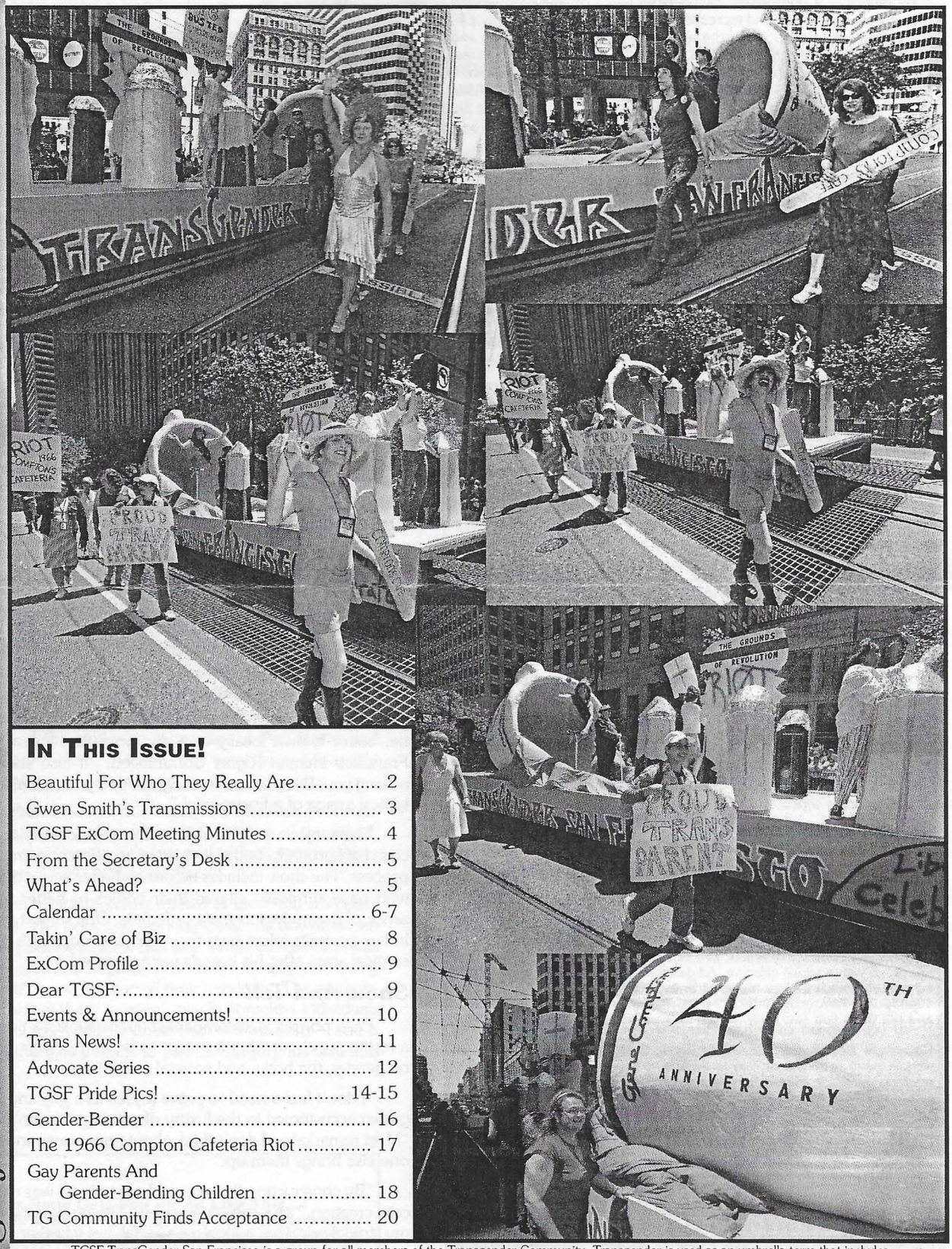
August 2006 | *A Quarter Century of Service!* | Volume 25, Issue 8

The Channel

Bustin' Out With Pride!



In This Issue!

Beautiful For Who They Really Are 2
Gwen Smith's Transmissions 3
TGSF ExCom Meeting Minutes 4
From the Secretary's Desk 5
What's Ahead? 5
Calendar 6-7
Takin' Care of Biz 8
ExCom Profile 9
Dear TGSF: 9
Events & Announcements! 10
Trans News! 11
Advocate Series 12
TGSF Pride Pics! 14-15
Gender-Bender 16
The 1966 Compton Cafeteria Riot 17
Gay Parents And Gender-Bending Children 18
TG Community Finds Acceptance 20

TGSF TransGender San Francisco is a group for all members of the Transgender 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 2006 - 2007 Officers

(Fiscal Year: May 1 - April 30)

President ..... Allison D. Laureano
Vice President ..... Jennifer Kennedy
Secretary ..... Lisa Rae Dummer
Treasurer ..... OPEN
Education ..... Dawnne Woodie
Jennifer Anderson
Outreach ..... Becky Benton
Bonnie Bryen
Social ..... Katra Briel
Ms. TGSF 2006 ..... Jennifer Anderson
Mr. TGSF 2006 ..... Sydney A. Mason

Fine Print

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

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

Newsletter Staff

Editor ..... Ayme Michelle Kantz
Advertising ..... Dawnne Woodie
Contributing Photographers, this Issue: ..... Jennifer Anderson, Eric Larson, Marina D., Sydney Mason, and Becky Benton

Ad Rates

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

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

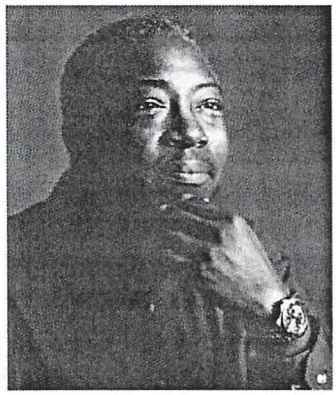
Copyright Statement: Material appearing in this newsletter is distributed without profit or monetary gain to those who have expressed an interest in receiving the article material for research and educational purposes. This is in accordance with Title 17 USC Section 107. Please note that distribution of articles doesn't constitute endorsement of the articles' content; "opposition" articles are distributed to educate interested readership about contrary and unfavorable standpoints.

WWW.TGSF.ORG
UPGRADED SITE! GET ONLINE!
HOTLINE & VOICE MAIL
415-564-3246

BEAUTIFUL FOR WHO THEY REALLY ARE

'Transfigurations: Photos of Self-Made Women and Men'

by Patrick Letellier
Bay Area Reporter



Lyle, from Transfigurations. Photo: Jana Marcus

It's a photo exhibit unlike anything most people have ever seen. Thirty-one large, black-and-white portraits of what appear to be ordinary men and women looking relaxed, peaceful and directly at the camera, their eyes holding your gaze as you move from picture to picture.

One man sports a trim beard, a print tie and a sly smile. Another crouches over slightly, balancing his five-year-old son on his shoulders. A third, shirtless and thickly muscled, rests both hands on the back of his head, as if gently flexing his biceps.

Like the men, the women are both elegant and unremarkable at the same time. One looks regal in a sleek print dress, hands folded, her face softly framed with dark, wavy hair. Another, with a wool cap and pretty smile, tilts her head slightly, her long, lean arms crossed on the table in front of her.

They all look like people you know, have worked with, or stood next to on the bus. Or people you've slept with. And that's the point.

The award-winning exhibit called Transfigurations, by Santa Cruz photographer Jana Marcus, features studio portraits of transgender men and women that strip away the veneer of drag-queen-glamour associated with trans women and add a modicum of visibility to the mostly invisible population of transgender men (think, um, can you even name one? OK, maybe you can, if you live in San Francisco.)

"It shows people who we are," says Marcus Arana, the man in the tie, better known locally as a discrimination investigator at the San Francisco Human Rights Commission. "It also shows that we walk among you. But you won't recognize us if you're looking for the stereotypical image of a transsexual."

The subjects include men and women of varying ages, races and class backgrounds, and shows them at different points in the transition process. The show includes before-and-after nudes of men and women who have surgically altered their bodies to better reflect their inner sense of themselves as male or female. One subject, Aidan, is featured in five portraits taken over two years that depict his breasts and, later, surgical scars after his breasts were removed.

Show And Tell

Each portrait is accompanied by the subject's personal statement, a testimony about what it means to be transgender, and their musings on gender, the body, and societal prejudice.

"I don't feel a need to prove myself as a guy any more, and I have grown accustomed to the luxury of passing," Aidan's statement reads. "Most remarkably, I don't think about trans issues any more until someone else brings them up."

"By constructing the woman I am today, I was able to become my own creation," says the statement by Tiffany Woods. "The outcome of my struggles is what makes me special, not whether I've had surgery to create a vagina."

Continued on Page 13

Transmissions

Lies And Deceptions

by Gwendolyn Ann Smith
Bay Area Reporter

Illustration: Christine Smith

Last year, Hurricane Katrina hit land near New Orleans, laying waste to the city and surrounding areas. Hundreds died, and many more were left without food, shelter, and most basic needs. In the course of this natural disaster, it became clear that the Federal Emergency Management Agency was to blame for these people remaining stranded for so long. This scandal was a low point for the Bush administration, and has left many Americans pondering whether we are on the right track as a country.

Of course, there have been some who have wanted to lay the blame for so much at the feet of those who lost it all to Hurricane Katrina, and who have been left as virtual refugees in their own home country. Perhaps, for some, this is easier than admitting that our government was wrong.

A month ago, in testimony before a congressional subcommittee, the Government Accountability Office revealed $1.4 billion in waste and fraud from Hurricane Katrina emergency assistance funds. Among the fraud that was in the news was a report that some of these funds were used to pay for genital reassignment surgery, what most would call a "sex change." This claim riled many about this waste of their money on something they view as frivolous as best.

Yet this surgery may never have actually happened.

According to the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition, no surgery of any type was paid for using emergency assistance funds. This is based on the very testimony mentioned above as presented by the Government Accountability Office. From further investigation, it sounds like the story may well simply be an urban myth, right up there with someone being charged $250 for Neiman Marcus cookies and the explosive properties of Pop Rocks and soda. Yet somewhere along the line, this went from a possible fabrication to front-page news in many major newspapers.

Like most urban legends, this feeds into all kinds of stereotypes. People like reading stories that fit their view of the world, and are willing to give these a little less critical look versus stories that challenge their closely-held opinions.

With Hurricane Katrina, many looked at those left homeless as, at best, riffraff. The poor, the working class, the downtrodden from some of the poorest parts of that city. While compassion was given, there was an equal helping of derision. Simply put, many cities opened their doors, but barred their windows. The assumption seemed to be that these indigent, newly homeless individuals were likely to rob you blind for their own self-interests – and a story like using emergency funds to pay for surgery fits well into such a view.

Add to this some of the common misconceptions of the transgenders. Like stereotypes of some races as lazy and criminal, gays and lesbians as being out to recruit children, and woman as flighty and irrational, transgender people are often stereotyped around the concept of deception. The argument is that if we are so willing to "conceal" our "true" gender, then how can we be trusted to be honest about anything else?

So it makes sense, based on that flawed logic, that a transgender person would take advantage of one of the greatest natural disasters in modern U.S. history in order to get surgery that many might call unnecessary. It is the same bias that comes into play when a prisoner is reported as being in transition, and it's the same thing that comes up in an anti-transgender murder.

Of course, from our perspective, we're not deceiving anyone. Indeed, we're showing our true self by going into transition, not the other way around.

