The Change
TGSF TransGender San Francisco
January 2003 Volume 22, Issue 1

TGSF Gives Thanks!

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

The Channel

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

ExCom 2002 - 2003 Officers

(Fiscal Year: May 1 - April 30)

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

Membership Report

Final 2001-2002 Membership as of:

May 24, 2002 230

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

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

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Ad Rates

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

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

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FROM THE EDITOR...

As the one who faithfully cranks out the House Organ each month, I make an effort to keep my eyes peeled and my ears open, lurking on various email lists, monitoring international GLBT news channels, absorbing personal and oftimes unpublishable commentary, sorting out logical and reasonable sentiments from emotional ramblings, and otherwise trying to keep abreast in what's now commonly referred to as the "Transgendered Community," and I do find myself wading through quite a mountain of molehills that manage to provide fuel for fodder, grist for the mill.

And so it was that I became aware of what can only be described (graciously) as an incoherent rant, in that the rantee railed raucously against all activists allied under the transgender umbrella, for misrepresenting the poor misunderstood post-ops who've been living their lives in deep stealth mode (or are trying to), and how these rabble rousers have been kicking up so much fuss that those who are under cover - who don't really exist anyway because no one knows they're there, or they're not supposed to know...I forget which - now can't get jobs or housing or decent sex because they've just been outed as one of "them," and gosh darn it, now that they know I used to be a boy it's all your fault that my life is a shambles and I have to start over, no thanks to you people it's all so unfair!

The authoress finished by resigning her participation in further discussions, leaving her last lengthy tirade as a shining example and as fine a testament to blockheadedness as I've ever seen. Presumably, she's now picked up and moved off-planet to begin rebuilding her imaginary life where no one knows her, and where she can hopefully be in control so no one there will find out her hidden secret, and maybe this time there won't be any of those pesky "lifestylers" enlightening her neighbors that transsexuals exist among the regular folk and deserve to be treated like anyone else. God if that happens, then fer sure they'll point her out and she'll get tagged as one of "them" and then have to start all over again. And so on, ad nauseum. Always with that fear of discovery hanging over her head.

Considering the vehemence with which she voiced her righteous indignation, it's little wonder that some among the general public view male-to-female transsexuals as "tricksters." Particularly those who hide their past so thoroughly, and are so deeply under cover, that when outed their carefully crafted house of cards comes tumbling down. Isn't it such a tragedy when a life based on lies and deceit comes crashing to a halt, especially if they try to blame someone else for getting caught in the deception? I mean, build a bridge people, get over it!

On the other hand, consider what happened to Gwen Araujo - a young and pretty male-to-female transsexual also living a don't-ask don't-tell existence, and permanently silenced - a life snuffed out - because she supposedly "tricked" the boy she was with. In the first place, she hadn't lived long enough to even have much of a past to hide. She passed so well she probably didn't feel like she was purposely hiding anything - she didn't need to live in stealth. It was just second nature to her - she was going through life expressing herself the best way she knew how. Certainly we can argue that she wasn't trying to deceive anyone, yet she was killed because someone thought she was.

Sounds to me like two sides of the same coin - a matter of our own "old Guard vs. new Guard." I think the old Guard, the old way of thinking - the old model for being a transsexual - is the one

Continued on Page 3

President's Report

By Rachael Janelle

Cotillion Time

Wow, what an Awesome year!

Well, before talking about Cotillion 2003 I would like to thank all my guests for coming to Thanksgiving dinner, which made it a very special day. I will always remember that day. I have been very busy since the early part of December with all the holiday events. One very special event was the Holiday dinner for all the bay area Transgender groups. I believe there were about 80 people that attended that event. I was very honored to be able to present an Angel award to Rachel Hill for all her work this year helping to make the Transgender community a better place. I was also presented an Angel award that I will give to Sylvia Guerrero (Gwen Araujo's Mother). I was honored to meet her at the PFLAG event in Newark and got to spend some time with her. She is amazing person. I have invited Sylvia and her family to the Cotillion and she said she would be honored to come. December for me was a very unbelievable month filled with so much joy and love. Thank you all for making that happen!!

Earlier the Cotillion committee had a meeting with the design center management to review the TGSF needs for Cotillion at the their center. There is something special about the design center and walking on that stage feeling all that magic for me. It was almost like being on a drug (I have celebrated 11 years of sobriety in December). Wow, I am so excited about this year's Cotillion, its number 20 for TGSF and that alone is special. Everything is looking good and on the schedule, however, we could always use some help. So if you would like to get involved please e-mail me or call. Also, check out the event on Friday and Sunday

Susan Laird has done a great job in putting together a new TGSF web page. Please check it out. We have also put the November and December channel on the web page and if you like to look at the photos in this channel in color you can.

I also plan to run for president of TGSF one more year. I am starting my campaign early. There really are a couple more things I need to do. I hope all of you been proud of TGSF this year. We have done a lot of socials and educational events. What we really got was more respect from all the other LGBT community. People know that TGSF is the major Transgender Group in the bay area and going great things to help make the transgender community a better place. I hope to see you at the Cotillion and be sure to get your ticket soon it's going to be a sold out.

We could still use some help and if you want that gift of a priceless relationship get involved or get reconnected. This is going to be a very special night. If nothing else come to the event to celebrate TGSF's 20th year which will help the Transgender Community.

About two months ago I got this urge to get a butterfly tattoo on the back of my neck. I had got a rose tattoo couple year ago on my leg. I just could not understand why this tattoo was so important. I did it anyway and friends say it looks great. I have a hard time seeing it and sometimes forget that it's there. When I went to Gwen Araujo's funeral I saw the butterfly balloons that her best friend brought to the service and her family members were wearing butterflies on them. Then Gwen's casket had a beauty butterfly on it. I then understood why I needed my butterfly. Gwen Araujo's death has changed me as a person. Yesterday I saw "The Laramie Project" showing at the Newark Memorial High School which was performed by the high school students. At the end of show they showed a butterfly. I hope the only time I see butterflies are at the tattoo parlor or flying in the air. Definitely, not on caskets or at the end of a play like the "The Laramie Project" any more.

From the Editor...

Continued from Page 2

where you follow the HBIGDA rules, proclaim your heterosexuality, have your surgery, and fade officially into the woodwork, oh and never mind you won't have any social or civic rights at all, no need for any serious follow-up care, keep quiet and we'll take that as a yes, good luck to ya, don't let the door hit you in the ass on the way out bye!

And the new Guard is embodied in our youth, and yes - those youth who are vocal, and out, and loud about their rights as citizens of America. And it's made up of those that understand that by being silent and living stealth is not educating anybody about who we are. These are the proud transgendered and gender queers, who need to understand who they are and aren't satisfied with old and out-of-date binary models; those that are willing to walk the road of acceptance and challenge irrational beliefs. And in doing so, help others overcome their fear, and turn them away from violence as a response to that fear.

We need to continue supporting the New Guard of transgendered individuals who belong to the World Clique - the ones who go to bat for us when lobbying legislators; the ones who get appointed to Human Rights Commissions or elected to District Assemblies; the ones who speak out at protest rallies, funerals and memorials; the ones who help our kids get off the streets and stay off drugs. It's long past time where blending into mainstream society should be considered the supreme achievement. It's time to stand up and be counted and to tell the world that we are valid and worthy, that we vote and pay taxes and raise children and incur debt just like anybody else. And if the United Kingdom can finally get it, then the day is coming when the United States will follow suit, and despite our leadership's best efforts to get us into an artifically stimulated war-based economy, the real victory over terror and ignorance will come when we can celebrate our diversity as the true strength of all people everywhere.

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November 2002

TGSF Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting commences at 4:30 p.m. Present are: Rachael Janelle, Kara Flynn, Stephanie Ann, Susan Laird, Hill, and Kalani. Guests: Roxy, Linda. Absent were: Aiyana Eveningstar, Allison Grillo.

President's Report

The Channel: The December issue is to be 28 pages with extra photos of the year's events.

Cotillion: Presentation of budget for 2001 and 2002 for comparison purposes. Total Income from the 2002 event was $17,340 with the cost of the event at $14,920. Projected income for the 2003 event is $19,200 and the projected cost of the event will be $14,850. Additional cost is due to the installation of a Mr. And Ms. TGSF. Presentation and discussion of costs for the 2003 event. Cleanup people and servers will be paid this year as volunteer effort resulted in ex-com members doing the cleanup after a long day. Attempts will be made to reduce costs in the food expense and maintain quality.

TG Forum will not be purchasing Back page for advertising in the program. Susan Laird has agreed to purchase the advertising for 2003. Additional need for advertising revenue is stressed. Two tables will be added for the 2003 event. Motion to approve the budget for the 2003 Cotillion. Seconded and passed unanimously.

Liability Insurance for TGSF - Ex-com will be reviewed and need for this coverage is stressed.

More on The Channel: Kudos for a very fine issue of the channel featuring Gwen Araujo and additional issues have been requested. Request for an additional $25 per month for Amy's work to commence on January 1st. is reviewed. Due to financial stressed on the current treasure balance, issue will be reviewed again after January 1st.

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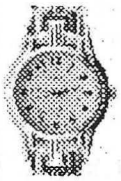

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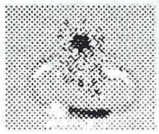

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It is noted that the expenditure of $1,600 for educational outreach earlier in the year has become part of the lack of sufficient funds for the Cotillion.

Vice President's Report

Presentation of Halloween party expenses. Approximately 75 tickets were sold. Ticket revenues paid for the boat itself. Additional expenses were not made by ticket sales and a deficit of $834.07 was incurred. Rachel Hill will hold expenses until sufficient ticket revenues are obtained.

Treasurer's Report

Current balance in the treasury is $2654.33 accounting for Halloween expenses. This will be a problem in paying for Cotillion expenses.

Secretary's Report

The new website is up, but in need of additional work which will be forthcoming. Pictures of current and recent events will be added shortly.

Pride Float: Susan will be head of the float committee, Budget of $1000 will be utilized for the float construction. Attempts will be made to properly prepare for float construction.

