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# TRANSGENDERIST

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Monthly Magazine of the Transgender Independence Club

December 4, 1997

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## Ho Ho Ho

DON'T FORGET the Christmas Party December 11th. At this time I don't have a clue as to what this party will be like, so I would suggest BYOP: Bring Your Own Party, enough for you and enough to share.

A serious note: Christmas and the Holiday Times are times of immense stress, times when our ties to family are either reaffirmed or redented. In either event, there is a recognized stress associated with this time.

It is important to recognize that there is a very good reason for this, having to do with the length of the year and the declining sunlight. December 21 or thereabouts is the shortest daylight day of the year, the Winter Solstice, the end of the solar year and the official beginning of Winter.

The Romans recognized this stress factor when they organized their calendar into ten months of 36 days, 360 days in the year. The remaining days were days when no business could be transacted, so the prevailing opinion was "PARTY TIME." The fledgling Christian Church wanted to make a statement about that sort of thing, so Christmas got put there (most scholars agree that Jesus was really born in the Spring, the time when sheep and shepherds are out at night).

So, in an effort to reduce stress, a lot of this newsletter will be peppered with humor gleaned and making the rounds this year on the Internet. I hope you enjoy it.

--Vix

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## The Drag Queen Who Saved Christmas

It was Christmas Eve  
Somewhere in the Southland  
At the local gay bar  
The celebration was out of hand.

The Party was joyous  
Full of good times and fun  
A family of friends  
Sharing with everyone

What did they hear  
But a bump and a clatter  
Officer Cindy went up  
To see what was the matter

It was Santa Claus  
Up on the roof  
Poor Santa had crashed  
And broken his hoof.

They brought Santa down  
Laid him on down  
Sally the doctor  
Examined him with frown

Sally looked a bit grave  
Dear Santa, she said  
I'm afraid you will have to  
Go home to bed.

Santa looked stricken  
"Oh the girls and the boys!  
Who will deliver  
The sacks full of toys?"

The crowd looked around.  
Who had the magic  
To transform a  
Situation this tragic?

Out of the darkness  
One person was seen  
There was Miss Anita  
The local drag queen.

"I can help, Santa!  
I can deliver the goods  
To children who live  
in the cities and woods."

Santa was worried  
Could the magic come true?  
Would this group of queers  
Know what to do?

People thought for a moment  
Could Anita do it?  
Did she have the magic  
To pull them all though it?

>From the back of the crowd  
Was heard one gay self  
"Well heck," Bill exclaimed  
"I always wanted to be an elf!"

So the folks in that bar  
Gave all the were worth  
To delighting the children  
All over the Earth.

Alex, the leather man said  
"Don't worry! I'll  
Get to the job  
Of fixing the bridle."

Carol, the butch said  
"Don't any one panic  
I can fix the sleigh  
Cause I'm a mechanic."

Robert & Richard,  
two very sweet boys,  
Fell to the task  
Of fixing the toys.

"When we finish these toys,  
They'll be better than new!  
Don't you just think that Barbie  
Needs a better hair do?"

Said Ruthie, a femme  
"You need to look cute!  
Come on Anita!  
We'll make you a suit!"

In a matter of moments  
Everything was done  
The sleigh was already  
To start up and run

The toys were all perfect  
Alex's rigging was aces  
Even the reindeer  
Had smiles on their faces.

The door to the ladies  
Opened up wide  
Into the hall  
Miss Anita did glide

Her beautiful cherry red dress  
Shone in the night  
A elegant hood, trimmed  
with (fake) fur of white.

Every mouth on the room  
Just stood and gasped  
Maybe she had  
The magic at last!



Over to the chimney  
Anita did soar  
Her patent spike heeledboots  
A tapping on the floor.

She looked and breathed in  
And with a call of Ho Girl, Ho!  
In a puff of pink smoke  
Up the chimney she did go!

They all ran to the roof  
Saw Anita in the sleigh  
She said to the reindeer  
"Up, up and away!"