This false assumption of deception is a powerful one. It is what Hollywood has made a lot of money off of, from Some Like It Hot – a comedy about two men who dress as women in an all-girl band to escape the mob – to the psychopathic killers of films like The Silence of the Lambs or Dressed to Kill. It is what our society assumes when it hears of transgender people. It is such a common belief that the story of a person having genital reassignment on the taxpayers' dime is all it takes to grab a headline.

NTAC released its information about the likely fabricating of this story in an attempt to set the record straight. The queer press has reported on this, but the outlets that wrote the initial stories have not paid much attention, let alone put up big "we were wrong" headlines in their newspapers. Not that I would expect them to.

So this story will continue to live until enough people understand that we are not out to deceive all we come across. It requires that we continue to educate others, and get them to see what the transgender are really here for.

In all honesty, it will never truly go away, just like there are still misogynists and racists in the world. Still, the more people who do know what we're about, the less sway these sorts of stories will hold.

Until then, I am sure we will see more of this, especially as transgender people begin to gain more political power in this world. It will be the stereotype to beat for transgender people.

Gwen Smith does not blow with gale force winds. You can find her online at www.gwensmith.com.

Hey!

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

Tall, feminine, graceful closet CD seeks Big Sister to help with shopping and makeup tips. I live alone so it's helpful if you can come here, but I can certainly travel. SF Area. Call (415) 000-0000. Up to 40 words only $10.00. Send text of ad and Check or Money Order to TGSF's PO Box, ATTN: Editor. Reach out and come out!

GenderQueer, Trans, & Gender Questioning Youth Group

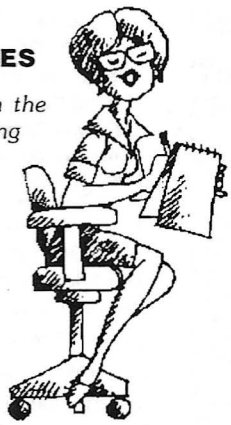
Billy DeFrank LGBT Community Center
www.defrank.org

This youth program will provide space for discussion groups, workshops and activities, specifically for genderqueer youth and their allies. We are excited to be offering this new programming, for an underserved population, even in our own community. This new group is for young people 20 and under, who identify somewhere on the gender nonconforming spectrum, who are questioning their gender identity or who are considering transitioning.

This group will meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month from 5-6pm at the DeFrank Center, which is located at 938 The Alameda, in San Jose. For more information please contact T. Aaron Hans, Program Director at 408.293.3040 ext. 112 or at progdir@defrank.org.

June 2, 2006

TGSF ExCom Meeting Minutes



[Editor's Note: These are the minutes from the June meeting; the minutes from the July meeting were not submitted by press time, and presumably will be published in next month's issue.]

The meeting was called to order at 7:20

Attending – In person -, Dawnne Woodie, Allison Laureano, Lisa Dummer, Bonnie Bryen, Becky Benton; By phone - Jennifer Anderson, Katra Briel

Absent – Tommi Watson, Jennifer Kennedy

The Minutes of the May 3, 2006 meeting were approved

President's Report – Allison Laureano

TGSF has been reinstated by the State of California. We are working to file tax returns for the years 1998, 2000, 2003 – 2005. There will be a screening of Screaming Queens at the Library on June 16th. The plaque will be placed on June 22nd at noon at the corner of Turk and Taylor. The selection of Ms. TG South Bay will take place on June 3rd. Jennifer Anderson is co-MC. TGSF would like to make a good appearance there to overcome rumors that we are abandoning the South Bay. On June 4th, TGSF will have an Outreach Booth at the Santa Cruz Pride festival. Anyone wishing to march can join with the Santa Cruz Diversity Center. On June 11th, TGSF will not be taking an official part in San Jose Pride Parade due to some logistical mistakes. We will be marching with the RGA contingent, though. On June 23rd, TGSF will not have an official participation in the Trans March due to its current sponsorship by a for-profit partnership but a number of members will be marching as individuals.

Vice President's Report – (Given by Allison Laureano)

Jenni Kennedy has asked to be allowed to resign for various personal reasons. Several of the members of the ExCom asked that this be tabled until the next meeting so that they would have an opportunity to speak with Jenni. This motion carried by roll call vote – Lisa-yes; Jennifer-yes; Dawnne-yes; Bonnie-yes; Becky-yes. Katra had left the phone call by this time. We will need 10 volunteers to work at the donation gate on Pride Sunday as well as at least 10 volunteers to act as contingent monitors for our float during the parade. Outreach will handle gathering the volunteers. Some may be able to do both jobs, but not all. There will be a conflict on time schedules for some people. We will check with the Pride committee to see if they will be providing us with the float bed this year. If not, other arrangements have been made but it will require some redesign of the float to fit the smaller bed.

Treasurer's Report – (Given by Allison Laureano)

We have now received the checkbook from Roxy. We still need the 501(c) 3 papers. Alli will get those. An election to replace the Treasurer will be held on August 17, 2006. A call for candidates will be sent out by the Secretary. Lisa Dummer was appointed as Acting Treasurer until a new one can be elected. The vote was taken by roll call – Dawnne-yes; Lisa-yes; Becky-yes; Bonnie-yes; Jennifer-yes.

Secretary's Report – Lisa Dummer

The next profile will be Lisa. Alli and Lisa will be working to update and improve the current database. All articles for the Channel that are submitted by members of the ExCom should be submitted to Lisa. They need to be submitted by the 15th of each month for inclusion in the Channel. Lisa and Alli will work on locating and storing the corporate paperwork.

Education – Dawnne Woodie, Jennifer Anderson

The next Education event will be a self defense exhibition and training by Krav Maga. It will be held on Saturday, July 22nd at 1:00. A suggested donation of $5.00 will be requested but no one will be turned away. The MAC event was successful although more members could have participated. There were a total of 9 makeovers and several visitors. Lydia was very happy. She will love to host another event. The TGSF library needs to be rebuilt. We will look for any old parts of it that may still exist and replace what we can. We will look for a place to have the library where it is accessible to all. Carla has offered to house it again. The next KQED auction that can be staffed with volunteers is August. Jennifer will look to see what we need to do to staff it.

Outreach – Becky Benton, Bonnie Bryen

The Hotline is being answered by the Outreach committee. The outgoing message has been changed and will be updated on a regular basis. Outreach will have a booth at the Santa Cruz Pride festival. Becky and Bonnie will get there early to set it up. Becky will handle a media development program to cover all of the forms of communication by TGSF. This will include a complete review of the website, the Channel and all handouts.

Social – Katra Briel

The Memorial Weekend barbeque netted $207. Everyone had a great time. The Blue Muse farewell went over very well. We will be holding two more before it closes the end of July, on June 22nd and July 22nd. The mid-month will be held on June 15th and the End of Month on June 29th. Both events will start at 7:00 and will be held at the Cathedral Hill Hotel. The annual End of Summer BBQ will be held in August or September. Lisa needs to arrange for the space at Central park in San Mateo. A beach party is in the works for July that will be hosted by Roxanne. More information will be forthcoming from her. The Venue Sub-committee, consisting of Katra, Becky and Bonnie, is still working on alternative venues for events. It is hoped that these will take place throughout the Bay Area, including the East Bay, South Bay and Peninsula.

Old Business

Tommi Watson has tendered her resignation due to personal demands in her transition to full time. She announced this to the ExCom several months ago but agreed to remain in place until the new ExCom was elected. Her resignation was accepted regretfully by the Board. Victoria Secret has expressed interest in filling the position. The appointment of a new Social Co-chair will occur at the next ExCom.

New Business

We were unable to arrive at a consensus as to the best day to hold ExCom meetings. The date will be decided each month – The next meeting will be Monday, July 10, 2006. It will be held at the LGBT Center and will commence at 7:00. The meeting was adjourned at 9:07.

transpirit @mccsf

Experience *Transformation*

Taize Resumes @ Most Holy Redeemer
100 Diamond St. at 18th
Wednesdays at 7:00pm

Sundays at MCCSF ... Community is our middle name
now on location at the SF LGBT Center, 1800 Market St.
Join us at 11:00am & 7:00pm
415-863-4434 **www.mccsf.org**

From the Desk of...

From the Secretary's Desk

(Originally written for July Issue)

It's been a while since I've done a column for you because I've had so many things on my mind. Now that Pride is over, there is only one thing on my mind, something that has paramount importance for me to the exclusion of everything else.

This month, I will be going into the hospital for surgery, the BIG surgery – my vaginoplasty. For those of you who've gone through this before, you know what I'm going through. For those of you who aren't even thinking about it, you may find the story interesting and maybe even a little amusing. For those of you who aren't yet ready but planning for it, maybe this will be a guideline of what to do.

The last month is filled with all the things you have to get done. There is the usual blood work that has to be done before any surgery. Since mine was requested by my cardiologist, I had to fast for 12 hours before the test could be done. Those of you who know me personally know that I find it difficult to go two hours without eating, much less 12. However, you do what you must and so I walked into the lab bright and early on June 1st to get the work done. I must have looked pretty bad because they gave me a "starvation pack" to ward off the fainting spells before I left. A power bar and Capri Sun are not my idea of breakfast. Luckily, I'd already fixed one to eat at work that it was sitting and waiting for me in the office. A ham sandwich never looked so good!

Since I had bypass surgery several years ago, my surgeon wanted to make sure my heart was healthy so I needed to see my cardiologist for an EKG and his approval of the surgery. I was a little nervous about it, although I knew I had nothing to worry about, but this was something that could throw my whole plan into jeopardy. Luckily, I passed with flying colors.

Okay, the only thing left was my final pre-op check-up with the surgeon and I was good to go, or at least that's what I thought. Wrong! The same day I got approval from my cardiologist, I also heard from the doctor's office that the two letters I gave them weren't sufficient as the therapists only had Masters' degrees. One letter has to come from a PhD. So there I am, a month before surgery scrambling around to get an appointment. Luckily, one of the recommended psychologists had an opening in a couple of days. That's another hour and $300 spent.

The last thing was the pre-op appointment with the surgeon, but even that didn't come off smoothly. They called me and asked if they could postpone my appointment for a couple of days. At that point, it didn't matter since everything was finally out of the way and it's just a matter of waiting for the surgery date.

Even though I had a lot of last minute running around to do, I've been floating as high as a kite for the last month and a half. Something I've dreamed about for so many years is finally happening. I may look calm on the outside, but I'm dancing in my heart.

I thought I'd be a little nervous and have some second thoughts about it, since it is the major step in my life. Everything I've done up until now is reversible. The final step isn't. However, there's been no nervousness, only excitement. I can't wait for the day to get here. I'm at peace with my decision and ready for it to happen.

The only way I've been able to even come close to describing how I feel is like a little child at Christmas, waiting for the big day to arrive. For me, it's almost here. Now it's time to close my eyes, watch the sugar plum fairies dance, and wake up to the best present I'll ever get.

Ms. TGSF

What's Ahead?

By Jennifer Anderson

Well, Pride season 2006 is in the books. What has impressed me most this year is how many people there are who are willing to dedicate their time and talent, often with little recognition or notice, so that others can have their moment in the sun. I'm talking of course about the committees who organized the bay area pride events I had the privilege of participating in (Santa Cruz, San Jose and San Francisco).