Education

December events will include: Personal shopping advice forum. January's events are open due to the Cotillion. A possible Self-defense class to be held in February is discussed. A re-schedule for Dr. Kaplan, plastic surgeon is discussed. Noted that his failure to appear as advertised at a recent event was actually a misunderstanding and his apologies were offered and accepted. Kara has purchased an overhead projector to be donated to TGSF for use in presentations.

Outreach

Advertising will provide $1,500 to $2,000 in additional income for the Cotillion. Nicole Mossinger did presentation to DeAnza for three classes with approximate attendance of 400 students.

Social

The December calendar is quite busy, with major events catering to the transgender community.

Old Business

Kalani will be profiled in the January Newsletter.

New Business

Transition Committee - announcement of formation of a committee to oversee the transition of duties of the various offices to the new officers. Kara Flynn will chair the transition committee. A call is made for volunteers for this committee in which members will help with the transition to the new ExCom.

Next ExCom dates will be January 5th at Susan Laird's house; also February 2nd, March 2nd, April 6th. And May 4th. Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

HEY!

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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!

This Month's ExCom Profile

Outreach Chair: Kalani Makanani

Heavy breathing, rapid heart beating, glistening forehead, anxious thoughts! What on earth is Kalani doing? This sentence, although short, brings about many things to ponder. (NO, not "those" things!) For example, where did I begin this journey, what has happened along the path I have chosen, where am I going?

First allow me to introduce myself. My name is Kalani and I am your current reigning Miss TGSF 2002. I'd like to share with you all some details of my origins and some of my experiences as Miss TGSF.

Since so many transgendered girls have very similar beginnings, I'd like to keep the description of my earlier origins fairly short. At the age of 2, I "borrowed" my sister's pink floral, pedal pusher Barbie Buggy car and ventured forth from my loving home in the city of Los Angeles to explore the world. I reached and became stuck on the lift gate of a Salvation Army truck and was subsequently adopted by a group of crossdressing clothes sorters. My parents, after recovering me and sensing my adventurous spirit, moved the family to Northern California where I attended grade school through junior college. During this entire time I never knew who a gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, homeless, and mentally unstable person was.

Needless to say, coming to the San Francisco bay area and living in San Francisco initially was a tremendous culture shock to me. Consequently, it was also an incredible opportunity for me to explore the reasons why I liked dressing in women's clothing. My first girlfriend, to whom I am eternally grateful, was the first one to help me explore my feminine side. It was rather nice that she happened to be a licensed cosmetologist working with Lancome cosmetics. She used me to practice her art and of course I would pretend to put up an incredible fuss. My first fully dressed venture out in public was in 1995. Coincidentally, the event was the 1995 ETVC Cotillion. During the course of the evening, I had a chance to interact with others like myself for the very first time. Shortly thereafter, I became a member and officer of ETVC and TGSF and have had the chance to begin and continue many wonderful friendships. From that initial venture out in public, almost every experience to date has been positive for me. Over time this helped me gain increasing confidence in myself as a transgendered individual and greatly helped in resolving the multitude of question I had locked away in my mind for many years. The only really bad experience I had occurred when I was dancing at a mixed crowd club in the South of Market area. I was approached by an obviously drunk and/or high male who wanted to dance with me. I politely declined his request to dance and continued dancing with my friends. I don't have a particularly feminine voice so I assumed he knew that I wasn't what I appeared to be. One hour later he again approached me and physically grabbed my arm and continuously tried to coax me over to where he was dancing. As anyone knows, this type of gesture is considered assault. I subsequently had to defend myself by locking his wrist and elbow against his back and taking him down to the floor. It helped that one of my degrees just happened to be in karate. Security was called after the commotion, dancing was briefly stopped, and the police were eventually called. The police took a brief statement from me outside and then left to take the man to the city jail for detoxification. I went back inside and was shocked to hear the applause of the other club persons! I was BLUSHING for a good hour because people were giving me smiles, high fives and even offering to buy me drinks! I was later contacted to find out if I was going to proceed with charges against the fellow club person. The officer went over my options and I also had the opportunity to ask questions. During the course of the conversation, I found out that the man was informed that it wasn't a genetic woman that had taken him down. I began giggling and could also tell the officer on the phone was beginning to chuckle. The officer also told me that the man was complaining about the nail marks that I left when I defended myself. Holding my laughter in check, I told the officer that I did not want to press charges.

The thought of him being told that a man dressed as a woman had taken him down and the questions from fellow detainees of, "So, what are you in here for?", was more than enough punishment in my mind. I still smile and giggle about the occurrence to this day...J

So, what has happened from these beginnings and where has my current path taken me? Well, as many of you know, in 1998 with much loving support from numerous friends, I decided to participate for the title of Miss ETVC. The experience was completely overwhelming and I made even more friends and even won first runner up!!!

Very shortly after the event I realized that even though I did not win, it was more important for me to brave the stage and present myself confidently and to the best of my abilities as a transgendered individual.

My kumu hula teacher from Hawaii, who choreographed and taught me my hula talent number, also consoled me and told me that "Winning is but a fleeting moment. However, producing smiles and memories is timeless". I also realized that it gave me the opportunity to come back the following year to not only participate, but to also meet and interact with others and gain even more friendships. I have held the thoughts of my hula teacher in my heart during each subsequent cotillion. Amazingly, after five participations (I do not like to use the term competing when referring to this event), in January of this year I won the title of Miss TGSF 2002! During the course of the year, I have had the chance to represent TGSF at functions too numerous to mention. Some of the major events have included the SF Coronation, SF Pride Parade, GAPA Runway, AIDS Walk, etc. One somber occasion was attending the memorial service for Gwen Araujo. The chances for outreach have been nothing short of phenomenal! I have also attended many civic, political, and social functions as Miss TGSF. It's always amazing what a crown and sash can do to prompt individuals curiosities and encourage them to approach me and ask questions. From walking the aisles of a grocery store, riding the BART, driving in my car, and just walking down the street, I have had many unique experiences. Some of the many heart-warming moments of the reign were when small kids would run up to me and bombard me with a barrage of questions. Questions have included, "Why are you wearing that?, "Are you Miss America?, "You're tall for a girl!". Several parents have even asked to take my picture with the kids and sometimes the occasional shy and/or nervous husband!

Additionally, I have also been keeping active with my duties as TGSF Outreach Chairperson. By the way, the first sentence describes the happenings during my very first speaking engagement as Kalani. Intense, you be'' Over time though I have discovered that the sessions have greatly improved my confidence and I highly encourage others to think about doing a presentation. I have made presentations concerning gender issues, both solely and with other co-speakers, at colleges and universities such as Stanford University, Notre Dame de Namur, De Anza College, etc.

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TGSF
TransGender San Francisco
(formerly ETVC)

TGSF Events in January

Sunday / January 5 / 4:00pm

TGSF ExCom Meeting

The first meeting of 2003 will be held at Susan Laird's house in Santa Clara, [redacted] Call 408-430-2196 x1230 - all TGSF members in good standing are invited to attend. Help us get the New Year off to a great start!

Sunday / January 19 / 10:00am - 3:00pm

TGSF Event at Bloomingdale's

Evening dresses, accessories, and makeup. Take advantage of the post new year sales, with the privacy of an event exclusive for TGSF. Be ready for the Cotillion! To Attend, contact Siobhan Ellis with your dress size, to help the store assistant. / e-mail: [redacted]@hotmail.com, or phone: 408[redacted]

Saturday / January 25 / 5:30pm

TGSF - 20th Annual Cotillion

"An Enchanted Evening in the Islands"

Please see the ad on **Page 8** for all the details and special events surrounding this premier event. Please join TGSF in helping make this a fabulous way to kick-off the New Year!

Friday / January 31 / 7:30pm

RGA Gals and Guys' Night Out

Keep your calendar open for this, the first of four RGA Fifth Friday Dinners in 2003. If you'd like to suggest a restaurant, or get more information on this or any other RGA event, call the Warm Line at (408) 984-4044.

Coming Next Month and Beyond!

Sunday / February 2

TGSF ExCom Meeting

Sunday / February 9

Pre-Valentine's Makeup Event.

The MAC event at Bloomingdale's was such a success last time, we are doing it again. Professional makeup artists on hand to help you with your look. To attend, you have to guarantee $50 in purchases. Contact Siobhan Ellis with your dress size, to help the store assistant. / e-mail: [redacted]@hotmail.com, or phone: 408[redacted]

Saturday February 15

Carla's Valentine's Day Party

Join Carla for her first party in her new building!

Saturday / March 1

Billy De Frank Anniversary Dinner

With Dunner, Auction and Casino! For more information please contact 408-293-3040 x117. Save the Date!

To Be Announced in February Issue!

Also, please keep an eye out for two **Education Seminars in February**. We hope to have Dr. Kaplan present SRS and post op care in early Feb (hopefully around the 8th), and Triangle TKD will put on a self defense seminar later in the month.

January's Birthdays

1/00	Glenn Marzillo	1/14	Mai Ku'uipo
1/01	Laurie Fuhrman-Lowry	1/15	Miki O'donnell
1/01	Kim Power	1/15	Roberta Price
1/02	Ruben Lopes	1/15	Georgia Castleberry
1/03	Susie Schang	1/16	Rachael Dettmer
1/05	Carla Cecchetto	1/18	Millicent
1/05	Jennifer Wilhelmi	1/19	Akiko Ellis
1/08	Billie Jean Kanios	1/23	Pamela L.
1/09	Bob Lieberman	1/23	P. Mc Leod
1/10	Valerie Russell	1/26	Vicki Reiman
1/11	Aqua Marine	1/27	Mary Crawford
1/11	Andee Werthman	1/30	Lori Fox
1/14	Diane Giles	1/30	Elizabeth Ruggiero

Many Happy Returns of the Day!

Significant Other Support - East Bay

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

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Cosmetics Fem Fashions Shoes

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Calendar of Events – January 2003

Other Bay Area Groups

Pacific Center for Human Growth (PacCtr)
A counseling oriented growth center sponsors all-inclusive gender support groups on every Friday at 8:00pm, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. 510-548-8283

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Santa Cruz Trans (SCT)
Bi-weekly social/support group for gender-gifted persons serving Santa Cruz and Central Coast. 1st and 3rd Thursdays every month at The Diversity Center, 1328 Commerce Lane, Santa Cruz, CA 95060; (831) 425-5422; 7:00pm

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

Central City Hospitality House (CCHH)
288 Turk Street, SF. 415-749-2167. Facilitated TG discussion group every Monday, 5:00pm - 6:30pm.