A beautiful sight  
flying though the sky  
And, as Santa noticed.  
There wasn't a dry eye.

The people who made  
Christmas so cheery  
Some lesbians and gay men  
Some butches and fairies.

And Santa remembered  
what he had known for so long  
Without queers at Christmas  
The magic is gone.

So at this Christmas  
When Santa you ask  
Remember a drag queen  
Once carried his pack.

Miss Anita's voice rang out  
On that marvelous flight  
"Merry Christmas to all  
And to all a good night, Bay-bee!"

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Many thanks to Callan, Pam, Trilby, Julie,  
Jackie, Steve, Andrea, Cathy and Susie for  
providing the humor; huggles!

## Callan William's Acceptance Speech for Building Bridges Award

On receiving a Building Bridges Award for  
TGIC, 10/19/97

Anyone who knows me knows you can't put me  
in front of a group of people on Sunday  
morning without having me preach! If you will  
indulge me a few minutes, I would like to ask.

What do all queer people share?

We all share the experience of being shamed  
and humiliated into hiding the contents of our  
heart. We each have been pounded into hiding  
the joys and the desires and the ecstasy that our  
creator placed in our heart.

We share the experience of being driven into  
the closet, into walling our heart off from the  
world to keep our integrity and to keep the  
world comfortable with their own rigidly binary  
view of what women should do, what men  
should do.

The secret to building bridges is simple, as any  
transgendered person who has built a bridge  
between the masculine and feminine part of  
themselves will tell you. It is not really  
building bridges, it is simply erasing the walls  
of separation that we have built around our  
hearts.

To come together, we must focus on what we  
share. The blocks to seeing what we share are  
the illusory walls of separation that we built  
between humans, trying to neatly divide the  
beautiful landscape of our continuous common  
humanity with boundaries that comfort us -- the  
same boundaries that limit and oppress us.



TGIC, for over 40 years, has been committed to supporting those who feel constrained by the rigid boundary between men and women.

We have taken many approaches to this challenge, including trying to build new boundaries that include us and exclude others, which frankly, was not a great idea. The best solution to date seems to be to work towards a world where everyone is free to follow their own heart without boundaries.

This thrust of transgendered people acting as the connective tissue between humans -- men and women, straight and gay, even black and white, poor and rich -- is not a new role for us. It is the role that transgendered shamans have always played. It is the way that queer people, who have had to claim their own unique hearts back from the pressures of socialization, have always served all of humanity.

To paraphrase M.R. Ritley, "Being queer is not an accident, it is a calling." We cross boundaries -- of gender, for race, of class and more -- to reveal the truth that all is connected.

Speaking for everyone who has been involved with TGIC, we are pleased that our lesbian sisters and our gay brothers who have also struggled against the expectations of what men should do, what women should do, choose to honor our role in building connection.

Thank you for this award. In receiving it, I would like to thank the transgendered people throughout history, including the butches and drags, the tomboys and sissies right here in the Capital District who have worked to remind us that walls between people are illusions. They remind us that we are each, in our heart, simply human.

It is my fondest hope that transgendered people here and now can continue the honored role of building bridges, of having a foot in each world. I know that they will continue making connections, proudly following the grand heritage of transgender.

To live in a world where all is connected by bridges, a world without walls, is to live where there is one world, one community, and where everyone is respected and is honored as an individual.

To live in a connected world is to face the challenges of being the best we can be, of operating with grace, and honesty, being our best self at all times.

These are the challenges that we take on, to know that, regardless of sex, gender, race, class, ethnicity, religion, body, or any other differences, we are each connected -- and each is loved and respected.

Today, you say that you want this world of connection by honoring us for Building Bridges. Let us walk out of here together and continue the work build bridges, to remove the walls around our hearts, and to remind everyone of the powerful symbiotic and beautiful connections of the entire world.

Thank you.