Given that most of the jobs on these committees are volunteer positions, it has to be a labor of love. Fortunately, there is a lot of love to go around in our community. I saw it in the faces of the participants and I saw it on the faces of the supporters who lined Pacific Avenue in Santa Cruz, Almaden Boulevard in San Jose and Market Street in San Francisco. I can only hope that the volunteers were not too tired or too busy taking care of last-minute details that they were able to experience some of the love first hand.

Many people view the ride down Market Street in front of thousands of supportive and admiring folks as the supreme moment of being Ms. TGSF. For a few brief minutes all you have to do is be who you are and soak up the love and adulation that is so freely given. It was an experience that I will cherish for the rest of my life, and I am deeply grateful to all who sacrificed so much to make it happen!

But where do I go from here? How do I best honor the sacrifices made by so many for a relatively few such as myself? I move forward by following the model of selfless giving you have so graciously provided to me.

It's time for me to go back to what I do best; organizing, supporting and implementing the dreams of others. This is what I hope to do during my remaining time as your Ms. TGSF.

You have asked for more educational events and I will continue, with my counterpart Dawnne Woodie, to look for and produce events that educate, inform and enlighten all elements of our community. In addition, there are two specific projects that have sparked passion in me and that I hope to bring to fruition by the end of the year, both of which fit in to the broader context of TGSF education.

The first is to complete the TGSF website, so that it becomes more than just a stopping off point for information and pictures. I want to build it into a trusted source of education and outreach materials for the transgender community at large, and those who support them.

The second project is to re-establish the TGSF library. It is my hope to create not just a lending library where folks can come to check out books and movies, but ideally to create a place where closeted members of our community from around the world can come for education, information and support.

My final goal is to recruit for my successor, Ms. TGSF 2007. It has been and continues to be my hope this year to establish a high bar of accomplishment as Ms. TGSF and then support the person who comes along next year to replace me in moving the bar even higher. So, don't be surprised in the near future if I come up to you and point out how good you might look in a tiara, and more importantly, how well I think you might wear it!

TGSF Events in August

Saturday, August 5, 2006

ExCom Meeting

The next ExCom meeting will take place on August 5, 2006. It will be held at the LGBT Center, 1800 Market Street, 4th Floor. All members are welcome to attend.

Saturday, August 12, 2006

Roxanne and TGSF Beach Party

Come and enjoy the sand and water with Roxanne and TGSF. For more information, contact Katra at katra.briel@tgsf.org or Roxanne at Carla's.

Thursday, August 17, 2006 / Begins 7:00pm

TGSF Mid-Month

Another fun Mid-month is being planned by Katra Briel. It will be held at the Cafe Arguello at 24th and Mission in San Francisco, beginning at 7:00. For more information and to verify location, please contact Katra at katra.briel@tgsf.org

Saturday, August 26, 2006

Carla's Monthly Dinner

Carla's Monthly Dinner in June will be at La Pastaia on the 26th. If you'd like to join Carla's girls, please RSVP to Carla at carla@carlas.com or (408) 298-6900. Reservations are absolutely required.

Thursday, August 31, 2006 / Begins 7:00pm

TGSF End of Month

The End of Month will be held on Thursday, August 31st. It will be held at the Cathedral Hill Hotel, beginning at 7:00. Come and join your friends and family for a fun-filled evening.

August's Birthdays

08/01	Jenifer Kilarr	08/16	Casey Cole
08/02	Elizabeth Jeffords	08/16	Gail Stern
08/03	Angel Louise Grant	08/16	John Gulino
08/03	Kendra Blewitt	08/16	Tina Benez
08/03	Marla Selby	08/21	Erin Marie Tucker
08/03	Lisa Dummer	08/23	Yvonne Galileo
08/04	Anne Hart	08/27	Lulu Blau
08/07	Deborah Bolle	08/27	Sabrina Evans
08/13	Susan Seger	08/27	Louise Balk
08/13	Grace Kwan	08/29	Leia Chen
		08/31	Darcy Leopard

Happy Birthday To All!

Reprinted from August 2005 issue

T-Friendly Service Providers!

Advertise Your Business Card Here!

Only $25.00 Per Issue!

Buy 5 and Get 1 Free!

Buy 10 and Get 2 Free!

• • FREE TYPESETTING! • •

Contact the Editor at: MissAyme@aol.com

Nails Wigs Lingerie

Cosmetics Lingerie Fem Fashions Wigs Nails Shoes Cosmetics

CARLA'S

Salon & Boutique

124 Race Street
San Jose, CA 95126
(408) 298-6900

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

Cosmetics Fem Fashions Shoes

Cosmetics Shoes Nails Wigs Fem Fashions Lingerie Cosmetics

Bay Area Calendar – August 2006

Other Bay Area Groups

Diablo Valley Girls (DVG)
Meets 1st & 3rd Monday every month. 8pm at Club 1220, 1220 Pine Street in Walnut Creek. Write to DVG, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885 or call [redacted]

DVG Rap Group (RCC)
Meets 1st Thursday of every month, 7pm at Rainbow Community Center, 3024 Willow Pass Road in Concord [redacted]

FTM International
Support group for Female-to-Male CDs &TSs; Holds open Informational Meetings and closed Support Meetings. Write FTMI, 160 14th Street, SF, CA 94103; [redacted] or email: info@ftmi.org

I Love It Girl Socials
Every Wednesday night at I Love It Boutique, 45979 Warm Springs Blvd., #7 in Fremont. Call Jo-An at [redacted]

Mid-Peninsula TG Group (MPTG)
TGSF-sponsored support group: 7pm, First Wednesday of each month at Full Circle Books in Belmont, CA. Contact Laura Patterson at [redacted]

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 [redacted]

Rainbow Gender Association (RGA)
Meets 1st and 3rd Friday of the month 8pm 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 8pm the 2nd and 4th Saturday 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

Santa Cruz Diversity Center (SCDC)
1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7:30pm. All gender-different persons are invited to attend. Primarily a support group for those who are trans-questioning or in transition (MTF & FTM), but all are invited to come and share personal experiences in a safe, caring, and moderated environment. 1117 Soquel Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95061 • (831) 425-5422

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

Silicon Valley Gender Association (SVGA)
A new TG support group meets at the Billy De Frank Community Ctr in San Jose on the 2nd and 4th Friday of every month from 7-9pm. For more information, call 408-293-2429.

TGIF
Social group for transgenders. Meets one Saturday each month at a private home in Santa Rosa for a potluck social from 4pm until early evening. Space is limited - Reservations Recommended! Call Diane or Anne at [redacted]

T.R.A.N.S
MTF support group meets every Wednesday afternoon 2pm at 1145 Bush Street in San Francisco.

TransSpirit Ministry (TSM)
Gathering @ Metropolitan Community Church of SF, 150 Eureka, SF. Second Friday each month. Potluck dinner, social, and discussion time. For information, contact Dawnne Woodie [redacted]

TransVis-HWD
TransVision Social TG Women meets 7pm, 4th Friday every month. Light refreshments and a wonderful atmosphere. Contact [redacted]

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 7:30 PM SCDC	2 2:00 PM T.R.A.N.S 7:00 PM I Love It Social **7:30 PM MPTG**	3 7:00 PM DVG RCC	4 8:00 PM PacCtr 8:00 PM RGA	5 **TGSF: ExCom Meeting**
6	7 7:00 PM PISSR General Meeting 8:00 PM DVG	8	9 2:00 PM T.R.A.N.S 7:00 PM I Love It Social	10	11 7:00 PM SVGA **7:00 PM TSM** 8:00 PM PacCtr	12 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA **TGSF Beach Party**
13	14	15 7:30 PM SCDC	16 2:00 PM T.R.A.N.S 7:00 PM I Love It Social	17 **7:00 PM TGSF Mid-Month** TG Legal Clinic	18 8:00 PM PacCtr 8:00 PM RGA	19
20	21 8:00 PM DVG	22 7:30 PM SCOUT	23 2:00 PM T.R.A.N.S 7:00 PM I Love It Social	24	25 7:00 PM SVGA 7:00 PM TransVis-HWD 8:00 PM PacCtr	26 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA **Carla's Monthly Dinner**
27	28	29	30 2:00 PM T.R.A.N.S 7:00 PM I Love It Social	31 **7:00 PM TGSF EOM**		

TGSF Membership Application

Membership is billed annually upon enrollment: $40 Single / $45 Family

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

Please Print / Check all that apply:

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

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

Mailing Name: _____

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

Address: _____

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

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

***Email:** _____ Website URL: _____

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

May we use photos of you taken at TGSF events in our newsletter or website? ❑ 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.

Takin' Care of Biz...

TGSF Financial Report

No financial report was submitted by press time.

TGSF Donations

Our Friends Who Give

for the period July 16 - June 15, 2006

There were no donations reported by press time.

Bless You and Thank You for Caring!

Contact TGSF!

2006-07 Executive Committee

President
Allison D Laureano ..... [redacted]
Vice President
Jennifer Kennedy ..... [redacted]
Secretary
Lisa Rae Dummer ..... [redacted]
Treasurer
OPEN ..... TBD
Education
Dawnne Woodie ..... [redacted]
Jennifer Anderson ..... [redacted]
Outreach
Becky Benton ..... [redacted]
Bonnie Bryen ..... [redacted]
Social
Tommie Watson ..... [redacted]
Katra Briel ..... [redacted]

Other Email Addresses

Editor, *The Channel*
Ayme Kantz ..... [redacted]
Ms. TGSF 2006
Jennifer Anderson ..... [redacted]
Mr. TGSF 2006
Sydney A. Mason ..... [redacted]
TGSF.Org Webmistress
Jennifer Anderson ..... [redacted]
Calendar ..... www.tgsf.org

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

PISSR

People In Search of Safe Restrooms

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

KIM HRACA, M.A. MFT
PSYCHOTHERAPY • CONSULTATION

Helping you find the path that's right for you.

Berkeley
MFT #27252 (510) 601-1859

ExCom Profile

Secretary

Lisa Rae Dummer

Name - I was born a long time ago in a body that didn't fit me, and my parents named me William L. Dummer. The L stands for LeRoy, a name I hated but is where my current name came from. My middle name came from my mother's two favorite brothers, Lee and Roy, and Lisa Rae is an adaptation of those two names. It's funny how a name I hated has become so much better when adapted to my feminine personality. As my therapist said, it fits me. It's a little bit flirty and so am I.

Profession - I'm an attorney. It's not something I'd recommend for anyone else, but it works for me. I guess that's because I don't get involved in all that courtroom drama you see on television. That wasn't my thing. I prefer working at my desk from 9:00 to 5:00 and having a life. I actually work from 5:30 in the morning to 2:30 in the afternoon because my clients are located mostly on the East Coast, but you get the idea.

Status - I am a pre-op MTF, although that is going to change shortly. As stated elsewhere, my surgery is scheduled for the middle of July. To paraphrase the theme from Smoky and the Bandit – It's been a long ways to go and a short time to get there.

Musical preference – I am a died-in-the-wool, country music fan. I am right up there with Barbara Mandrell - I was country when country wasn't cool. In a graduating class of 291, I was one of 4 people who enjoyed country music. I grew up not far from Knott's Berry Farm, and my senior year the 4 of us would go out there on a weekly basis to see who was playing. For a City girl, I was stuck in the country.

Sexual preference – I'm not sure. Ask me again in a month or two after my surgery is finished.

Transgender history – I remember feeling different all my life. Growing up in the 50s, though, I never saw anything I could do about it. You heard of the rare individuals who changed their gender but I never saw that as applicable for me. I remember thinking on occasion that I wish I had the courage to do it, but I didn't even know how to start. I did know enough at an early age not to say anything to my parents. I know their first reaction would have been to get me into treatment for a mental illness. I may have been crazy to think I was a girl, but not crazy enough to tell them about it.