Transcendence Gospel Choir (TGC)
Ashley Moore 510-[redacted] http://tgchoir.home.attbi.com/

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 7:00 PM DVG RCC 7:00 PM SCT	3 8:00 PM PacCtr 8:00 PM RGA	4
5 4:00 PM TGSF: ExCom Meeting	6 5:00 PM CCHH 8:00 PM DVG	7	8 7:30 PM MPTG	9	10 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr	11 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
12	13 5:00 PM CCHH	14	15	16 7:00 PM DVG RCC 7:00 PM SCT	17 8:00 PM PacCtr 8:00 PM RGA	18
19 10:00 AM TGSF @ Bloomie's!	20 5:00 PM CCHH 8:00 PM DVG	21	22	23	24 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr	25 5:30 PM TGSF: 20th Cotillion! 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
26	27 5:00 PM CCHH	28	29	30	31 7:30 PM RGA: Gals & Guys Nite Out 8:00 PM PacCtr	

TGSF Membership Application

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

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? _____

Your Email address: _____ 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.

Special Events & Announcements!

Cotillion 2003

January 25, 2003

"AN ENCHANTED EVENING IN THE ISLANDS"

The 20th Miss TGSF Pageant and Show

San Francisco Design Center Galleria / 101 Henry Adams Street, San Francisco

Doors open at 5:30pm - show starts at 7:30pm

Hors d'oeuvres served

Out of town guests will have activities for Friday night

A hospitality suite at the host hotel all day Saturday

Sunday January 26, 2003: Post-Celebration Brunch

Host Hotel: Holiday Inn Golden Gateway

1500 Van Ness Avenue San Francisco, CA 94109 / 415-441-4000

The rate will be $99.00 for a single room per night

Please mention TGSF to insure hotel rate

Hotel deadline January 6, 2003

Ticket prices:

Orchestra Seats $60 • Premium Seats $50

Main Floor Seats $40 • Second/Third Floor Open Seating $30

Tickets Available Now At Carla's Boutique - 408 298 6900

Or Contact [redacted]@Hotmail.Com or 408[redacted]

For program advertising or any other questions

contact Rachael or Cotillion2003@msn.com

You'll Love It!

By Roxy-Carmichael-Hart

Looking for that "knock-em dead" Cotillion dress? How about that special Halloween costume? Or what about casual, everyday wear for that T-girl on the go? You'll find all this, and more, at *I LOVE IT* .

I LOVE IT's owner, Jo-An Torres, has been a good friend to the TG community for many years. Jo-An has recently expanded her outreach to T-gals with Wednesday Night Socials (not to be confused with Monday Night Football). Every Wednesday, beginning at 6 PM and continuing until whenever, Jo-An will entertain ladies in a private room in an upstairs loft in her store. Here, ladies can chat, snack, take pictures and, of course, try on clothes. With over 5,000 square feet of warehouse space, there is lots to chose from – including vintage clothes, wedding dresses, costumes and anything and everything you can imagine. Jo-An will also host periodic educational sessions on topics such as make-up and fashion.

Jo-An has only two rules concerning clothes. One is that you have to try on an outfit on before you can buy it, and two, you have to love it, because if you don't love it, it will hang uselessly in your closet. (There is also a third unwritten rule that she has to love it on you, to which my black dress and blue slutty dress, still hanging in her store, can attest.)

The reason for this is simple. If Jo-An lets you walk out of the store wearing something that looks horrible on you, not only is it a bad reflection on you, but is a bad reflection on her. What self-respecting storeowner would let a customer buy something obviously not right for her? And Jo-An is not just trying to sell you clothes. She is helping you to build a wardrobe. She has an eye for what looks good on you and what fits with clothes you already have. She helps you design a wardrobe that it "tailor-made" for you. You try getting this personalized service from the size zero sales girls at the bigger department stores (where "everything" looks good on you!). Jo-An wants you to be happy with your purchase so that you will wear it again and again. I owe 95% of my wardrobe to Jo-An. I would hate to think of what I would look like without her but I guarantee it wouldn't be pretty.

Worried about your budget? (An easy thing to do). You'll find her prices to be more than reasonable. Don't have the money right now? Jo-An has unlimited lay-a-way with no money down. The "perfect" dress won't fit? Jo-An can turn a size 8 into an 18 with a flash of her sewing machine.

I LOVE IT is located at 45979 Warm Springs Road #7, in the Warm Springs area of Fremont, just off the I-880/Mission-Warren exit, phone (510) 656-4738. She is normally open every day except Sunday, but you should call her first to make an appointment, not only because her schedule is quite hectic, but so that she can give you the personalized service she is known and loved for. So stop by and visit Jo-An and her lovely associates, Cindy, Linda and Roxy. You'll love it. I do.

TGSF Visits bloomingdale's

Just In Time For Cotillion!

TGSF Event at Bloomingdale's

Sunday / January 19

10:00am - 3:00pm.

Private fittings and expert consultations for Evening dresses, accessories, and makeup.

Take advantage of the post new year sales, with the privacy of an event exclusive for TGSF.

Be ready for the Cotillion!

To attend, contact **Siobhan Ellis** with your dress size, to help the store assistant.

e-mail: [redacted]@hotmail.com,

or phone: 408[redacted]

Special Events & Announcements!

The Sound of Music

I was wondering if there would be any interest in a night out to see "The Sound of Music" in San Jose from Jan 17 to Feb 2. I looked at several Friday night dates and it looked hard to get seats together so maybe a weeknight would be best. Please reply to my e-mail [redacted]@tgforum.com

Laura Anne

New Transgender Services

The Transgender Life Care Project (TLC) offers psychotherapy, topic-focused support groups and medical care to transgender individuals who are without medical insurance or ability to pay for services.

TLC is a collaboration between the San Francisco Department of Health, Castro Mission Health Center and UCSF/ Center for AIDS Prevention Studies/Health Studies for People of Color.

Services are available to individuals of any ethnicity, FTM and MTF, anywhere along the gender spectrum from TS, TV, TG, post-op, gender questioning or "gender queer," who are medically indigent and not already receiving transgender-sensitive mental health services. People of color and those with existing substance abuse or mental health needs are especially encouraged to participate. You may choose to participate in individual psychotherapy, a support group or both. Services are free of charge and are offered at two sites in downtown San Francisco.

To contact the Transgender Life Care Project and obtain an appointment for individual psychotherapy or support group services, call:

Luanna L. Rodgers, M.A., MFT

Therapist and Case Manager

Transgender Life Care Project

(415) 487-7527

Ms. Rodgers, who also maintains a private practice, has worked for many years with the transgender community and will be providing assessments and psychotherapy for the Transgender Life Care Project.

Funding for TLC comes from a research grant. Participants receiving services will be asked to fill out a pre- and post-service questionnaire.

"CONGRATULATIONS!"

Transgender, San Francisco

On a Rockin' Year!

It has been a pleasure to work with your organization

Good Luck to the candidates for

Miss TGSF

We hope your fantasies come true tonight!

Please join Rockstars

Emperor Berlin & Empress Barbie LaChoy

and the Imperial Court of San Francisco

at Coronation 2003

"Carnivalé – Rockstars In Rio"

February 22, 2003 – GiftCenter Pavilion

As we celebrate 38 years of Community Service

through Charitable Fundraisers for those in need

Attorney

Merrisa L. Coleman

Family Law, Domestic Violence, Estate & Financial Planning And Transgender Issues

Tel (408) 265-9681 • Fax (408) 265-9681

E-Mail: Merrisasjc@aol.com

4960 Almaden Expressway #317, San Jose, CA 95118

TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP

Safe ongoing group

All gender queers welcome

Transitioning NOT required

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http://members.aol.com/valigl/page/feministtherapy.htm

valigl@aol.com **510-527-5662**

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- Personalized Service
- Evening Appointments / Minor Alterations Available
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Fremont, California

Let us help you be all the things you dream!

Readers Respond

Movie Review

The Hot Chick

Review by Brent Ko
365gay.com Entertainment

I'm not certain what offends me more about this film: the complete lack of any humor whatsoever or the insulting depiction of gays and the transgendered. Either way this drag waste of celluloid is shameless in its exploitation falling even lower than Swept Away as a complete waste of time, effort, and money.

Cranked out from Adam Sandler's Happy Madison Production Company, it is utterly wretched, but that has come to be expected from Sandler's stable. Rob Schneider is Clive, a pretty crook who "comes across" a pair of ancient Abyssinian earrings. A magic spell transforms Clive into the body of Jessica (Rachel McAdams), a snobby high school princess.

The jokes are not funny. The attempts at physical comedy fail. And, director Tom Brady is up to his neck in a sea of incompetent directing. Most of the film is taken up with Jessica/Clive as she/he tries to come to terms with being in a hairy man's skin, all the while, firing off negative gay lines that would have been out of place twenty years ago, and are certainly out of place today. It is this sort of thing that fuels the homophobia of high schoolers to whom this film is aimed.

All of the principles connected with The Hot Chick have talent, which makes this effort all the more sad. Never before have I sat through the screening of a film purporting to be a comedy where no one, absolutely no one laughed.

Although we see little of Jessica as a man, we are deluged with Schneider and unfunny penis jokes. Finally, toward the end, Jessica figures out how to reverse the spell and with the help of friends gets her own body back. Jessica and Clive may get their old forms returned to them, but don't expect to get your money back if you make the mistake of shelling out good money for this excuse of a film.

Online SO List!

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

New FTM Group!

South Bay Transmen

Come and hang out with other FTM/questioning guys at our social and support group. We meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:30-9:00pm at the Billy DeFrank Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 938 the Alameda, in San Jose.

For more info: Contact Marianne at (408) 293-3040 ext. 116 or supportedu@defrank.org, — or Lance at [redacted]@onebox.com.

AP Stylebook, Update

First off, a thank you to all who helped raise money to get a new AP stylebook to our local media outlets. I will have the book in my hands tomorrow — I ordered them from a local bookstore, and they had to get 'em from the warehouse.