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## "To Cook a Turkey"

First stuff the bird -- 2 cups bread crumbs, 1 cup water, 1 onion chopped, 2 tsp. sage, 2 eggs, salt & pepper, 1 cup popcorn (unpopped).

Roast turkey at 325 degrees. It will be done when the popcorn blows the ass off the turkey.

I, personally, consider this to be downright lewd.  
<giggle>



## Letter to the Editor

[I wish you could see this cover letter; it's the most readable script I have ever seen!]

November 22, 1997

Dear Vicky,

Condolences on your recent computer woes. I enjoyed Andrea [REDACTED]'s piece on her closet (mine has logging boots, two hard hats, & some shirts from the early 70s that I can't bear to part with), & Tina's poem and cartoon. I don't know who submitted the Darwin Awards entry, but I got a laugh out of that too. Women are known for their incredible capacity for self-sacrifice, but I am continually amazed at men's capacity for self-destruction. You'd think they could put some of that creativity to better use....

Anyway, I was a little overwhelmed by all that stuff about skirts & dresses and makeup, so I scribbled a rejoinder from my perspective. Please excuse my execrable typing. [personal stuff snipped here]

Peace!

--Evan [REDACTED]

[We need input from you guys out there to keep up the balance in this newsletter. Otherwise, I put the whole Sarah Fox tipbook in there, which will take about two entire newsletters; how's that for an incentive to write stuff, eh?]

### WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT MAKEUP?

(from an FTM who is totally clueless)

A friend recently gave me a brochure on "FTM Passing Tips." I've been cross-dressing for years--the last time I had a skirt on was New Year's Eve,

1979, and almost all of my everyday clothing comes from the men's department. On rare occasions I've been momentarily mistaken for a man, much to my delight, but at the unimposing height of 5' 2", I have not yet tried seriously to pass for one.

I had to laugh as I read through the passing tips list: haircuts and shaving, socks and shoes, pants and shirts, binders and pants-stuffers. I have no objection whatever to wearing any piece of men's clothing that fits me (I've given up entirely on women's shoes), but I draw the line at fakes.

Let me back up about 40 years. As a small child, I sometimes got to watch Mommy dressing. She was an upwardly mobile, middle class 1950s housewife, probably not all that different from many other women of her era and social class. By the time she'd let me in, she'd already covered her most intimate undergarments with a slip, but I knew she was wearing a girdle to flatten-her tummy and a bra to create the proper shape on top. Nylons (clipped to the girdle-- no pantyhose then) gave her legs an acceptably uniform color: taupe or beige or suntan. On her face, she applied pancake makeup as a "foundation," then added rouge, eye shadow, eye liner, eyebrow pencil, and lipstick. She even had a little gadget for curling her eyelashes, an absolute must. (She told us she didn't want to be buried until her eyelashes were curled.) Her hair was always professionally set and coloreds and she used a generous coating of hairspray to keep it in place. She qualified as a "natural woman," but by the time she finished putting on her clothes, jewelry, and high heels, there was very little natural about her, from her Miss Clairol blond hair to her pointy-toed shoes.

I entered high school in the late 60s, when young women and men were rebelling against their parents' restrictive dress codes. Long straight hair was in, on men and women. Heavy makeup, high heels, and tight foundation garments were as out of fashion as neckties and three-piece suits. What a liberation! Not only did we not *have to what our parents did, we didn't have to look like them.*



Part of my journey as an FTM has been not only a refusal to conform to female stereotypes, but also a cautious assessment of how much, and even if, I want to conform to male stereotypes. I don't see that trading one set of stereotypes for another is an improvement.

Many thoughtful people have observed that our society's gender expectations are so contradictory and irrational, it is impassible to conform to them and stay sane. The casualties from that attempt are all around us, especially among young people who haven't yet learned that the myths are just that, and nothing to base a life upon.