I really recall dressing when I was 10 or 11 years old. My mother had converted an old pottery studio at the back of out lot into a playhouse for my brother, sister and I. She'd put a lot of her old clothes up there for my sister to use for dress up, but I'm the one who did it the most. My brother caught me wearing a wedding dress one time but I made up some lame story about a play that he must have accepted since he completely forgot about it. My mother also used to store my sister's old clothes in the garage until she could give them to charity. I used to crawl up on a big shelf and dress in her clothes and just sit there, pretending I was a girl.

TG Activities – I've run for Ms. TGSF twice and didn't get the tiara. I may run again in the future, too. There's nothing wrong with being a perennial bridesmaid as far as I can see. Being up there on stage is a lot of fun. I was appointed as Education co-chair to fill out a term and then ran for Secretary, a position that I am filling right now, along with the Acting Treasurer until a new one can be elected. On the ExCom there is a saying, "If you can't find someone to do the job, appoint Lisa." To tell the truth, they don't need to appoint, I volunteer. As I told Alli once, I am P.T. Barnum's favorite person – a sucker born every minute (although history seems to prove that he never really said that).

This has been a fairly tongue in cheek idea of my life – past, present and future. The truth of it remains locked in my brain, a mess no one will ever be able to unravel.

Dear TGSF:

I was born Felicia A. Elizondo in San Angelo, Texas on July 23, 1946. At 3 years old I knew I was different, but I didn't know why. My mother moved from us from San Angelo, Texas and than to Stockton, CA. and than we all ended up in San Jose, Ca. I was a very feminine boy, so I was called queer, sissy, and all kinds of horrible names.

I didn't know at the time being gay was a crime, that you were sent to mental hospitals and given electro shock treatments to make you normal.

But how can you change what you feel inside, I met my first gay man when I was about 12 years old Victor Torres in Stockton, CA. So I thought I was gay. And we had to be very careful because being gay was against the law and you could go to jail for a long time. I started being a male prostitute; I came to San Francisco when I was 15 years old with a sugar daddy. I was at oz because all these people were like me in this area called the Tenderloin, and you could be gay without having to hide it. I was at Compton's at the age of 15. I had being coming to SF since I was 15 off and on. You have to understand every body wanted to be loved and needed, and most of our family didn't want us, we were an embarrassment to the family so they discard us like an old shoe. Most of the people that came to the Tenderloin, we didn't know their real names; they wanted to forget the past and hurt that most of our family didn't want us, they wanted to start a new life with a new identity. When I came here there were only hair fairy, Hair do's make-up, Angora Sweat and Skin tide pants and white tennis shoes. A lot of the queens had long hair but they cover it with a hat. It was against the law to have long hair or it wasn't expectable at the time. But when the Hippy generation came the girls started getting bold, and they let their hair down and got the freedom to finally dress the way we wanted. Although it was against the law we had to do what we had to be who we are. At 18 years old I joined the Navy, if the Navy didn't make me a man nothing would. I had to play the role of my life, I had to lower my voice and act like a man. I went thru Booth Camp and volunteered to go to Vietnam maybe I would get killed because I didn't want to be this way. I even had sex with two women maybe I would change. In 1966 I came to live in San Francisco, and I called my self either Bobby or Diane I can't remember a lot of things. My first place to live was the El Rose Hotel about half a block up Turk Street. Five of us moved from San Jose, CA. They didn't want us there. So we came to where we were accepted. All I had was a blue dress and a wig I started being a female impersonator prostitute. Amanda was our house mother. I only made money to pay rent and food and misc stuff. I wanted to get addictive to drugs, but I didn't get hooked on any drugs except alcohol. I would get so drunk to kill the pain and to kill the loneliness of being different.

No body wanted to hire a sissy boy, so we had to survive and sell our bodies There were a lot of gays bars in the Tenderloin Area, but Gene Compton's was the place to go, any time of the day because it was opened 24/7.

Where Transgender, Drag Queens, Gays and Hustlers would gather to talk and brag. What a place it had windows all around the front and on the side. You could see who was in there. You could come to Compton's any time of the day and meet friends and talk and plan what was happening that night. A lot of them use drugs, but we had to cope with life, the pain and confusion that we ourselves didn't understand. By day we were sissy boys and at night we were female impersonator prostitutes. There were honest girls out there. They had jobs being female impersonator. Or some would do both to make ends meet.

The SF Police arrested us for anything they could think of, like obstructing a sidewalk, and they would us pick up like a (drag net) when there was a three day weekend, so we stayed in jail for three days in the Queens Tank or they would pick us up and drive us around all night and than they would let go. Sometime they would take our wigs off and our falsey and parade up in public to embarrass us. What they didn't understand that we had to pay rent and buy food and survive. There was no where else to go, we were not hard core criminals we were just want to belong. Compton's was the place to go and eat, meet friends, and show your fashions or new boyfriend. It was a place where it was safe to gather. Or just to see that some of us had survived the night. We were scared and some of us were terrify but no body wanted us or hire a boy in woman clothes or a Sissy boy, so we did what we had to do to survive. Some of us just got tired of being push around and we fought back. We didn't know we even made an impact. And really nobody cared. It got even harder after the Riot because they were going to get even with us. After a while some of us move out of the Tenderloin to seek others lives, I moved to Chicago with my lover Larry, in 1969

Continued on Page 13

Events and Announcements!

FTM International Meeting is Moving!

Thanks to our stellar volunteer business meeting on Sunday the 9th the FTMi San Francisco membership has decided to make a meeting move to the Eureka Valley Rec Center 100 Collingwood, SF 94114.

NEW DAY: Saturdays **August 12th** (2nd Sat), September 23rd (4th Sat), October 21st (3rd Sat), November 18th (3rd Sat) and December 16th (3rd Sat). After the 1st of the year we can revisit which Saturday works best for the group!

TIME: 2-5pm same as always!

NEW PLACE: Eureka Valley Rec Center 100 Collingwood, SF 94114. (There is a playground on site for those who have children)

The Significant Other, Friend Family and Ally group will be at the same place in an adjacent room. And by the way we are still looking for volunteers to facilitate the SOFFA group - If you are interested in helping contact Shelli at shellimf@yahoo.com

FTMi San Francisco is also looking for those who would like to be mentored for leadership positions: Secretary, Treasurer and of course President. If you are interested in being part of the leadership committee please contact Martin Rawlings-Fein at martyr@ftmi.org or [redacted]

Watch for FTMi's 20th Anniversary Bash in September, exciting things are happening in San Francisco!

Marty

Mid-Month Social
Volunteers Needed!

TGSF is looking for some enthusiastic and motivated people to help plan our mid-month socials. All it takes to plan these events is for someone to call a venue that is hopefully very TG friendly and see if they would be willing to host our event. Mid-months can expect anywhere from 10-20 people.

If you would like to help with these events, please contact [redacted] Thank you!

New Trans Advisory Hotline of America

1-877-427-3230

This will supply anyone in the U.S. with sources of: Referrals for Medical; Gender Therapists; Transgender groups and organizations; Peer support

Hopefully, at a future date; we will have forwarding capabilities to someone in the state you reside in; answers to questions to veterans issues, problems; and avenues to help in times of natural disasters on a transgender level.

FTM Get-Together and Saturday Brunch

Every Saturday @ 1pm • The Crepevine 216 Church St., San Francisco, CA 94114 • Castro †Cross street: 15th & Market St. • (415) 431-4646. For further directions call Marty @ [redacted]

trans gender san francisco

tgsf

Mid-Peninsula Support Group

WEDNESDAY, August 2, 2006

Full Circle Books

1538 El Camino Real, Belmont, CA 94002
(650) 508-9546

7:30 - 9:30 P.M.

All welcome regardless of race, age, gender, gender identification
$1 donation will be requested but no one will be turned away.
For more details please contact Laura Patterson at [redacted]

Please note: This is a support group. The views expressed in this group are reflective of the attendees and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the ExCom and members of TGSF.

You are encouraged to speak to your personal physician and/or therapist regarding your specific treatment and care.

Multi Cultural Transwomen Support Group

TRANSUNIDAS

Looking for a Multi Cultural Trangender Support Group? Join us at TRANSUNIDAS.

Our group caters to the Latina, Asian, Afro American, Pacific Islanders & 2 Spirit Native American Transgender Women .We are with TransPowerment of San Jose.

We Meet every Third Friday of Each Month from 6-8pm at 614 Tully Road, San Jose, CA 95111. Together We're Making a Difference! For More Info Call 408-648-7906 ask for Danielle Castro ext.218

TransVision Social — Hayward

TransVision Social Transgender Women will meet at **7:00pm on the fourth Friday of every month** to celebrate our survival. Come and share your journey of daily living and participate in the affirmation of our lives. For each of our journeys and our vision, let us validate, support and affirm each other and celebrate our success.

There will be light refreshments and a wonderful atmosphere. Come for that good feeling. For more information, contact Tiffany at (510) 713-6690, ext. 9. Don't miss this!

Trans News!

San Francisco Makes Transgender History, Again!

Submitted by Cecilia Chung
Transgender Law Center

When the San Francisco Board of Supervisors Budget Committee present their proposal to the full Board tomorrow night it will include an historic $300,000 commitment to turning around high rates of poverty in San Francisco's transgender communities. Thirteen years after San Francisco outlawed discrimination against transgender employees, the Committee has earmarked funds to improve employment and entrepreneurial opportunities to overcome high rates of unemployment and underemployment among transgender people in the city.

"The Comprehensive Transgender Employment Initiative is a great investment for San Francisco," said San Francisco Supervisor Bevan Dufty. "Too many well qualified transgender people who want to work or start businesses are frozen out of the market. The Initiative is a vital first step in making sure that this community can fully participate and contribute to the wellbeing of our great city."

Receiving unanimous support from the Budget Committee, the initiative is important and timely. Joining Supervisor Dufty in voting for funding the Initiative was Committee Chair Chris Daly, Board President Aaron Peskin, and Supervisors Ross Mirkarimi and Sean Elsbernd. "This commitment is overdue," said Daly. "For too long, transgender people in my district and throughout the city have been isolated from living wage jobs and career opportunities. This initial investment signals an end to that reality and a strong step forward in full inclusion."

Community members hail the vote and the support of elected officials. "It's a great time to be living and working in San Francisco," said Cecilia Chung, Deputy Director of the Transgender Law Center. "This historic vote reinforces the city's role as a national leader in the transgender equality movement. Just five years after the city began offering health insurance equality for city employees, this initiative will set a new milestone in transgender history by creating full and fair employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for our community."

Funding for the Initiative will be managed by the City's Human Services Agency (HSA) which oversees workforce development. HSA Director Trent Rhorer added, "We are excited to be part of a public collaborative developing this much needed effort." San Francisco's Airport and the Public Utilities Commission collaboratively contributed $100,000 to the Initiative so that some of the employment training programs will be specifically geared to meet their employment and hiring needs. The remaining commitment comes the for city's General Fund.