After that, I get to sit down with my trusty highlighter and mark the appropriate sections in the book, and affix a faceplate to each. The faceplates have the following text: This Stylebook Presented to: The San Francisco Chronicle (for example), In loving memory of Gwen Araujo. Purchased by members of the transgendered community in the sincere hope of respectful coverage for all transgendered people, past, present, and future.

I am still finalizing the text of a letter I intend to send with each book. Books will go to the SF Chronicle and Examiner, the San Jose Mercury News, the Oakland Tribune, KTVU 2, KNTV 3/11, KRON 4, KPIX 5, and KGO 7.

Cheers,
Gwen Smith

The Learning Channel Documentary

Spine Films, based in San Francisco, California, is producing a one-hour documentary for The Learning Channel (TLC), focusing on the lives and experiences of transgender individuals. This hour will center specifically on the MTF experience.

Our program will attempt to profile the emotional and psychological journeys of transgender individuals and their families. The primary focus will be the social aspects of gender identity, and we are specifically searching for people experiencing the first few weeks living as a female. Lesser emphasis will be placed on the medical options associated with transitioning. We also hope to give our audience some understanding of the vast diversity that exists in the 'trans' world, and to help them to understand the difference between sexual identity and gender identity.

We are looking to profile transsexual individuals at different stages of their physical transitions. We are particularly interested people who will be starting hormone treatments or undergoing surgeries (sex reassignment surgery, facial feminization surgery) some time within the next few months. We are also looking for gender dysphoric adolescents as well older transsexuals who transitioned 20-30 years ago.

Interested individuals can send me a short note including the following:

1. First name
2. Contact info (e-mail or phone number)
3. Age
4. A little about yourself (family, job, hobbies)
5. Brief description of transition to date
6. Projected treatment or procedure dates.
7. Brief statement concerning why you would like to possibly be featured in a program of this nature.

A recent photo would also be helpful. Send information to Jonathan Rosen, producer at jonathan@spinefilms.com. Thanks, and I look forward to hearing from you!

Takin' Care of Biz...

TGSF Balance Sheet

(November 16, 2002 through December 22, 2002)

Assets

Cash	$3,749.55
Event Equipment	
Decorations	$1,000.00
Food Service	$200.00
Office Supplies	$50.00
Total Assets	**$4,999.55**

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	$5,880.00
Educational Fund	$0.00
Taxes	$0.00
Insurance	$0.00
Utilities	$0.00
Operations	$0.00
Total Liabilities	$5,880.00
Equity	($880.45)
Total Liabilities & Equity	**$4,999.55**

Monthly Income Statement

Revenue

Membership	$70.00
Advertising	$150.00
Cotillion	$1,550.00
Donations Received	$0.00
Social	$48.00
Education	$0.00
Outreach	$0.00
Halloween Party	$1,295.00
	$3,113.00

Expenses

Cotillion	$0.00
Halloween Party	$2,574.07
Big Shew	$0.00
Pride Parade	$0.00
Social	$100.00
Education	$0.00
Outreach	$0.00
Newsletter	$559.42
Operations	$299.36
Donations Paid	$0.00
	$3,532.85

Net Income ..... **($419.85)**

TGSF Donations

Our Friends Who Give
as of December 15, 2002

There were no donations for the period.

Won't you consider a tax-deductible donation?

Contact TGSF!

ExCom Members

President
Rachael Janelle ..... [redacted]@hotmail.com

Vice President
Rachel Hill ..... [redacted]@aol.com

Secretary
Susan Laird ..... [redacted]@hairzapper.com

Treasurer
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Comments and suggestions concerning the TGSF *web site* www.tgsf.org

Information
Rachael Janelle ..... [redacted]@hotmail.com
..... or 408 [redacted]

Requests for information concerning TGSF *and upcoming events*

Calendar ..... www.tgsf.org

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

Boys Don't Cry Killer Asks to Have Death Sentence Commuted

LINCOLN, Neb. - One of two men convicted of murdering Boys Don't Cry victim Teena Brandon asked the state Supreme Court on Wednesday to commute his death sentence, arguing that a jury, not a judge, should have sentenced him. John Lotter's attorney noted a June ruling in which the U.S. Supreme Court said the Constitution guarantees a trial by a jury, and that that right extends to sentencing.

Nebraska lawmakers recently changed state law to allow juries rather than judges to determine if aggravating factors exist to merit a sentence of death, rather than life in prison, in cases where the death penalty is an option.

Lotter, 31, also is asking the high court to declare the state's use of the electric chair cruel and unusual punishment. Nebraska is the only state with the electric chair as its sole means of execution. Lawmakers have been unable to pass a bill changing the method of execution to lethal injection. Lotter and Marvin T. Nissen were convicted of the 1993 murder of 21-year-old Brandon, a woman who dressed as a man and dated a female friend of the two men.

Prosecutors said Brandon was killed because she accused Lotter and Nissen of raping her after learning her true gender.

The men also killed Lisa Lambert, 24, and Philip DeVine, 22, who had witnessed Brandon's death in a rural Humboldt farmhouse. The killings were the subject of the movie Boys Don't Cry. Nissen, in a deal with prosecutors, testified against Lotter and was sentenced to life in prison. Lotter received three death sentences.

Sex Change Surgeon Relocating to Arizona

Queery.com

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP) _ One of the nation's 20 doctors specializing in sex change operations plans to open a practice in Arizona next month, a newspaper reported Thursday.

Dr. Toby Meltzer, who is now in Portland, Ore., would be the first physician in Arizona to specialize in gender reconstruction surgery, according to the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association. The group is a professional organization devoted to issues involving transsexuals. Local experts and members of the Phoenix area's transsexual community told the East Valley Tribune that Meltzer will be a boon to the state medically, socially and politically.

John Thorne, co-chairman of Transgender Harmony, a referral, support and educational group that meets in Tempe, said Meltzer's presence will mark an opening of acceptance for the stigmatized transgender community. "In a political sense this is a plus for the transgender community to have this doctor who does exceptionally good work relocate to Phoenix considering the conservativeness and religiousness of this state," Thorne said. "For the community to accept this kind of surgery is great _ it shows an openness and forward-thinking."

Dr. William Leighton, president of the Arizona Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons and a Scottsdale plastic surgeon, said Meltzer's arrival means more access to the procedure for those who need it. Now, the closest center that offers the surgery is in Denver. Meltzer's office wouldn't comment on his relocation when contacted Thursday by The Associated Press.

Teena Murderer Appeals Death Sentence

Ann Rostow, Gay.com / PlanetOut.com Network

John Lotter has asked the Nebraska Supreme Court to commute his three death sentences for the 1993 murders of Brandon Teena, Lisa Lambert and Philip DeVine, which were dramatized in the film "Boys Don't Cry."

Lotter was condemned to die in Nebraska's electric chair after his co-defendant, Marvin Nissen, traded testimony for a life sentence.

In a three-pronged plea, the Associated Press reports, Lotter's attorneys argue that the electric chair represents cruel and unusual punishment. Nebraska is the only state that still executes capital criminals in this manner, and although the Legislature has considered changing to lethal injection, they have yet to do so.

Second, Lotter believes the trial court should have admitted testimony from Nissen's cellmate, who is alleged to have heard Nissen confess to being the actual shooter.

Finally, Lotter's major point of appeal rests on a Supreme Court decision last summer, ruling that capital defendants have a constitutional right to be sentenced by a jury rather than a judge. After the June decision, Nebraska's governor called a special session of the Legislature to codify the high court's instructions. But prior to that, death sentences were left in the hands of Nebraska judges.

A sentence of death requires aggravating circumstances, such as particular cruelty, murder for money, depravity and the like. In the famous case of Brandon Teena, the transgender 21-year-old reported Lotter and Nissen to the county sheriff after they had gang-raped him.

Sheriff Charles Laux took no action against the men, who killed Teena and then the two witnesses a few days after Teena sought his help. In a separate civil suit, Teena's mother has been pursuing former Sheriff Laux, and Richardson County, for negligence. After winning her case in lower court, however, she has twice been obliged to appeal to the Nebraska Supreme Court after being awarded token damages. Her latest appeal is pending.

Revolutionary New TG Reassignment Surgery

by 365Gay.com Newscenter Staff

(Rome) An Italian medical team has revolutionized gender reassignment surgery, reducing the multiple surgeries required to just one.

The technique is available only for female to male reassignment and requires two teams of surgeons working for six hours. But, they report that not only can the reassignment be done in one operation, the patient can return home in 12 days in the hospital, with no major complications.

In the recent issue of the urology journal BJU International, Dr. C. Trombetta and colleagues from the University of Trieste describe operations. One surgical team is used to create the patients' breasts, the other to remove the female sexual organs and to manipulate the skin to form a penis. Trombetta said the technique has been successfully used on three reassignments.

The patients were apparently satisfied with the appearance of their new bodies—something not all patients who undergo sex-reassignment surgery report.

TG News!

NTAC Press Release

Transgendered Woman Raped In Sacramento Jail Files Claim

The Sheriff's Department of Sacramento, California, states its mission as "the protection of life and property, the preservation of the public peace and the enforcement of the laws. To accomplish our mission, we dedicate ourselves to Service With Concern." Last August and September, concern may have been farthest from the minds of Sheriff Lou Banas and his force.

In a civil claim filed against Sacramento County, its District Attorney, and the Sheriff's Department on December 17, 2002, Kelly McAllister alleges negligence, threats and slurs based on her transgender status, negligent and intentional infliction of emotional distress, conspiracy, battery, and assault that culminated in a brutal rape by a male inmate.

Ms. McAllister was arrested on August 16, 2002 in connection with a reported public disturbance. She alleges mistreatment during and following her arrest, including beatings and denial of restroom access. She claims to have been pepper sprayed, hog-tied with handcuffs on her wrists and ankles, dragged across the hot pavement face down, and, at one point, left to burn on the hot pavement.

According to the claim, her treatment at the Sacramento Main Jail was even worse. McAllister, a preoperative transsexual in her mid-thirties who has lived full time as a woman for several years, was threatened, demeaned, and subjected to a humiliating strip search.