I think that as TSs, TGs and TVS, we have a special opportunity, maybe even a responsibility, to study society's expectations before we embrace them (as I would not wear a girdle, so I would not wear a necktie). Mindlessly conforming to the norm in hopes that it will allow us to pass affirms no one's true identity and reinforces some pretty toxic ideas (as I would not wear high heels, so I would not wear a jacket on a 90-degree day). I am not trying to dampen anyone's fun in vamping once in a while, but I have to think that anyone, straight or trans, who is afraid to be seen without something that screams "I am a man" or "I am a woman" is dealing, with serious insecurities.

At my parents' 25th anniversary party, my mother gleefully related how, for the first two weeks after their wedding, she got up an hour before my father to put on her makeup, because he'd never seen her without it. As if what she was without it wasn't good enough!

I'd like to argue that we are good enough, just as we are, without resorting to artifice. Is there one person alive who is totally satisfied with his or her body? Don't most of us wish we were taller, shorter, thinner, curvier, with more hair on top or less elsewhere? There are plenty of genetic men who are convinced they've been passed over for promotions or dates because they lack hair or height, and too many genetic women who believe that because they're flat-chested, they're inadequate as wives and mothers. Are we so different, and should we take ourselves any more seriously?

Whether society will accept us without artifice is another issue, but I hold that we need to concentrate on creating our personae just as we are, "figure flaws" and all, rather than trying to conform to some downright damaging expectations.

(On the other hand, the brochure's advice about layering a mesh tank top over a muscle shirt for summertime sounded pretty good. Anything to avoid wearing a (yuck!) bra!)

-- Evan [REDACTED]

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[We can't let the men have all of the space, though!]

JINGLE THIGHS  
(saly Sheklow of WYMPROV)

Dashing and devine,  
Her legs look just like mine  
Ample and robust  
Legs a girl can trust  
Womanly and round  
Sexy and alive  
What fun it is to see and feel  
A pair of women's thighs  
OH! (Chorus)

Chorus

Jingle thighs, jingle thighs  
Jingle all the way  
Oh what fun it is to have  
A pair of women's le-egs  
Jingle thighs, jingle thighs  
Jingle all the way  
Oh what fun it is to have  
A pair of women's legs

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May you be who you are.

Starlet or star,  
One thing rings true:  
You are you.



## Ally McBeal--TV Prostitute Episode

Fox's "Ally McBeal," a sweet "tragicomedy" about a young lawyer in a hip firm in Boston had a story about a "transvestite prostitute" last night (12/1/97). It came from the pen of David Kelly, who also gave us the Picket Fences Nativity episode, and the Chicago Hope TS episode.

Stephanie is in jail for her third prostitution arrest, this time facing jail time, which Ally knows will destroy this 18 year old from Ohio. Ally is touched by this child and spends more than the 10 minutes other public defenders have spent, hiring a therapist to say that the fetishism, the desire to have men for approval of femininity, may be a mental disability, and getting the case continued for a year if she stays out of trouble, contingent on Stephanie having a job. The therapist also notes that "he is one screwed up kid, and there are signs of gender dysphoria, though that would take more work to determine. That means he is more like a woman inside -- or he thinks he is."

Ally hires the kid, who designs dresses and makes one for Ally as a thank you, to work at the law firm as a word processing clerk. She gets a phone call that night -- Stephanie has been tricking again and was clubbed to death by a john who got crazy when he found out she was a guy -- kind of like Deborah Forte and Chanelle Picket who have died in the Boston area in the last few years.. The parents won't come from Ohio, so Ally takes care of Stephanies last wishes.

Stephanie is played by Wilson Cruz, the gay kid from "My So Called Life" in a wig, without her own hair grown out. It's a nice visual trick, but not quite accurate, as was the images of the hooker life, where Stephanie would have found a tranny stroll, found other trannies, even some hormones. Boston even has a program for transsexuals on the streets. It was, as usual, oversimplified for TV.