Electrologist * Skin Care Therapist

Marilyn Dahl

Inside Carla's
124 Race Street
San Jose, CA 95126

tel: 831-262-0480
marilyndahl
@sbcglobal.net

Gwen Araujo Justice for Victims Act Advances in CA Senate

Araujo's mother, Sylvia Guerrero, testifies at hearing

June 28, 2006 - San Francisco - California took another step towards becoming the first state to meaningfully respond to strategies that blame transgender people for their own murders. The Gwen Araujo Justice for Victims Act (AB 1160), authored by Assemblymember Sally Lieber and sponsored by Equality California, passed through the Senate Public Safety Committee on a 4-2 vote yesterday afternoon. Sylvia Guerrero, testifying about the bill named after her murdered transgender daughter, spoke about the need for educating juries about bias in order to prevent defendants from successfully blaming their victims for their own murders through use of the so-called "panic strategies."

"Since my daughter was killed, my family and I have spent literally thousands of hours working hard to make sure that California is a state where everyone is respected and treated fairly. The Gwen Araujo Justice for Victims Act will really help us in our work," said Guerrero. "[The bill] will give jurors the information they need to better understand their obligation to make decisions free of bias against the victim."

AB 1160 now moves to the Senate Appropriations committee for consideration of a new provision earmarking $125,000 for the creation of educational materials about panic strategies to be distributed to District Attorneys' office throughout the state. This provision responds to a 2005 decision by the Fresno County District Attorney to agree to a plea bargain resulting in a 4 year sentence for a person believed to have stabbed a transgender person 20 times with a pair of scissors. When asked about this light sentence for a homicide, an attorney from the DA's office is reported to have attributed it, in part, to use of panic strategies.

"Outcomes like these turn our state's hate crimes and anti-discrimination laws on their heads," said Christopher Daley, Director of the Transgender Law Center. "The Gwen Araujo Justice for Victim's Act is a logical step forward in ensuring that such outcomes, based on the bias we've already outlawed in employment, housing, education, insurance, and public accommodations, don't put transgender people and others at risk for violent crimes."

LGBT Community Cookbook

Got an original recipe or family favorite?
Never been published?

Here's your chance to get your original recipe published! You can also include a short 200-word bio about yourself. And you can even help name the book!

Submit your recipes and title suggestions to:

TGCommCB@hotmail.com

Deadline for this edition is August 30th!

The Wonders Of The Female Hormone

For male-to-female transsexuals, estrogen can deliver soft skin, sensuous curves, and a profound sense of harmony—but it's no magic bullet.

By Joanne Herman
Advocate.com

Forgive me while I dip into my prior (male) life for a proper analogy to describe what it was like to have the wrong primary sex hormone coursing through my body. The only way to explain it is that I felt like a car running on the wrong type of gas. That seems very clear after having replaced testosterone with estrogen four years ago. I now have an amazing sense of well-being and harmony that I never knew before. Now my body just hums.

Estrogen has also accomplished physical changes that contribute to my harmony. Because I now carry a higher body fat content, as other women do, my skin feels softer—and I have a few curves I didn't have before. Of course, all the curves in the world couldn't hide my broader shoulders and longer waist, but it helps. My rear end is larger now too but still a little smaller than my ideal. In fact, I have on occasion joked with my nontrans women friends that I would gladly trade my shoulders for their butts.

One thing estrogen cannot do is make a male voice rise into female range. There are surgeries that claim to be able to do this, but their success rates are terrible, and because the procedures can actually cause damage they are not recommended. The safer alternative is voice therapy, and results can be quite good. Remember the voice coach at the very opening of the movie Transamerica? Many MTFs know about Andrea James, and some (including me) own her voice course. There are also speech therapists in larger cities that specialize in voice feminization.

Estrogen may make your body hair softer, but it does not get rid of hair in the places women usually don't have hair. For this reason electrolysis is often sought. In my case, I had so much hair to remove that I chose to make several trips to a legendary establishment, well-known in the MTF community, where external injections of anesthetics are used to permit extended electrolysis sessions. It took five days with two technicians working on me from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. to remove my facial hair the first time, and 300 hours of electrolysis overall. Others require less and can get by seeing the local electrologist, but it still adds up to a significant expense.

Estrogen also does not grow hair in the places where women normally have hair. If you transition genders later in life, chances are you are suffering from male pattern baldness. Some have luck regrowing hair with hair regrowth medications, but more severe baldness usually requires hair transplantation or a hairpiece in order to meet expectations for feminine hair.

And, of course, estrogen does not give you female sex organs. This is where some turn to sex-reassignment surgery. I say "some" because many people under the transgender umbrella can't afford SRS, and some actually never feel the need for it. Really! Some achieve harmony with their gender identity after following a few or all of the steps above, without SRS, while others are satisfied just by living as the opposite gender, or somewhere in between, all of the time or maybe even some of the time.

Yet our culture and our laws are very focused on SRS as the defining moment that one switches genders. For example, while the movie Transamerica was generally well done, the advertising and publicity annoy many of us by referring to the main character Bree as "he" in the days prior to her SRS, even though she was living as a woman. Meanwhile, the gender marker on most legal documents cannot be changed without proof of SRS. This is highly problematic for transgender people who need to have legal identification that matches their gender identity and outward appearance. Besides, why are we forced to disclose what's in our pants in the first place?

But since SRS is of great interest to many, I'll outline the common procedure for MTFs. As described by Wikipedia.org, "the erectile tissue of the penis is removed, and the skin, with its blood and nerve supplies still attached, is inverted into a cavity created in the pelvis. Part of the tip, still connected to its blood and nerve supplies, is usually used to construct a clitoris, and the urethra is shortened to end at a place that is appropriate for a female anatomy."

After sex reassignment surgery, one can have vaginal intercourse but, of course, cannot give birth. I've been told that 85% of those who have had SRS can achieve orgasm. It often takes a while after surgery, however, to learn what stimulation (and where) works with your new anatomy. MTF SRS can cost as much as $20,000 and require three to four weeks of time off, and unless you are very active sexually it requires dilating the vagina at least once a week for the rest of your life to keep it from closing up. It is not a surgery to be undertaken lightly.

At the same time as SRS, or separately, some may opt for additional procedures to enhance outward appearance. Breast augmentation may be chosen if estrogen therapy has not resulted in adequate breast tissue growth. Others may undergo a "tracheal shave," a surgical procedure which generally successfully minimizes the prominence of the Adam's apple.

Ironically, hormone therapy and SRS are usually not allowed without the authorization of a mental health professional, yet few insurance plans cover any aspect of transgender care. Cost is usually cited as the concern, fueled by the false belief that all transgender people want SRS. The result is that beneficial estrogen therapy, covered without question for the well-being of a menopausal woman, is generally not covered for the well-being of a transgender woman. How sad.

Herman is the first transgender member of the boards of the Point Foundation, a scholarship lifeline for LGBT students, and of Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, the New England LGBT legal rights organization that helped bring same-sex marriage to Massachusetts. She is also a member of the advisory board of the National Center for Transgender Equality. Find more information about these organizations at www.thepointfoundation.org, www.glad.org, and www.nctequality.org.

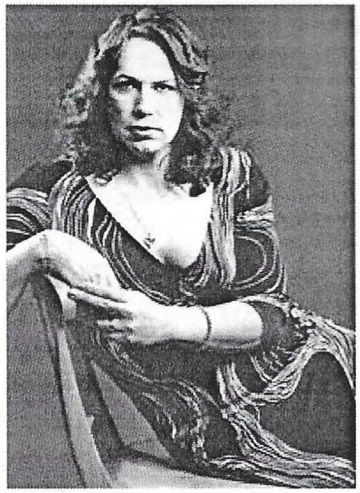
Significant Other Support East Bay

Questions or concerns about your partner's crossdressing? Please call Julie at [redacted] or e-mail [redacted] or write to: Julie Freeman, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885.

Transfigurations...

Continued from Page 2

Woods, who runs an HIV prevention program for transgender people in Alameda County, says the exhibit is important not just to show the rest of the world what transgender people actually look like, but to show transgender people themselves what is possible.



Tiffany, from Transfigurations. Photo: Jana Marcus

"There's always this sense in transitioning that somehow you're just not there yet. Then you look at yourself through Jana's lens, and you see the photos she took, and you say, 'Oh my God. I made it,'" Woods says. "I want younger trans people or people going through the transition to see these photos and get a sense of 'that could be me.'"

The exhibit, which started two years ago as Marcus' graduate school photography project, originally featured transgender men only. It won a slew of awards, including the prestigious Best Photos of the Year Award in 2004 and 2005 by New York's Photo District News.

But after spending two years interviewing and photographing transgender men, Marcus wanted to balance the work by including trans women. She has photographed 50 people so far, and now has an exhibit too big for any one gallery. For upcoming shows around the country, various curators pick through her collection for the images they want to display. And she is still shooting. She is also shopping the exhibit to literary agents with the hopes of turning the array of photos into a coffee-table book.

"This project has taken on a life of its own that is much bigger than me," Marcus says. "These people have struggled their whole lives to become who they are today, so to see themselves in a photograph in a gallery as the beautiful, dignified woman or man they are is very powerful."

Transfigurations shows at Good Vibrations, 1620 Polk St., SF, through Aug. 21. Info and a slide show of the exhibit at www.jlmphotography.com.

HEY!

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

Tall, feminine, graceful closet CD seeks Big Sister to help with shopping and makeup tips. I live alone so it's helpful if you can come here, but I can certainly travel. SF Area. Call (415) 000-0000. Up to 40 words only $10.00. Send text of ad and Check or Money Order to TGSF's PO Box, ATTN: Editor. Reach out and come out!

EAST BAY TRANSGENDER AA

Genderqueer, Transgendered, Transsexual, Twin-Spirited, LGBT. Speaker/Discussion/Meditation/Readings of AA approved literature. **Weekly – THURSDAYS – 8–9 PM.** 3989 Howe Street (Mandana House one block from Kaiser off Broadway), in Oakland, CA 94611.

Dear TGSF...

Continued from Page 9

where I saw the Christine Jorgensen movie and than there I knew where I was going. I didn't how I was going to get there but I knew now where I was going. And in 1971 I became the first male long distance telephone operator, where I had to strap my breast because I was taking female hormones. In 1973 I went to gender dysphoria Clinic at Chope Hospital in San Mateo, Ca. I had surgery in 1974 and became a woman and I change my name to Elena Nicole Montez and Blue Cross of California Paid for my Surgery. I have been married nine times looking for the right man. And in the 1980, AIDS came into the picture. In 1987 I became HIV+ in San Jose, CA. I thought I deserve it because of the person I was, and I learned to love myself and understood this was a disease , that I wasn't being punish for the person that I mean to be. 1988 I became a volunteer for ARis Project and became emotional and practical support volunteer. And In 1988 we started a group of drag queens entertainer and started raising money for AIDS in San Jose, Ca. In 1991 since we were losing a lot people, two to three funerals a week. I decided where I would like to die. And I chose San Francisco; I have volunteered and worked for Project open Hand, Shanti, and LGBT Community Center.

I have volunteered and raised money for almost every AIDS organization in San Jose and in San Francisco. I would name them all but there are too many. I have made about 70 AIDS Memorial Panels for the Names Project for my friends that died of AIDS. I have been a spoke model for Catholic Charities and Project Open Hand, Shanti, Hivstopswithme.

Than in 1996 I had my name change again to Felicia A. Elizondo, than I knew now and than, this is person I was mean to be. A Transsexual woman. Giving from my heart and it feels good. And I still perform to raise money for AIDS and other non-profit organizations. In the last three years I was a regular performer for Aunt Charlie's Lounge, I am known as Felicia Flames-Ashton. And I have been involved with the San Francisco Ducal Court as Miss Debutante 2004 and 2005.