Following a court appearance on September 6, the five foot seven inch, 135-pound McAllister was placed in a cell with a much larger male prisoner who brutally raped her. Hospital tests, witnessed by a male and female Deputy Sheriff, confirmed that she had been sexually assaulted. Continuing threats and taunts from inmates and jailers drove her to despair, and McAllister attempted suicide soon after her return to jail.

Dean Johansson, principal attorney in the civil action claim, sees no rational explanation for the Sheriff's Department placing a known male to female transsexual in a cell with a man. "The Sheriff's Department was aware of Kelly McAllister's transgender status," he said, "and had previously housed her in protective custody for this very reason in connection with an earlier, unrelated misdemeanor incident."

On September 9, McAllister was returned to court. The judge ordered her released based on time served. Throughout her ordeal, McAllister steadfastly proclaimed her innocence.

Despite having filed a full report with the Sheriff's Department in following her release in September, including photographs of bite marks and other wounds inflicted during the rape, no one has been charged or disciplined for the rape or for the incidents surrounding McAllister's incarceration.

Attorney Johansson stated that he and fellow attorney Dani Williams are prepared to file suit in federal court if the county rejects McAllister's claim. To date, he says, the Sheriff's Department has refused to provide details of their investigation or to release medical records. "Since she was raped, there are very worrisome medical concerns."

The Sheriff's Department had no comment on the case. When reached by phone, the Department's Lt. Lewis said that the claim had not yet come to their attention.

NTAC, the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition, is a §501(c)(4) political advocacy coalition working to establish and maintain the right of all transgendered, intersexed, and gender-variant people to live and work without fear of violence or discrimination.

City Council Approve TG Protections

San Jose Mercury News

A great day! Here's this morning's article from the Mercury News. Our thanks go out to Councilman Ken Yeager and Mayor Gonzales for their work on this. Clearly the murder of Gwen Araujo pushed this over the top—it's been on the table for more than a year. It's a major turn around from the 80's when equivalent measures for the GL community were blasted n the polls by over 80%—there was unanimous support for this. Note, though that while this new language will help in a number of areas, it doesn't solve some of the thorny ones like health care issues a la SF. There's still work to be done. My notes in brackets: [Jennifer Wolcott]

Prompted by the recent slaying of a transgender teen in Newark, the San Jose City Council voted unanimously Tuesday to add transgender people to the list of groups protected under the city's anti-discrimination policy.

Councilman Ken Yeager proposed changing san Jose's harassment policy after learning about the beating death of Eddie Araujo—also known as Gwen—last month. Araujo was killed after his dual identity was discovered at a party, authorities say (Mercury News still can't get this language right!].

Members of the Bay Area Municipal Elections Committee, a gay and lesbian [and recently T] political advocacy group that Yeager co-founded in 1984, approached Yeager and Mayor Ron Gonzales about the amendment [TGSV also spoke with him to request action on this during the last year], which will add protections for gender identity. Current protections include race, color, ethnicity, national origin, disability, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation and religion.

According to Yeager, cities including San Francisco, New York City, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Dallas, and Seattle have adopted similar policies. Yeager said he knows of only one transgender city employee in San Jose [there are several], but companies that receive city contracts also would have to comply, he said.

Commentary

Good News On Ordinance

In case you didn't see the article in the newspaper, the San Jose City Council unanimously approved the memorandum that Mayor Gonzales and I wrote on gender identity protections. With the vote, the Council amended the City of San Jose Harassment Policy to include protections for gender identity; amended the Municipal Code to make it a violation for contractors with the City to discriminate or grant preferential treatment on the basis of gender identity; and amended the Municipal Code to include gender identity discrimination as a matter affecting human rights and covered under the functions, powers, and duties of the Human Rights Commission.

The discussion of the issue went very well. I spoke at length about the need for the protections. In my remarks, I referred to the death of Eddie "Gwen" Araujo several times, mentioning how Newark, CA wasn't so far from San Jose, and how we must do all we can to protect transgendered individuals from harassment, violence, and discrimination. Councilwoman Cindy Chavez also spoke, agreeing that San Jose must build a city where everyone is included.

I want to thank BAYMEC for all its work on the issue. All of us know that while this was an important step for the City to take, there remains much work left to do.

Ken Yeager

TG News!

Transsexual Rights in UK

Transsexuals in the UK will now be able to apply for a substitute birth certificate and be able to marry in their adopted gender, according to new measures announced by the Government. The long awaited reforms have resulted after pressure from the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

A minister for the Lord Chancellor's department, Rosie Winterton, said "If democracies are measured by how they treat their minorities, then I believe it is right that the 5,000-strong transsexual community be afforded the same rights enjoyed by the rest of us."

The new measures are unlikely to become law until 2004 and transsexuals wishing to register in their new genders will have to provide medical evidence that they fulfil the criteria as set out in new guidelines. A new authorizing body will be set up to deal with cases, and all those wishing to apply for new gender recognition will have to show that they have lived in their new sex for at least two years.

However, gender re-assignment surgery will not be a prerequisite and an individual's privacy will be protected from public records access. Only a limited number of agencies, such as the Criminal Records Bureau, Police and Inland Revenue, will be able to access the original documents.

Transsexual Marriage

Rainbow Network.com

Transsexuals are likely to be given the right to marry as part of the government's new equality initiatives. The reported changes are believed to allow the right for transsexuals to have their sex changed on their birth certificates and be legally recognized in their adopted gender. The changes are likely to be announced by ministers within the next month after intervention by the European Court of Human Rights.

A spokesman for the Lord Chancellor's Department said, "There will be an announcement on transsexuals imminently, the detail of which I am not able to go into at this stage." The expected changes follow on from a ruling at the European Court of Human Rights in July, when a British transsexual woman won the right to change the sex on her birth certificate.

Christine Goodwin alleged that the British government violated her human rights by denying her a pension at 60. Goodwin is still legally recognized as a man. Goodwin's QC argued that the British government failed to respect her right to a private life. Goodwin alleges that she has been discriminated against because the government refused to grant her a new national insurance number, left her without legal support when she was sexually harassed at work, and denied her the right to marry.

The European Court of Human Rights ruled that there had been a violation of both Article 8 & 12. These articles deal with the right to 'respect for private and family life' and the 'right to marry and found a family'. Goodwin, who has lived as a woman since undergoing a sex change operation in 1984, was awarded £14,685 in damages.

Goodwin's solicitor said, "The court has said that the Government's stance falls far short of the standards for human dignity and human freedom in the 21st Century. Christine Goodwin's victory will be seen as a milestone on the road to change."

At present the UK stands alongside Albania, Andorra and the Irish Republic as the only countries in the Council of Europe not to recognize a sex change as legally valid.

TG Civil Rights In UK

by Peter Moore, 365Gay.com

(London) The British government is set to bring in legislation giving the transgendered the right to change their birth certificates and marry in their adopted sex.

The new law ends a legal battle between the transgendered and the government that began more than 30 years ago. The Blair government was forced to act following a ruling by the European Court of Human Rights. Two British women, Christine Goodwin and another woman identified only as "I", took their fight with the government to the court in Strasbourg, France last July.

The judges ruled that the UK's failure to recognize the women's new identities in law breached their rights to respect for private life and their right to marry under the European Convention on Human Rights. Goodwin, 65, has lived full time as a woman since 1984 and had gender reassignment surgery in 1990. Both women complained about their treatment in relation to employment, social security, pensions and the ability to marry.

In a third case, a transgendered female is due next month to ask the House of Lords for a ruling that her 20-year marriage to a man is valid. An appeals court had ruled that Elizabeth Bellinger's marriage was illegal because she was still considered a man.

Stephen Whittle, of the transgendered rights group Press for Change, said: "I'm really pleased they're finally doing it. The fact that they're waiting nearly six months from the Strasbourg decision is appalling."

Dr Whittle, a female-to-male transsexual and law lecturer he was concerned about what the new law will mean for people who had changed sex but remained within existing marriages, in some cases for pension reasons. Whittle said he understood some ministers were divided on whether they should have to divorce if they wanted to change the sex on their birth certificates.

Britain To Recognize Sex Changes

Queery.com

LONDON (AP) _ The British government proposed legislation Friday to legally recognize sex changes, a move that would allow transsexuals to marry in their new gender.

Britain is one of a handful of European nations that refuse to let transsexual people officially change the gender on their birth certificate. People who want to change gender under the government proposal would not have to undergo sex change surgery. The European Court of Human Rights backed complaints by two transsexuals in July that British law violated their rights.

Rosie Winterton, a minister in the Lord Chancellor's office, which oversees Britain's court system, said that if passed, the proposed legislation would bring the country into compliance with the European ruling. "Our legislation will enable transsexual people confidently to take up those rights which have been denied to them in society _ including the right to marry in their acquired gender," she said. "I have been impressed by the case put forward by the Trans community and the persuasive arguments they have used in illustrating the plight of an often forgotten minority in society."

Winterton said those who change their sex would be able to apply for full legal recognition of their new gender, although they would still retain any obligations incurred in their old sex, such as parental responsibilities. The person's original birth certificate would not be amended but they could obtain a new record with their new name and gender, with its ties to the old one to be kept confidential, the government said.

Before recognizing someone's new gender, Winterton said, a panel would review medical evidence and ascertain that the person has lived in the acquired sex for at least two years. She added that the government would not require those who want to register a new gender to have undergone sex change surgery.

Christine Burns, of the transsexual rights group Press for Change, said the organization was eager to examine the details of the government's proposal. "It is vital that they offer consistent and complete legal recognition for all purposes," she said. "It's no good someone being a man for one part of the law and a woman for another aspect, because that would lead to the same problems that people have suffered all along."

This Month's ExCom Profile...

Continued from Page 5

As the year comes to a close, I have begun to reflect on where I am going. My reign will be ending in January but I will still continue to be active with TGSF. I have a wonderful, loving girlfriend who I am sure will be delighted that I will be able to spend more time with. I owe her a lot for her understanding and patience throughout the year and will always cherish her endless love. I can not thank enough the numerous friends and acquaintances that have supported and encouraged me and also those that I have met along my path both prior to and during my reign as Miss TGSF 2002. I would like to leave you with this short song excerpt:

Don't lose your way
With each passing day
You've come so far
Don't throw it away
Live believing dreams are for weaving
Wonders are waiting to start
Live your story, faith, hope and glory
Hold to the truth in your heart
If we hold on together
I know our dreams will never die
Dreams see us through to forever
Where clouds roll by
For you and I

Mahalo (thank you) for your time.

