married — who render these absolute categories invalid.

There are at least three ways one might try to codify gender under law — biologically, psychologically and culturally. On close inspection, all of them fail.

Biologically, one must choose either secondary sexual characteristics — things like facial hair for men or breast development for women — or genetic testing as defining markers of gender. Neither method is clear-cut. Some women show male secondary characteristics, and vice versa. Before puberty, things are not necessarily any clearer. A significant proportion of all babies have ambiguous gender development. It has been longstanding — and now, increasingly, controversial — medical practice to surgically "reassign" such babies shortly after birth so that they will have only one set of sexual organs.

Sometimes doctors guess wrong, and children are "reassigned" and raised as males, when they are genetically female, and vice versa.

In one condition, androgen insensitivity syndrome, genetic males are born with a genetic immunity to androgens, the hormones that produce male sexual characteristics. Though they are genetic males, these children typically grow up looking like females, although they have no internal female organs.

Although figures are imprecise, experts in intersexuality, such as Dr. Anne Fausto-Sterling of Brown University, estimate that persons born with some degree of ambiguous gender constitute approximately 1 percent of the population. This means that there are 2 million Americans who may be biologically ambiguous.

Psychologically, another dilemma for those who seek to codify gender is the condition known as gender dysphoria, in which a person feels that their true gender is the opposite of that in which they were born. These individuals are often referred to as "transgendered." Some experts estimate as many as 1.2 million Americans are transgendered. Gender dysphoria is a matter of personal identity and has nothing to do with sexual orientation. A male-to-female transgendered person may be attracted to women or to men.

Finally, human societies around the world recognize individuals who are culturally female or culturally male no matter what their physical gender. The "berdache" is an umbrella term used by Europeans to designate a man who is culturally classified as a woman, and who may be a "wife" to another man. The practice is perhaps best known among the Zuni Indians of Arizona, but is widely seen in other tribal groups as well. Outside of North America, the hijra of India, a cultural "third gender," is important in ceremonial life. Hijra are classified as "neither man nor woman," but they may marry males. These examples of cultural gender ambiguity are only two among dozens throughout the world.

If the United States tries to enact a national law defining gender conditions for marriage, it is only a matter of time before the law falters on one of these rocks of ambiguity. There are undoubtedly existing marriages where the wife is a genetic male or the husband is a genetic female. In a medical examination, if it is determined that this genetic fact is discovered, is the marriage then voided? When post-operative transgendered persons wed, whom will they be allowed to marry — persons with the opposite set of chromosomes, or people with the opposite set of genitalia?

More Cotillion 2004 Pics!



ONLINE SO LIST!

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

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