And now I am the Royal Crown Princess to the Regent Grand Duchess Collette LeGrande and Regent Grand Duke Rob Esmonde. We are an organization that tirelessly Raising money for non profit organization here in San Francisco Area, and this year in the Tenderloin Area our Court has raised about $15,000 and counting and on July 23, 2006 Sunday at Aunt Charlie Lounge I celebrated my 60th Birthday and raised money for Open House-SF LGBT Senior Housing and Tenderloin Child Care Center.

Thanks to Susan Stryker and Victor Silverman and to all the people involved with this project. You have given us back Pride and respect, and that is all we wanted was to be recognize for human being that have feeling. This dedication to all the transgender, Drag queens, Hustler and gays that helped us with this historic events.

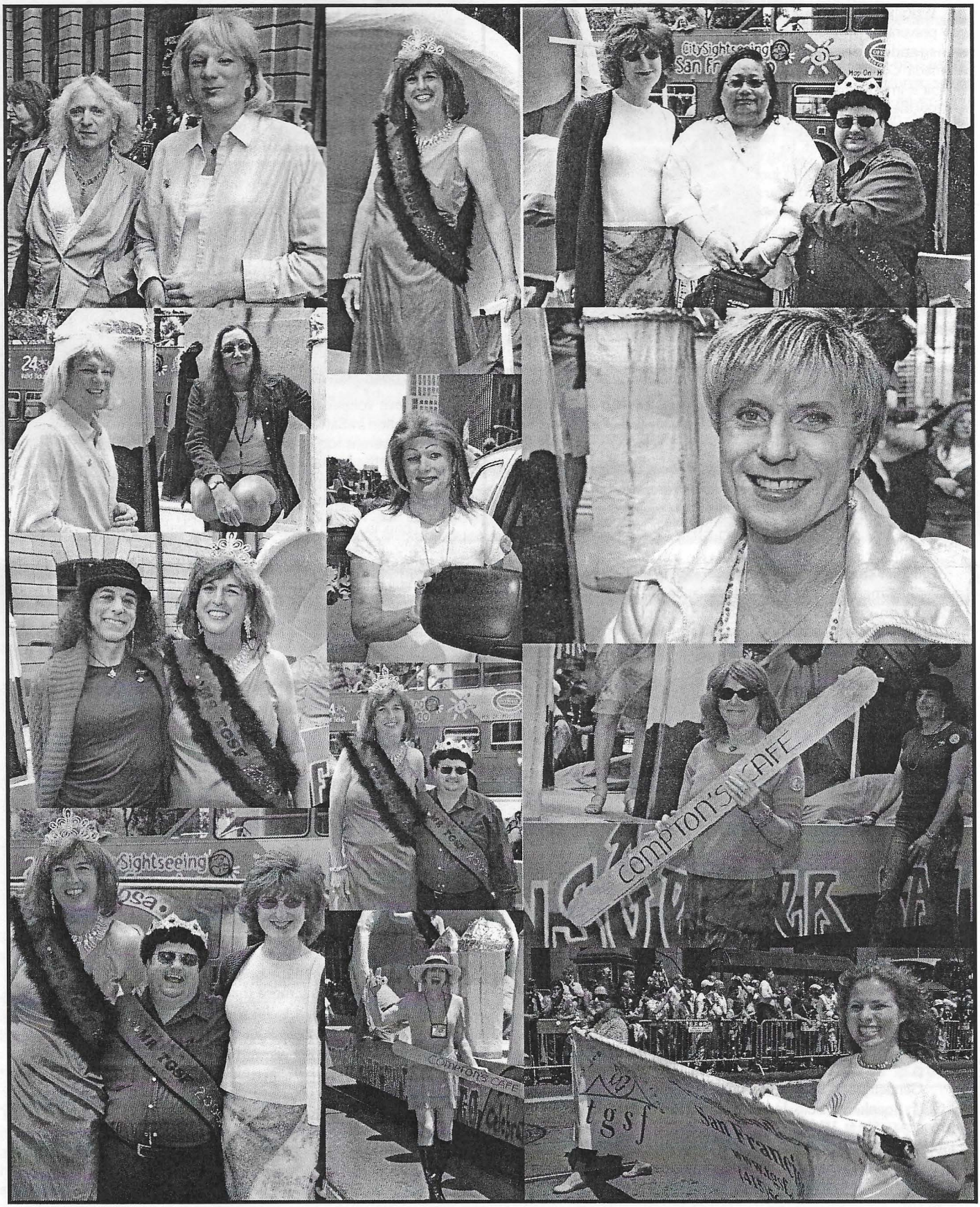
Thanks to you and the ones who have past and to those that are still alive. And now more than ever we need to document our lives, because we need to let them know that we exist. And we need to document our lives because you are history now and in future.

My saying is today is the beginning of the rest of my life.

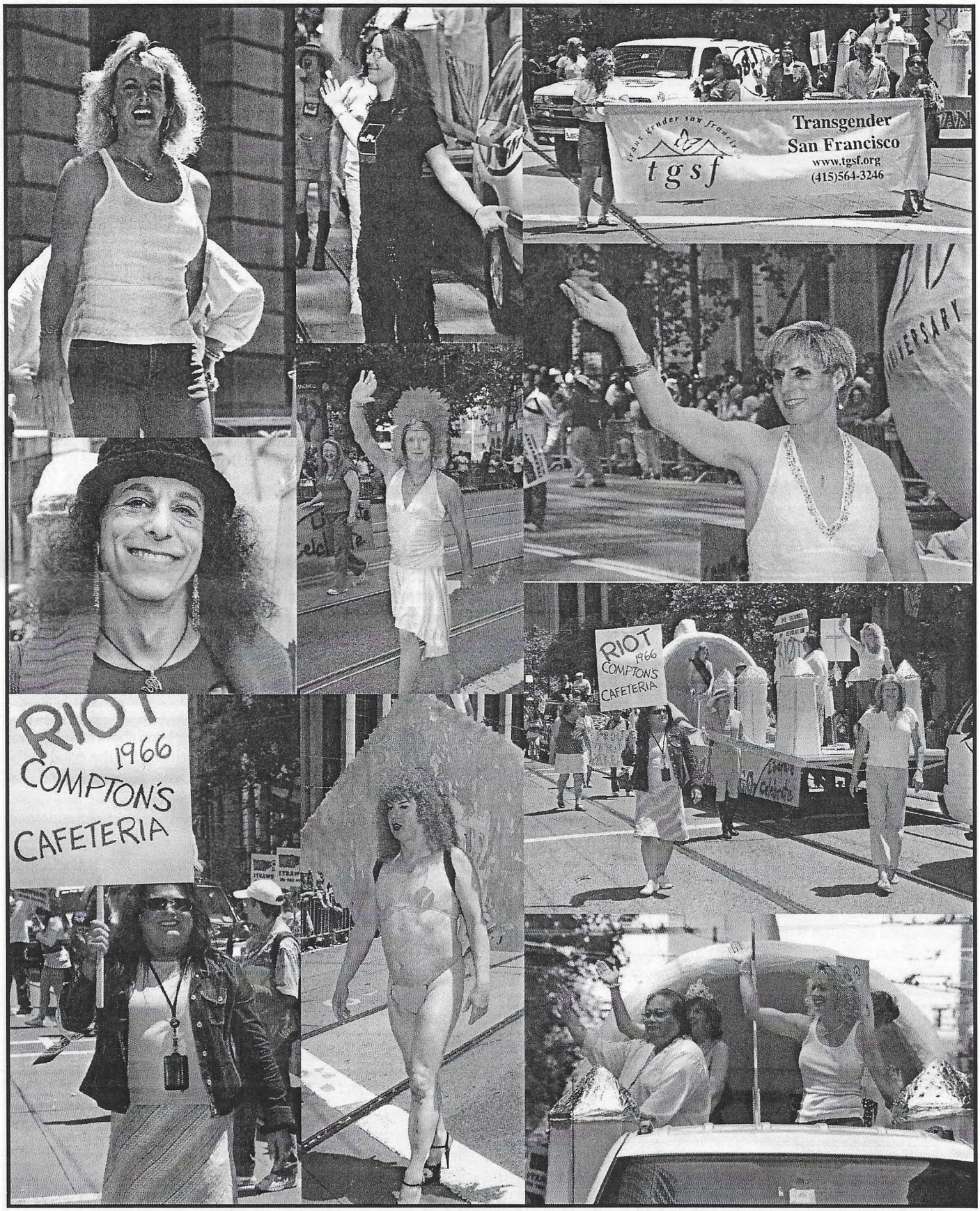
And I wonder why I am still here, because my work is not over yet, or I would be gone.

Thank you.

TGSF Pride Pics!



TGSF Pride Pics!



Gender-Bender

As courts grapple with same-sex marriage laws, a new twist emerges: How do you define man and woman?

Style Weekly, VA

After suffering from a seemingly minor foot injury, a series of operations and blood clots tragically ended Jonathan Littleton's life in 1996. Aggrieved, Littleton's widow, Christie Lee, blamed the doctors and filed a medical malpractice lawsuit. But a Texas court threw out the lawsuit. Because Christie Lee Littleton was born a man - she had a sex-change operation when she was 27 - the court ruled that the marriage was invalid and that she had no legal ground to sue as a spouse.

Twenty years earlier a court in New Jersey settled a similar case the opposite way: The wife had been born a man but underwent hormone therapy and various surgeries to live as a woman. After she and her husband split up, she sued for spousal support. The husband argued that because his wife was born a man, the marriage wasn't legal and he owed her nothing. The court ruled that for the purpose of marriage, she was a woman and the husband was forced to pay spousal support.

How courts define gender is garnering attention in legal circles while states consider new laws banning same-sex marriage. In November, Virginia voters will vote on a constitutional amendment defining marriage as "a union between one man and one woman." But how does the law determine who is a man and who is a woman?

For years, judges across the country have wrestled with the question of how to define gender. Rulings have been inconsistent across the states, but most courts tend to rule in line with the Texas court: Gender is fixed at birth, and sex-change operations, or sex-reassignment surgeries, do not change a person's legal gender.

So if Texas says someone's sex cannot change, does that mean Christie Lee Littleton can only marry women? That scenario would look a lot like same-sex marriage.

What would that mean in a state such as Mississippi, where 86 percent of voters supported a gay-marriage ban? And what happens if Littleton, legally a man in Texas, remarries a woman and moves to a state that doesn't recognize same-sex marriages, but has court precedent that recognizes changes of gender through surgery?

Marriage cases are particularly emotional examples, but such rulings can have broad implications for the legal system.

"There's huge stuff at stake in these seemingly quirky little cases," says Anne Coughlin, a gender law specialist at the University of Virginia. "It's possible that somebody for the purposes of marriage [gets classified] one way, but for the purposes of prison characterized another way."

Federal law puts prisoners who have had sex changes under the same roof as prisoners of their postoperative sex - a man who becomes a woman through surgery is put into the women's prison. But transgendered prisoners who haven't undergone a sex-change operation are placed with people of their natural-born gender - a man living as a woman is put into the men's prison. Prison isn't the only place impacted by the legalities of gender.

The LPGA professional women's golf tour requires participants to be females at birth, but its European counterpart has allowed a Danish transgender golfer to play. Contestants for Miss USA must be natural-born women. Females have two X chromosomes and no Y. Males have one X and one Y. What about people born with Klinefelter syndrome, who have two X chromosomes and one Y chromosome?