Aloha nui loa,
Kalani , Miss TGSF 2002

Missouri School Board is Asked for Policy to Bar Cross-Dressers

Queery.com

O'FALLON, Mo. (AP) - After a father chaperoned a fourth-grade field trip while dressed as a woman, some Francis Howell School District parents want the school system to establish conduct and dress codes for parents attending school-related functions.

But during a school board meeting Thursday night in this St. Louis suburb, board member Jon Bennett countered that "there are serious constitutional issues involved here" in the St. Charles County school system's forming any such policy.

"We're all disappointed in the problems that have come from this, and it is embarrassing," Bennett said. "But we can't control this man. We can't control anybody _ any parent in our district, and how they choose to dress. At issue is a father, while supervising an Oct. 18 field trip of Castlio Elementary School fourth-graders, apparently having a woman's hairstyle and wearing makeup, a sweater, women's jeans and women's shoes.

Vickie McMichael, a fourth-grader's mother, brought the matter before the school board last month. During the Thursday night meeting that drew about 50 people, she asked the board to form a committee of parents, teachers and board members to draft behavior and dress guidelines for field-trip chaperones and volunteering parents at other school events.

Otherwise, she said, she wants the school to let her know any time an identified cross-dresser is in the building so she can pull her child from school.

Donald Wescott, the board's president, said the board would not take actio until its attorneys decided what could be done, adding that "if anything can be done then it will done."

In defense of the father, 54-year-old Marty Hodits, whose wife teaches at Castlio, said the man had been volunteering at school and attending parent-teacher conferences for at least eight years while dressed as a woman.

"No one has said a word. No one has had a problem with him until now," Hodits said.

'Gay Community Abandoned Us' Transgendered Say

by Beth Shapiro, 365Gay.com

(Albany New York) The passage of civil rights protections for gays and lesbians in New York State has created a serious rift between gays and the transgendered.

The New York State Senate in a special session voted to pass the Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act or SONDA. The legislation was signed Tuesday night by Governor George Pataki and goes into effect in 30 days. The 34-26 vote ended a 31-year battle by gays and lesbians to gain inclusion in the states human rights code.

The legislation, which protects gays and lesbians in employment and housing, does not include the transgendered. A proposed amendment to add protections for the transgendered failed 19-41. Senate majority leader Joseph Bruno agreed to recall the senate in a special session to vote on the bill after the state's biggest gay rights group, Empire State Pride Agenda withheld endorsing Pataki for reelection last November. After Bruno announced the recall, Pride Agenda gave the coveted endorsement.

TG activist Melissa Sklarz accused Pride Agenda of abandoning the transgendered. "They have closed the door on us time and time again," she said. Sklarz and other TG activists said they had preferred that SONDA be voted down if it failed to include the transgender amendment proposed by Sen. Thomas Duane, the chamber's only openly gay member. "We are fighting among ourselves," said the Manhattan Democrat. "I promise the transgender community I'm not going to forget. The battle for that begins right away."

Foreman estimated that 75 percent of transgender people in the state live in New York City where a city law already protects them against discrimination.

Passage of the bill was hailed by Empire State Pride. "The New York law will be one of the broadest anti-gay discrimination laws in the nation," said Matt Foreman, Executive Director of the organization. "This lays the foundation for winning full equality under the law in areas such as taxation, protections for gay youth and transgender people, and recognition of our families."

SONDA makes New York the 13th state to enact protections for gays and lesbians in housing and employment. To celebrate the victory, Rainbow flags will fly today from city halls across the state, including those of Albany, Brighton, Brooklyn, Buffalo, and Rochester.

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.

Remember Gwen Araujo!

"My Kid Didn't Die in Vain," Says Transgender Teen's Mother

By Michelle Locke
Associated Press Writer

Newark, Calif. (AP) _ She had always worried about her child, ever since elementary school, when other kids threw stones and hateful insults at Eddie Araujo, the little boy who didn't fit in.

By 17, there were lots of friends, but the danger had only grown _ little Eddie had grown up to be "Gwen," a beautiful young woman who only some knew was biologically still a man.

Worry turned to dread on a quiet morning in October when Sylvia Guerrero realized that Gwen hadn't returned from a party the night before. Something was wrong.

Days later, the reason Eddie "Gwen" Araujo Jr. never returned home was spelled out in thick black headlines. "TRANSGENDER TEEN'S SLAYING SHAKES NATION." "3 Charged in Beating Death of Boy, 17, Who Lived as a Girl."

Transgender activists saw the murder as a symbol of the fear and hostility they face daily. Kansas preacher Fred Phelps, who has made a career out of gay bashing, seized on the murder as a bully pulpit for his hate gospel.

For a while, the close-knit Guerrero clan shrank from the onslaught. But gradually, Guerrero began coming forward. She opened the funeral to the public and sat front and center at hearings for the alleged attackers. She assumed the far from comfortable role of dealing with a private sorrow, viewed through the prism of public agendas.

"It's important for Gwen," she said. "That's why."

Even while playing Little League and going fishing, her child was unusually sensitive and neat. A picture of Eddie making campfire s'mores at about age 9 is all impish charm, eyes gleaming beneath close-cropped black hair, an all-white outfit immaculate right down to the socks. "I think moms just know," said Guerrero.

Other people knew, too. It was in elementary school that Eddie first started getting hassled _ teasing, name-calling, even rock-throwing. The youngster kept some of it from Guerrero, not wanting to hurt her. But she found out and started driving Eddie to and from school.

As a teenager, Gwen was a knockout, a young woman in every way but one. She had a beguiling smile and a passion for music and friends and butterflies. But her school career was spotty. She enrolled in an alternative high school, but this fall, senior year, never showed up for class. She tried for a few jobs. But employers balked when "Gwen" was in the interview chair and "Eddie" was on the application form.

Police reports paint a grim picture of the teen's last months. In court documents, police say they were told the teenager had a problem with alcohol. In July, police say, Guerrero had to pick her child up _ suffering a stab wound from an alley.

Guerrero said she hasn't read the police reports. She is reluctant to talk about her child's troubles, but is adamant _ and the family support this _ that she never rejected Gwen. Being single mom to four children _ there is a grown daughter, Pearl, and two younger boys _ wasn't easy. "Teenagers are not perfect and they drive us crazy. You don't even want to come home from work. You just want to drive ... you don't know where," said Guerrero, only 38 herself when Gwen was killed. But "you don't toss your kids out."

Life wasn't all teen angst. There were mother-daughter days with Pearl and with Gwen, too, days they'd go to the movies, get their nails done, drink smoothies at the mall. Everyone went to Gwen for makeup. If there was a wedding or one of the girls was having her quinceanera, a Hispanic coming-of-age tradition, "they were all there lined up."

Guerrero always tried to call the teenager "Gwen" in public, but the habit of a lifetime was hard to break. Even now, Guerrero sometimes uses masculine pronouns to describe her child, although, if asked, she prefers the use of feminine pronouns out of respect. Did Guerrero ever wish her child weren't different? No. "If there's anything that I really regretted, it was the way he was treated by the world."

The last night of Gwen's life began prosaically enough.

On Oct. 3, Guerrero came home from work with two bottles of hair dye that Gwen had been after her to buy so they could do their hair together. She was annoyed when the teen announced she was going to a party instead.

Gwen modeled her outfit, a girlfriend's denim miniskirt _ it was her first time going out in a skirt _ a black shirt and flip-flops. Guerrero didn't like the look and said so. Gwen took along a pair of jeans as a backup. Just before she left, the teen, as children sometimes will, poured on the charm.

"Why are you being so nice?" Guerrero asked. "What do you want from me?"

Nothing, Gwen said, and was gone.

"Had I known ...," Guerrero says now, a world of regret in her voice.

Two months later, questions remain about what happened at that party. Four local men have been charged in the murder, which police are calling a hate crime. According to police reports, the teenager was beaten and strangled after her biological gender was revealed. One of the accused, 19-year-old Jaron Nabors, who police say led them to the body in a shallow grave 150 miles east of Newark, has pleaded innocent. His lawyer says Nabors is far from homophobic and will be cleared.

The three other men have yet to enter a plea. The lawyer for one, 22-year-old Jose Merel, has said the victim was not singled out because of sexual orientation or gender, but wouldn't say why. What is clear is that after the party, no one came forward. The story seeped out only after Nabors blurted out something to a friend, police say. It eventually reached the Guerrero family, who had already reported the teen as missing.

Family members of the accused portray them as serious young men with hopes for the future. Merel and Nabors were working to support their girlfriends and babies. Friends told the San Jose Mercury News that Magidson nursed a wounded pit bull back to life.

Merel told the newspaper during a jail interview that he was innocent of the killing but had gotten angry after learning the teenager whom he knew as Lida had a male body.

The discovery of the body in mid-October electrified Newark, a suburb of about 43,000 which sits just across the bay from San Francisco but has little in common with that famously broad-minded city.

High school students putting on an already scheduled performance of "The Laramie Project," a play about the murder of gay college student Matthew Shepard, found their well-rehearsed lines reverberating in new ways.

Transgender activists rallied and marched in Gwen's name. They said the murdered teen was the 25th person in less than a year to fall victim to violence against their community - people who feel their gender identity doesn't conform with their biology.

Mainstream society sees the transgendered, especially men, as tricksters. In truth, a transgender man dressing as a woman is being honest, activists say.

"When I walk down the street at night I have to fear everything (a woman) fears," said Rachael-Janelle Light, who has undergone surgery to become female and is founder [President] of Transgender San Francisco. "But I have to fear just one degree more because maybe they recognize I'm not a woman."

At a vigil honoring Gwen in November, Gloria Allred, the prominent LA attorney who is representing the family, challenged the teen's killers. "Did the fact that Gwen knew exactly who she was remind you about doubts that you might have about yourself? Did you fear the Gwen inside yourself?" Allred said.

So much has changed for Guerrero since that October morning when she realized her child was gone. Sometimes the sense of loss gets to be too much; she locks herself in a room and turns off the phone.