Deputy attorney general David Johnson says that as the commonwealth is concerned, sex is defined by what's on your birth certificate. Virginia state law allows transgender individuals to change the sex designation on their birth certificates if they provide evidence that sexual reassignment surgery has taken place.

So if someone like Christie Lee Littleton gets married in Virginia after undergoing sex-reassignment surgery and changing her birth certificate, on appeal the current office of the attorney general would defend the state's right to grant the marriage based on what the birth certificate says.

So what if a woman undergoes surgery to become a man, doesn't change her birth certificate and marries someone who was born a man? Will Attorney General Bob McDonnell, and ardent opponent of same-sex marriage, go to bat for that?

Still, Coughlin says that no case like that has been tried in Virginia, and a court could very well rule that birth certificates are not what determine gender for the purpose of marriage.

"As you can see the questions are messy," Coughlin says. "Very, very messy."

Activists on both sides of the debate over Virginia's constitutional marriage amendment say questions about the meaning of "man" and "woman" have not figured into their campaign strategies for November.

Dyana Mason, executive director of Equality Virginia, says "the mission statement of Equality Virginia is that any person should be able to marry the person of their choosing, but we haven't thought about it much beyond those terms."

Supporters of the marriage amendment say the mess Coughlin refers to is a mirage.

"I think we see with this discussion how far homosexual activists are asking everyone else to go even when it comes to defining the most simple terms: man, woman, marriage," says Victoria Cobb, executive director of the Family Foundation, one of the most vocal proponents of the Virginia marriage amendment. "It's because they are such basic terms that these scenarios defy nature and logic."

The Family Foundation gets legal assistance from the Alliance Defense Fund, a national organization committed to banning gay marriage and abortion in the name of religious freedom. Chris Stovall, a senior attorney with the Defense Fund, thinks the importance of protecting marriage as an institution dwarfs the uncertainties concerning how to define "man" and "woman," and doubts such questions threaten existing statutes or constitutional amendments.

"Marriage as a state matter has never been about love," Stovall says. "It's about promoting stable households for the good of the children that are born to women and men preferably living together."

Stovall says his organization has discussed going after no-fault divorce statutes, but has no immediate plans to do so. All states allow divorces where the spouse suing for divorce does not have to prove that the other spouse did something wrong. So "not getting along" is legal grounds for a no-fault divorce, something ADL would like to see changed.

Even as the list of state statutes and constitutional amendments continues to grow, the U.S. Senate rejected a federal marriage amendment last month by a vote of 49 to 48, leaving the states to determine the boundaries of marriage and gender on their own.

Transcending Transgender

Sponsored by
City of Refuge UCC Outreach Ministries

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

TG History Commemorated!

The 1966 Compton Cafeteria Riot

Phyllis Frye

On June 22, the transgender community and our allies commemorated the 40th anniversary of the Compton's Cafeteria Riot in San Francisco by installing a historical plaque marking one of the most important sites of the early transgender and queer movement.

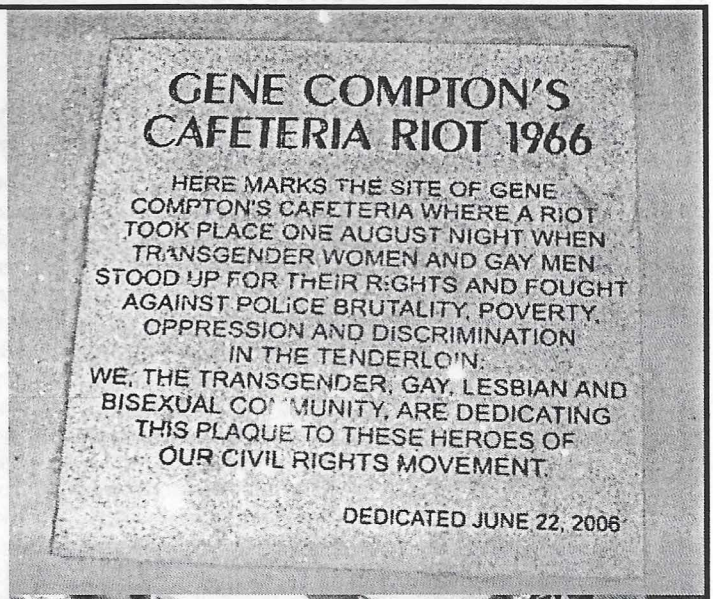
In San Francisco, August 1966, police were called to remove transgender patrons from Compton's Cafeteria—a late-night diner that once stood on the corner of Turk and Taylor Streets in the Tenderloin neighborhood. On that night, one drag queen decided that she had had enough police harassment and fought back. The altercation soon became a riot. It was the first real sign that drag, queer and trans people weren't going to take harassment and discrimination anymore.

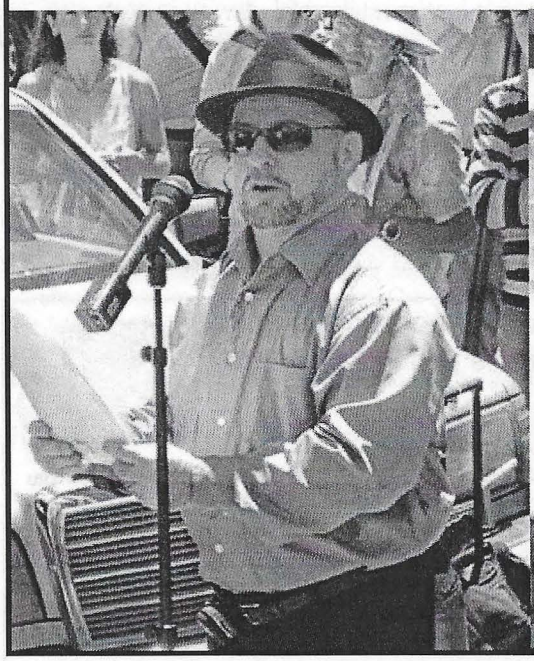
This rebellion against the police took place three years before the riots at Stonewall and marks an important movement in the transgender movement towards social integration and political equality.

That movement continues to progress forward today, forty years later. Lisa Leff's widely reprinted Associated Press wire story covering the Compton's commemoration, "Transgender Community Finds Acceptance," included a quotation from NCTE's executive director Mara Keisling. The Compton's story is also being told through trans historian Susan Stryker's award-winning documentary Screaming Queens: The Riots at Compton's Cafeteria.

We continue our work in honor of those who fought back at Compton's Cafeteria, and for all those who have contributed time, energy and talent to our movement.

For more information about the Compton's riot and the documentary, please visit www.comptonscafeteriariot.org and http://www.screamingqueensmovie.com





Gay Parents And Gender-Bending Children

Kyle's lesbian moms are worried that he likes dolls and girls' clothes. But shouldn't LGBT parents be more accepting of gender-nonconforming kids? Or do we worry they're bad PR for gay parenting?

By Arlene Istar Lev, LCSW
Advocate.com

Suzannah and Lia sought out family therapy because they were concerned about their youngest son. Kyle is a 5-year-old boy with a gentle, soft nature who scoffs at traditional boys' toys and games. He spends most of his time in day care playing with girls, and his favorite games involve playing with dolls and dressing up in princess gowns. Suzannah and Lia are progressive parents who have never forced gender-based roles or toys on any of their three children. "Our oldest son also played with 'girls' things,' " they said, "but never exclusively. Kyle's behavior stands out, and everyone is commenting on it."

As Suzannah and Lia talk about Kyle they keep contradicting themselves, saying, "I know that we haven't done anything to make Kyle this way, but maybe it's because he has no father?" and "I just want him to be himself, but maybe we shouldn't let him play with Barbies?"

There is something about transgressing gender boundaries that sends even the most liberal people running to their worn and tattered copies of Freud for explanations. On one hand, most of us believe that gender-based play and clothing is mostly about a social convention that we would rather not enforce. On the other hand, the division of the sexes is deeply embedded in our psyches. We may feel fine about our sons rocking their baby dolls to sleep, but not so fine about them wearing baby-doll pajamas to bed. We may encourage our daughters to play soccer, but bristle when they want to wear slacks and men's tailored shirts to their sisters' weddings.

We have all absorbed many social messages about proper gender behavior, and when children exhibit strong and intense aversion to the gender roles of their sex (or passionate desire for those of the "opposite" sex), we fear that something is terribly "wrong." What, if anything, is wrong with Kyle?

Well, the answer to that question depends on whom you ask. Some child psychologists will tell you that Kyle is confused about his proper gender role and that cross-gender behavior is fundamentally unhealthy (read: pathological, mentally ill, a sign of bad parenting). Many in the field have been especially concerned about boys' femininity, and gender transgression in boys has been more thoroughly researched and more aggressively treated than similar behavior in girls.

Much of the research describes four general outcomes for cross-gendered children. One, they grow up to be normatively gendered, heterosexual people. Two, they grow up to be feminine men or masculine women. Three, they grow up to be lesbian or gay. Four, they grow up to be transsexual or transgender. [See the note on sexual orientation and gender identity at the end of this story.] The most common outcome seems to be that gender-variant boys grow up to be gay. Treatment—in the form of behavioral modification programs geared at eliminating cross-gender behavior—is the standard recommendation.

Phyllis Burke, in her book Gender Shock, documents these treatments, which consist of encouraging greater father-son interaction, eliminating exclusive cross-gender friendship, forbidding opposite-sex toys and games, and shunning boys when they behave in an overtly feminine way. Marion, whose son Gregory, age 4, was treated for his feminine behavior, says, "When Gregory began to play more roughly with boys, shamefully hid his Barbie dolls, and began to mercilessly tease girls, the therapist thought he was getting better—that's when we decided to take him out of the program."

Underlying this treatment philosophy is the belief that cross-gender expression in children is indicative of later homosexuality or transsexualism, and that these are negative outcomes to be avoided at all costs. One author admits that treatment is rarely successful but says that "parents have the legal right to seek treatment to modify their child's cross-gender behavior to standard boy and girl behavior even if their only motivation is to prevent homosexuality." I think this should raise our queer eyebrows very high.

Something is very wrong here, but I'm not sure it is Kyle who has the problem. In order to decide if something is "wrong" with Kyle, we need to define what we mean by wrong. Do we think it is wrong to be a sensitive heterosexual man? Do we think it is wrong to be a gay man? I suspect most of us will respond to those questions with a resounding "No!"

We need to ask ourselves, as LGBT parents, what it is that we fear for our children who cross gender boundaries. Cross-gender behavior can be very anxiety provoking for parents; we may be embarrassed or frightened by a son's overt femininity or a daughter's masculine expression. Indeed, we also might be more fiercely protective of our children, living as we all do with the ghosts of our own queer childhoods. We are often torn between wanting to give our children room for self-expression and wanting to protect them from being teased. It is a rare LGBT parent that does not succumb, at least sometimes, to the fear that we are hurting our children because we are queer, especially regarding the development of their sexual and gender identities.

Suzannah and Lia have trouble articulating their fears about what is wrong with Kyle. And they preface their words with qualifiers ("We don't care if he's gay" "We will love him no matter who is"), but in truth they are worried that Kyle is gay and that it might in some way be their fault. Even though they are very aware that growing up with heterosexual parents did little to influence their own emerging sexual orientations. Even though their other children appear to have typical gender presentations. Even though it is not clear what the relationship is between playing with girls' toys and being gay. Even though they really really really think it's OK to be gay.

When we dig a little deeper, Suzannah and Lia have another concern. They are afraid that Kyle is not "just" gay but actually transsexual. As transsexual people are developing a more public voice, we may hear echoes of our children's words in the stories adult transgender people tell of their childhoods. "I was always

Continued on Page 19

Lucy Ann Jones Software, Inc
Mainframes and PC Consulting

1001 Hemlock Ave
Millbrae, CA 94030-2046
650-302-3737
www.lucyannjones.com
Email: lucyannjones@aol.com

DOS and Windows Operating Systems
Industrial Engineering and Operations Research
FORTRAN, COBOL, PLI, C, and Business Software
Computer Aided Design, Database Design, Graphics
Specifications, Programming & Analysis, and Games

Gender-Bending Children...

Continued from Page 18

different when I was younger." "I always knew in my heart that I wanted to be a girl." "I never played with traditional girls' toys, ever."

Clearly, most transsexuals did not grow up in homes with supportive parents. Their behavior was silenced and punished. The last thing we want to do is silence our children, but most of us (if we are being honest) say to ourselves "not transsexualism" with a frozen sense of terror. We have to honestly ask ourselves the question: Do we think it is wrong to be transgender or transsexual? Many of us, LGB and perhaps especially trans people, are confused about and fear transsexualism in our children with the same lack of knowledge with which our parents feared our homosexuality. We worry that our children will be beaten to death. We can't picture them having a satisfying career, a loving partner, or healthy self-esteem. We imagine them living in a netherworld where they are forever condemned as outsiders. And like our own parents, we worry, "What did I do to cause this?"

The research has shown that only a small percentage of cross-gendered children grow up to be transgender or transsexual. However, it is possible that this number may increase as transgenderism becomes more socially acceptable. Children who show persistent and strong indications of disliking their physical bodies ("I hate my penis"), in addition to other cross-gender behavior, are more likely to be exhibiting early signs of gender dysphoria.

Adding to our confusion about our children's gender expression is the fact that many LGBT parents are consciously raising children with fewer traditional sex role expectations. We stood firm when our sons took dance lessons, and we refused to buy toy makeup kits for our daughters. Perhaps we have trouble standing quite as firm when our sons insist on wearing nail polish to school and our daughters tell us that they really wish they were boys. We are torn between encouraging our children to be themselves and protecting them from a judgmental world. Jennie from Alameda, Calif., mother of a 3-year-old son who loves to dress in beautiful clothing, says, "I'm afraid he will be ridiculed and learn not to be his kind, gentle, sweet self because someone made fun of him for wearing bright, sparkly clothes. I fear that even if he doesn't get beaten up this year, he sure as heck will in a few years. I want him to be as blissfully happy as he wants to be, but not to the point of putting his self-esteem and body into peril."

For some of us with differently gendered children, our uncertainty about our children's behavior is intensified because we are not all that "gender-normative" ourselves. LGBT parents sometimes worry how our children will develop healthy gender identities in the absence of a same-sex parent, or in the presence of parents with left-of-center gender expressions. What are the messages a butch mom or a nelly dad sends to developing children? When a transgender parent transitions, how does that impact the gender identity of small children (or teens) living in his or her home?

Children develop a sense of their own gender from myriad sources; parental influences are just one aspect. Our children attend schools, watch television, and learn that the rules within their families may be different from those in the outside world, just like they understand that Grandma lets them eat way more pie than Dad does. Like Jewish children living in a Christian culture, they learn to see the world through both the eyes of the dominant culture and their own unique cultural lens.

Many years ago, I worked with a young boy who was completing a homework assignment. He had to write sentences describing pictures on a worksheet. One picture was of two children with short hair playing tag. He wrote, "The boys are playing." I asked him how he knew they were boys. He looked at me and matter-of-factly said, "Because they don't have dykes in school." He understood that although in his family and social environment short-haired women were common, in school, girls were not pictured with short hair.

Young children may ask lots of questions about gender when they have a parent who has an atypical gender expression. They may say, "You're a woman, right, Mom?" Often children are more comfortable with gender ambiguity than adults. "Mom is a little bit like a boy and a little bit like a girl," they conclude. When my older son was about 3 years old, he explained the world of clothing options to me. He said, "Men wear pants and so do women. Women wear dresses or skirts. Men do not wear skirts or dresses—unless they really want to, right, Mom?" Exactly right, dear.

Although we have a great deal of influence over our children's attitudes and behaviors, we are not so powerful that we can direct their sexual orientations or gender expression. This means that we cannot make them gay (as the conservatives fear), but we also cannot make them straight. Generally, our children have been exposed to a greater range of gender expressions than other children, which may make them more liberal, more accepting of diversity, but it does not influence their own developing identity. I work with many children whose parents are transsexual. Their lack of concern about their own gender is always eye-opening for me. "If Dad is happier as a woman, that's cool; it doesn't have anything to do with me." And the converse is true too; our children's gender identity has little to do with us.

The pressure on LGBT parents to raise "normal" children (read: heterosexual, gender-normative) is tremendous. The world, even the liberal world, cautiously watches this generation of children. If our children turn out to be drag queens and trans men, we have clearly, in their eyes, failed. Despite the fact that research repeatedly shows that our children do not have more social or emotional problems than other children, we persist in wanting to prove that our children are 100% "normal." But just like children being raised in heterosexual homes, some of our children exhibit far from typical gender expressions. Have we bought the message that if our children grow up to gay or transgender, we have failed? Surely we don't believe that boys and girls who grow up to be drag queens or transmen have less need for loving, supportive families?

Ultimately, it is unclear what gender transgressions in childhood will mean for our children, so the only pertinent question is: How can we best support and advocate for our children, regardless of what it will eventually mean for their adulthood?

As queer parents, most of us are aware of how little control our own parents had over the direction of our emerging sexual and gender identities. Few of us grew up supported or encouraged by our families of origin to be queer, and yet we became who we are despite our parents' efforts to normalize us. Disallowing the toys and clothing our children love will only teach them not to trust us with their most vulnerable and precious selves. Do we really think that behavior modification will change our child's sexual orientation or gender expression? And if it could, what is the cost?

Continued on Page 20

LUANNA L. RODGERS, MA, MFT

• Individual Psychotherapy •
• Couples & Family Counseling •
• Gender • Sexuality • Women's Issues •

425 Gough Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Telephone:
(415) 641-8890

TG Community Finds Acceptance

By Lisa Leff, The Associated Press
Examiner.com

SAN FRANCISCO - A clash between police and patrons of an all-night diner here 40 years ago was once a forgotten footnote in history. For members of the transgender community, though, it was the start of their slow march toward widespread acceptance.

Sparked by the riot, San Francisco activists started their own civil rights movement - three years before the more famous clashes at New York City's Stonewall Inn.

A dedication this month of a granite anniversary marker at the site of the Compton's Cafeteria riot drew a pair of city supervisors, the district attorney and the police chief. The California Assembly and Mayor Gavin Newsom sent proclamations.

"Trans has 'become part of polite society," said historian and transgender activist Susan Stryker, who spent years investigating the riot and making it into a documentary called "Screaming Queens."

"You can't be openly anti-trans the way you could before," she said.

"Transgender" is an umbrella term that came into common usage a decade ago and covers cross-dressers, transsexuals and others whose outward appearance doesn't match their gender at birth.

While not every city is ready to celebrate their contributions, San Francisco - which in 2001 extended its health insurance to cover sex reassignment surgeries for municipal employees - is no longer alone in left field. Across the nation, one of America's most maligned minority groups is quickly winning rights and recognition it began to demand only recently.

In the last two years, New Mexico, Illinois and California have updated their anti-discrimination laws to protect transgender home buyers and renters; colleges in Vermont and Iowa have dedicated "gender neutral" dorm rooms; and corporations have adopted policies for helping employees stay on the job during sex changes.

The change has been especially obvious this month as U.S. cities observe gay pride events. Although so-called "drag queens" have been a visible part of pride marches since the 1970s, gay and lesbian groups were long afraid to embrace transgender causes for fear of being tainted by the more extreme prejudice they provoked, said Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

"There was a time when nobody wanted to even mention transgender issues or have transgender people accompany you on lobbying visits to members of your state assembly because that was pushing the envelope too far," Foreman said.

But gender identity still raises thorny questions for gay activists. For example, should women who were born as men be admitted to lesbian events? But the annual pride party has become much more transgender inclusive, said Mara Keisling, executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality in Washington, D.C.

This month, transgender people were chosen as grand marshals for pride parades in Albuquerque, N.M., and Seattle, while Boston and Houston joined New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco in making trans-specific entertainment part of the official pride festivities.

Observing the range of lawyers, entertainers and openly transgender professionals who were on hand as the sidewalk plaque marking 1966's Compton's Cafeteria riot was installed, Stryker was struck by how much had changed in the last 40 years.

"Back then, you couldn't be out as trans without huge costs," she said. "To see all these people honoring a bunch of drag queens who rioted against the cops is amazing."

Make Your Money Count!

To support transgender education work: **Gwen Araujo Transgender Education Fund** c/o Horizons Foundation, 870 Market St. Suite, 728, San Francisco, CA 94102 • (415) 398 - 2333 / www.horizonsfoundation.org

Gender-Bending Children...

Continued from Page 19

I do not think there is anything wrong with boys like Kyle; I think they were born into a challenging society. If therapists really want to help differently gendered children, perhaps they can start by reassuring parents that there are many expressions of gender that are healthy. Interventions can be focused on teacher education and creating safe schools.

Parents must find a balance between allowing children their own gender expression and protecting them. In a discussion on boys wanting to wear nail polish to school, one mother said, "If I forbid him to wear the nail polish in order to protect him, he will be angry at me and never understand what I am protecting him from. Instead of being the one who punishes him for the outside world's cruelty, I would rather him experience the world and know that he can always come home to my safe arms for support."

Differently gendered children will have many foes. We can be their best advocates. Our support can help them grow up strong, with intact self-esteem and a sense of pride in themselves. As LGBT parents we have an advantage over our heterosexual counterparts when rearing potentially differently gendered children. We have a lot of personal experience in growing up different. Our children have more diverse role models and examples of how they can be men and women. They are being raised in homes where they will have words and language to talk about their gender.

For many of us, our earliest realization that we were queer was emotionally devastating. It took a long time to realize that being queer was really one of our greatest blessings. Who knows what hidden blessings are in store for our cross-gendered children? Who is better equipped to recognize this gift than LGBT parents?

On sexual orientation and gender identity:

The relationship between sexual orientation and gender identity is hotly debated in both the professional literature and the growing transgender community. Sexual orientation—whether someone is gay, lesbian, bisexual, or heterosexual—is about our sexual desire and attraction to others. Gender identity is about whether we experience ourselves as men or women, boys or girls, regardless of our physical bodies. Some people think that gender identity and sexual orientation are connected to one another, on a continuum where transgender is "more queer" than just being gay. Others think they are completely unrelated. All agree that they impact one another in profound ways. For example, if a person identifies as a lesbian, it is precisely because she has a sense of herself as a woman who is attracted to other women. If she believes herself to be a man (even if her body is technically female), she might not see herself as a lesbian, but rather as a heterosexual man.

Books for further reading:

Gender Shock: Exploding the Myths of Male & Female by Phyllis Burke

The "Sissy Boy Syndrome" and the Development of Homosexuality by Richard Green

Sissies & Tomboys: Gender Nonconformity & Homosexual Childhood edited by Matthew Rottnek

Trans Forming Families: Real Stories About Transgendered Loved Ones edited by Mary Boenke

Social Service With Transgendered Youth edited by Gerald P. Mallon

The Last Time I Wore a Dress by Daphne Scholinski