Still, she plans to continue campaigning against prejudice, encouraged by the cards and letters that have poured in from people touched by Gwen's story.

"I know," she says, "my kid didn't die in vain."

Remember Gwen Araujo!

Eddie "Gwen" Araujo Brings TG Pronouns into View

The Associated Press

The murder of Eddie "Gwen" Araujo Jr. has raised a question of grammar with serious implications for transgender people - should the slain teen who lived as a girl be referred to as he or she?

News media, including The Associated Press, initially used the masculine pronoun. AP had taken its lead from Araujo's family members, who called their child a "he."

Transgender activists saw the masculine pronoun as disrespectful - saying it was clear that Araujo, who adopted the name Gwen after singer Gwen Stefani of the alternative rock group No Doubt, would have wanted to be referred to as a girl.

Others argued that allowing people to essentially self-declare their gender without undergoing a physical change is too subjective an approach to grammar.

After gathering more information from Araujo's family, The AP decided to switch to the feminine pronoun when referring to the slain teenager from Newark, Calif.

The AP stylebook doesn't have an entry for "transgender," but does address the issue in part under "sex changes:"

"Use the pronoun preferred by the individuals who have acquired the physical characteristics (by hormone therapy, body modification, or surgery) of the opposite sex and present themselves in a way that does not correspond with their sex at birth. If that preference is not expressed, use the pronoun consistent with the way the individuals live publicly."

Araujo presented herself consistently as female - wearing women's clothing, makeup and long hair. Araujo also intended to have sex-change surgery, according to her mother, Sylvia Guerrero, who had promised the teen she would file a name-change petition after that was accomplished.

"He was going to be a 'she' and so we can go by 'she' out of respect to her," Guerrero told The AP.

Switching the habit of a lifetime has been tough for Araujo's mother. Although Guerrero tried hard to use "Gwen" when they were out in public - partly for her child's safety - she says she sometimes slipped up, much to her teen's chagrin.

"It's not that I'm disrespecting you. I respect you very much," she remembers telling the teen. "It's hard for a mom to call you 'Gwen' when I've called you 'Eddie.' It's like a habit."

Forum On TG Teen's Murder Told Victim Partly To Blame

by Mark Worrall
365Gay.com Newscenter in San Francisco

(Newark, California) A public forum on acceptance in the the wake of the murder of transgendered teenager Gwen Araujo shows many in this community in Silicone Valley fail to understand the magnitude of the problems faced by sexual minorities, especially teens.

About 100 people who attended the discussion, co-sponsored by the city and the local school board heard gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual students still don't feel safe in the community.

Newark Memorial High School teacher Paul DeWitt told the forum he has not heard slurs used toward certain ethnicities, religions or the disabled, but "I hear a lot of gay slurs...There should be workshops," he continued. "This kind of language and behavior needs to stop."

Jill Tregor, a consultant with Intergroup Clearinghouse, said her organization provided sensitivity training for teachers in the Visalia school district, which settled a case in August brought by a former high school student who was teased for being gay.

In addition to paying the plaintiffs $130,000, the district was forced to offer three years of training for teachers and students about anti-harassment and tolerance policies. "You can't expect to change hearts overnight," she said. "But you can tell them what they are legally mandated to do."

Local educators say workshops are on the way. But, several people in the audience said that Araujo was at least partly to blame for the events which led up to her murder. One person said she should not have "deceived" those who may have thought she was biologically female.

Another speaker said city leaders have been unduly pressured by "outside groups with political agendas."

"The city and school leaders should not feel pressure by outside groups to make decisions that are best for our Newark community," resident John Guzman said. "Newark leaders should not promote the homosexual lifestyle, but neither should they condemn it."

The transgendered teen was beaten and then strangled at a house party in Newark, October 3. Her body was found in a shallow grave about halfway between Lake Tahoe and Sacramento. Three men have been charged with the killing.

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Despite Setbacks, Transgender Activists Make Headway

By David Crary, AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) - Violence against their disparate community persists; so do legal setbacks. Yet these are heady days for transgender activists as they strengthen their lobbying efforts and gain civil rights protections in city after city.

"We have a lot of work to do, but we are winning," said Mara Keisling, an activist from Harrisburg, Pa., who is helping establish a new transgender-rights center in Washington.

The past year, for the movement, has been one of pronounced highs and lows. On the downside, transgender people last month commemorated 25 members of their community killed during the previous year in what activists considered to be hate crimes. Among the latest victims was a 17-year-old Californian born as Eddie Araujo but buried as Gwen, in makeup and black lace gloves, after being beaten and strangled at a party in October.

Activists also seethed over a federal judge's ruling in September that a trucker fired because he wore women's clothes after hours was not protected by the federal law against sex discrimination. The married trucker, Peter Oiler, was dismissed by the Winn-Dixie grocery chain after telling a supervisor he occasionally went out in public dressed in wig, makeup and women's clothes.

Offsetting those developments, transgender-rights advocates won an unprecedented series of political victories this year. The governing councils of 14 cities and counties - including Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, New York and Philadelphia - voted to include transgender people among the groups protected by local nondiscrimination laws.

In no previous year had more than six jurisdictions taken such action, according to the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition. It says seven counties, 44 cities and two states - Minnesota and Rhode Island - now have explicit civil-rights protections for transgender people in housing, employment and other areas.

"This is the best year we've ever had," said Sarah DePalma, a Houston-based activist. "Where we are still lacking is at the state level, but it's always been our goal to work from the local level up." Despite defeat in the Oiler case, transgender people are making gains in the workplace. One notable example: Lt. Brianne Lunan, formerly Brian Lunan, remains an officer in the Bexar County sheriff's department in San Antonio, 20 months after the sheriff said Lunan's male-to-female transition would not jeopardize her job status.

Another positive development, transgender activists said, is improved relations with major gay-rights organizations. "Some in the gay community still think they should have nothing to do with us, that we hurt their cause, but they're becoming fewer and fewer," DePalma said.

One of the most influential gay-rights groups, the Washington-based Human Rights Campaign, bolstered its standing with transgender activists this year by commissioning what it said was the first national survey of public attitudes toward transgender people.

The survey found majority support for the rights of transgender people to attend school and hold most jobs, but not jobs as elementary school teachers or day-care workers. Roughly one-third of the respondents said being transgender is morally wrong.

Human Rights Campaign spokesman David Smith said he was optimistic that gay-rights and transgender activists - though sometimes differing on tactics - could work in tandem to increase public understanding of their causes. "We're all united about what the goal is, and that's equality under the law," he said. Keisling said the improved relations with gay-rights groups coincided with an increasing sense of political self-reliance among transgender activists.

"The public understands more and more clearly that we exist," said Keisling, a male-to-female transsexual who co-chairs the Pennsylvania Gender Rights Coalition. "What they don't see is that there is still a lot of violence towards us, and a lot of discrimination. Most people mistakenly think almost everybody is protected by nondiscrimination laws." The transgender community is diverse, with the common denominator that its members, by and large, feel they were born the wrong sex. It encompasses transsexuals, cross-dressers, and people who live as members of the other gender but - unlike transsexuals - don't undergo surgery.

Conservative groups opposed to gay-rights legislation also oppose moves to codify transgender rights, but they do not equate the two movements. John Paulk, gender-issues analyst for the Christian ministry Focus on the Family, said transgender people have a treatable mental disorder and don't constitute a group that merits specific civil-rights protections. "Where do you close the door to other mental problems?" Paulk asked. "Can someone say, 'I'm schizophrenic, I should have my own bathroom'?"

Use of public bathrooms and showers is a perennially thorny issue for transsexuals; opponents of transgender rights often raise the specter of men dressed as women using women's bathrooms. Numerous businesses and colleges have addressed the matter by providing some one-person, unisex bathrooms. "It's frustrating that this issue has become so prominent," said Paisley Currah, a Brooklyn College political science professor who heads the Transgender Law and Policy Institute.

"Some politicians will support a transgender rights law, and yet don't want a transsexual in their bathroom," she said. "There's this absurd fear there will be men who cross-dress to go into bathrooms and rape women." Transgender activists are tackling an array of other challenges. Among them:

- Uncertainty about the validity of marriages involving transsexuals. Some courts have recognized such marriages, but the Kansas Supreme Court ruled this year that the marriage of a male-to-female transsexual and her husband was invalid, even though the wife had changed gender many years before the marriage.
- Parental rights. Some courts have terminated the parental rights of transgender people, or denied them visitation rights following a divorce. Though transgender people are not prohibited from adopting, they sometimes find their sexuality is viewed negatively by adoption agencies.
- Risk of violence against transgender convicts who are placed in prisons according to their gender at birth, rather than the gender they identify with. In August, a Canadian filed an $18 million lawsuit against U.S. and Montana officials for abuse allegedly suffered when sent to Montana's prison for men while in the process of transforming into a woman.
- Difficulties changing the sex designation on birth certificates and driver's licenses. In Bedford, Pa., a truck driver who changed from female to male last year was rebuffed by a judge in November when he sought to change his birth certificate and license.

"Every time I get stopped for safety checks ... they pick up on the fact that my license says I'm a female and I look like a male," said Daniel MacNeal.

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Hart To Heart

By Roxy Carmichael-Hart

The Crying Game

I've been crying this morning. Normally, this would not be anything special, since I tend to cry at a lot of things, like *The Wizard of Oz*, *Field of Dreams*, and *Dad*. But this was a cry that made me feel good. Let me explain.

I had the pleasure of spending Thanksgiving at Rachael Janelle's house and since I have no close family. I was happy to be able to spend time with my sisters. As I entered her home, I saw something that gave me pause. Several weeks earlier, I had a picture taken with Rachael, and Jackie and Gelsey from RGA, two other wonderful ladies and, in addition to Rachael, two of my mentors. I had printed the picture and had given it to Rachael a few days earlier. Well, she had it framed and had placed it on her mantle, as if it were our family portrait (Jackie calls it our "Gilmore Girls" photo.) To be held in this high esteem, with these leaders in the TG world, was a very heartwarming experience. Next, Rachael asked me to say grace before dinner. I was very touched by this gesture because this was the first time I had been to her home and I have likely known her for a lot shorter period of time than most of the others present. And third, as is her custom and because it was my first time in her home, she gave me a teddy bear. I was deeply moved and almost went over the edge then and there. But as you know, these acts of kindness were nothing new for Rachael, a woman with a heart as big as the universe.

But the thing that did the trick was the next morning. I had e-mailed Rachael some of the pictures I had taken at her home. She wrote me back and thanked me, and then said I was a special person. That did it. Nobody has ever called me special. I never thought of myself as special until I became a part of the transgender community. From the very beginning when Rachael saw this scared and confused little girl wandering around the TGSF float at the Pride Parade, I have been accepted as Roxy. No one asks why, no one critiques my clothes or my make-up, they just accept me for who I am.

The ladies in the TG community have become my real family. But, as Mary Richards once said, "What is a family, but the people who make you feel a little less alone, a little less afraid and a lot more loved." Thank you, my sisters, for being my family.

That is the message that I want to send to my new TG sisters, especially those who may be reading the *Channel* for the first time. It is ok to be afraid. We're all afraid at least once. It is ok to take your time. It took me almost 40 years for Roxy to make her appearance. But remember this - you are not alone. You family is there for you. It is why I intend to do anything that I can to ensure that TGSF is there for you, as it has been there for me.

The love and support that I have received from my TG sisters has given me the strength and courage to go forward as Roxy. (And if your lovely editor will allow me, I would like to describe my support network in a future column.). It has made me more confident and self-assured, so that I was able to live all of Thanksgiving as Roxy. And it has enabled me to look into the mirror each morning and say "I'm gonna make it after all."

Are You A Veteran?

Are you aware that there is a gender discussion group every Monday afternoon at the Ft. Miley Veteran's Center in San Francisco? The group is open to all TS, TV, and TG's who are qualified veterans. If you are interested and wish further information, contact Lorraine Hall at: [redacted]@aol.com or call 510[redacted]

Shirley Faire

god's 'umble Servants

Osama Bin Laden recently sent a message to us Americans covering a multitude of topics. He had a lot to say about god. He loves god. It seems that god is all merciful and at the same time wants us Americans dead because we do not love him in the right way; in fact we are enemies of god—followers of "Taghut," or satan. The right way to love god happens conveniently to be exactly the same way as Mr. Bin Laden loves god. Until we believe in and love god as Mr. Bin Laden does, we are infidels and deserve god's worst.

As god's spokesman, he has a lot to say about us, and the news is not good. We are hypocrites (yes, we can be); we are responsible for unwarranted death and destruction in the Middle East (also, unhappily, true) just because we want cheap oil and support the Jews' claim that the Holy Land is theirs (a gross simplification). Our secular government is an unholy scandal because it does not place god (Mr. Bin Laden's god), the author of all existence and the only true moral compass for mankind, at its head. "You are the nation who, rather than ruling by the Shariah of Allah in its Constitution and Laws, choose to invent your own laws as you will and desire."

Because we elect our leaders, all Americans are equally guilty of the crimes with which he charges us and are legitimate targets for his (Mr. Bin Laden's—and, by extension, god's) wrath. Whether you or I or our children voted for the current American administration matters not. We are all guilty. We must all pay.

Mr. Bin Laden tells us that god does not like homosexuals and other deviants (such as crossdressers and transsexuals). When our corrupt government falls and is replaced by government run under god's rules, and by god's rulers (such as Mr. Bin Laden), no doubt homosexuality and other deviant behaviors will not be tolerated. They will be dealt with as god's representatives always deal with such abominations.

Mr. Bin Laden respects women. God, says Mr. Bin Laden, does not want women to be exploited. Women's liberation is just another heresy and merely a device to use women to sell sex and unnecessary products and to promote usury. There is a better way, Mr. Bin Laden's way. Though his letter does not say what that way is, his followers have. God wants women to be ruled by legitimate heads both of households and governments; that is, by men. And not just any men, but those, such as Mr. Bin Laden, who by the grace of god understand what is good for women. What sensible woman wouldn't agree— though her agreement is neither sought nor wanted?

In our country, we can tune in a homegrown version of Mr. Bin Laden every morning on one of the local channels. His name is Pat Robertson. Put a beard on Mr. Robertson and change the name of his god and the objects of his smiling wrath, and it's amazing how his words and Mr. Bin Laden's words match like two gloves cut out of the same hog.

Mr. Roberts doesn't like the fact that our government "outlaws" god, but he does like our current government because it is led by a George Bush, who is a Christian believer, as is Mr. Roberts, and does what god wants him to do, and as we see in the nightly news pursues his objectives of rooting out terrorists and waging war against "evil doers" without a trace of doubt. Like Mr. Bin Laden, Mr. Bush knows what is good for other people without having to ask them. Unlike Mr. Bin Laden, Mr. Bush sometimes has to listen to others, such as the American people, before acting, but not often, and in fact, less and less. You can do that when you are god's humble servant.

Mr. Bush, Mr. Robertson and Mr. Bin Laden all agree that all nations ultimately are accountable to god. All agree that their enemies are evil and doing the work of the devil. All agree that sex and gender diversity deviate from and violate god's law, and are an abomination. You'd think they would all be pals. They certainly sound like allies.

Human beings do not need monotheist bigots to provoke them to hurt and kill one another. The Hindus in India do a fair job of hurting and killing in the name of their faith. But the monotheists do seem to find more excuses to hurt and kill with less provocation than those of us who just want to find a little peace and happiness in this, our troubled, brief existence.

Bay Area Holiday Dinner at Tarragon!

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Transgenders in Transition

NCM Transgender Forum

New California Media, Elena Shore

"Voices Of Our Communities - The Road To Me: Transgender Experience in California Ethnic Communities", a forum that took place on Nov 26 in SF, was organized by New California Media and co-sponsored by the San Francisco LGBT Community Center.

The murder of Eddie Gwen Araujo, a 17-year-old Latina in Newark, California was the 25th killing of a transgender person this year, making 2002 the deadliest year on record for transgenders, according to the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition. As reports of violence against this group are on the rise, a panel of ethnically diverse transgender people said recently that their gender identities have not always been seen as a threat. In some cultures they are revered for their ability to transcend gender, while in others they are feared for the same reason.

Transgenders are more likely to be murdered today than any other group, panelists said to an audience of ethnic media at the San Francisco LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bi-sexual Transgender) Community Center. According to the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition, people who cross gender lines are killed at a rate 16 times greater than that of the general population. Their violent death rate is three times that of African-American males, the next closest group.

Though they are victims of violence in a modern society that has not made a place for them, transgender people have enjoyed a historical presence in many traditional cultures. Among Native American cultures, transgenders were accepted as a "third gender" and revered as mystical healers. With the unique ability to see the world from both male and female points of view, they were often consulted by tribal chiefs as visionaries and prophets.

"Ancient traditional cultures did have space for that," said Prado Gomez, a female-to-male transgender man from San Francisco and the director of Proyecto Contra SIDA Por Vida. "They recognized the value of people who were able to cross those lines and see multiple perspectives."

The "mahu" in pre-colonial Hawaii and Tahiti were revered as healers and continue to play an important role today. The "hijras" in India, celebrated as a third gender, perform the traditional ceremony when a baby is born. In Samoa, where the word for "woman" is "fafine," the word for transgenders is "fa'afine," or "to be woman." According to Chardain Su'e Su'e, a male-to-female transgender woman from American Samoa, "fa'afine" play an important role in the household. "A family with a transgender is an honorable family."

While many pre-colonial societies have placed value in the transgender experience, other cultures reject this group as a challenge to their own notion of gender. In Cuba, where the traditional gender roles of the Catholic Church may be more integral to defining relationships, identities and organizing society, transgenders are viewed as a threat to the society itself. Adela Vazquez, a male-to-female transgender woman from Cuba, was rejected by her family, whom she has not seen for 22 years. "I have no family," she said. "But I have myself."

Though San Francisco has long been seen as a Mecca for queer people, when she arrived there in 1983, Vazquez found that she, like other transgender people, also faced discrimination within the gay community. In gay bars, she said, they would laugh at her make-up. "I'm a woman in pajamas, in jeans and a shirt, with make-up or no make-up," she said. "I find it very strange that the community I've given so much to is taking so much from me."

The lack of acceptance of transgenders within a community that has itself been marginalized by society comes as a shock to many transgender people. "Many of us come out of the gay community so we expect more," said Ray Bernstein, a female-to-male transgender man.

But just as the transition from male to female - or from female to male - can be seen as a threat to a society that defines itself by gender, the transition of many transgender people from a gay man or lesbian to a heterosexual woman or man can present a threat to a gay community that defines itself by sexual orientation.

The reaction from the gay community, said Gomez, is often one of anger and betrayal: "By being a man," he said, "(they feel that) I have betrayed them and betrayed where I come from." This sense of betrayal may be a reaction to another aspect of his transition: as he moved from female to male and gay to heterosexual, Gomez also moved into a different social status.

But for many transgender people of color, there is a lot that does not change. For Gomez, the transition-from a woman of color to a man of color did not necessarily come with privilege. Before and after his transition, Gomez has experienced discrimination based on his ethnicity. "It's difficult for me to distinguish whether the discrimination I experience is as a man of color or as a transgendered man."

The experience for white transgenders can be somewhat different. Ray Bernstein , who transitioned from a "radical lesbian", now experiences a higher social status as a "straight, white male." As someone who has identified himself with radical movements that challenged society, Bernstein is now seen as part of the system that he once rejected. He confronts issues of privilege as he is viewed as the antithesis of his former identity.

According to Hawaiian native Melenie Eleneke, transgenders move through a hierarchy of social levels. As she transitioned from male to female, she moved from a position of privilege as a man to a lower social status as a woman. A female of color, she said, experiences a lower social standing. Being a transgender person of color, she said, lessens your societal status even further.

As the increasing murder rate has thrust the crisis of anti-transgender violence into the spotlight, transgender people of color voiced their frustration with the way they are seen by society. Their underlying message to the ethnic media was that their "transitions" across lines of gender, sexuality and social status, though fraught with difficulty, were really transitions to themselves. Unspoken, but implicit, was their wish to find acceptance in a larger society where they would be valued as they once were in traditional cultures.

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