It was a sweet episode. Ally clearly loves Stephanie, and while the pronouns are mixed, people are generally respectful of her choices to her face -- even if it looks like they are just playing along and indulging a fantasy. There aren't words for a woman born male, so it's always he and she, that's a guy and a man, rather than simply being a male. The word "transgender" was never used.

But the final blow, after you think that finally Stephanie might get the community that the therapist says she needs, when this screwed up kid breaks the rules of the court and betrays Ally to trick again, to commit suicide at the hands of a john. We are tragic figures, betwixed and between, and the option of death seems reasonable in drama, as it did to Kelly in the Chicago Hope episode where a post-op TS denied estrogen chooses death rather than turning back into a man -- although after the testes & beard are removed, there is no chance of re-masculinization.

So we are sweet, we are lovable, and we die when we come out. Seems like a good reason to stay in the closet and deny ourselves to me.

Maybe we need to learn to tell some more positive stories about who we are, and not just focus on the pain, the worst of us.

--Callan

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Don't miss the movie "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil!"

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Top ten reasons NOT to have male-to-female sexual reassignment surgery: 10. MasterCard won't raise credit limit to \$10,000. 9. Have 36 payments left to on bass boat powered by 454 Chevy bigblock engine. 8. Can't leave the house without cat putting run in nylons. 7. Girlfriends on Swiss Bikini Team wouldn't understand. 6. Hard to hide "U.S. Marine Corp." tatoos on forearms with makeup. 5. Those damned bra staps rub your shoulders raw. 4. Tired of getting hit on by "Ellen." 3. Sick of being treated like had brains instead of @#\$\* removed. 2. Rather be a pig than date one. 1. Miss being able to "aim."



**Transgenderist's Independence Club**  
**PO Box 13604, Albany, NY 12212-3604**  
**(518) 436-4513 (live Thurs.7:30-10 PM)**

Transgenderist's Independence Club (TGIC) is a nonprofit, educational, non-sexual social support group for persons wishing to explore beyond the conventional boundaries of gender, including crossdressers, transsexuals and their friends.

#### **TGIC Officers**

President Winnie [REDACTED]  
Vice President  
Secretary Rhiannon  
Treasurer  
Newsletter Editor Vicky E. [REDACTED]  
Facilities Tina, Edie, Rhiannon  
Outreach  
Program/Events

The Transgenderist is the newsletter of TGIC, published monthly and mailed First Class to members, prospective members, friends, professionals, and exchange publications. Copyright 1997 TGIC. No part may be reproduced without prior permission from the originator.

Readers are invited to submit articles relevant to the Transgendered Community for consideration. You may bring or mail typed pages for publication to the TGIC clubroom. Format should follow that shown in the current newsletter. You may also e-mail the articles to [REDACTED]. The article should be part of the body of the e-mail.

Regular Meetings are held every Thursday at the TGIC Club Room on Central Avenue in Albany, 7:30pm to 10pm. Some come earlier and stay later, but it is wise to call if you are not a Keyholder or if it is your first visit. Come dressed either way, meet and talk with friends. Many continue to socialize at one of the local night spots after the meetings.

#### **BECOME AN IFGE MEMBER**

The International Foundation for Gender Education is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

Basic membership is \$25 per year. Subscriptions to Transgender Tapestry are \$40. Brochures and forms are available in the TGIC Club Room. Call or write to:

IFGE (617) 899-2212  
PO Box 229  
Waltham, MA 02154-0229

The I.F.G.E. Internet version of Transgender Tapestry is available at:

<http://www.tiac.net/users/dba/ifge/ifge.htm>

#### **ANONYMOUS HIV ANTIBODY TESTING**

Your regional HIV Counseling and Testing Program provides free HIV counseling and antibody testing, support and referral. No names will be asked.

(NYS Health Department)

Call: (518) 486-1595 or 1-800-962-5065.



#### **Connections**

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782-1426*



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## Therapeutic Support Group

for Transgender/Transsexual M to F is now accepting new members. Topics include Coming Out, Transitioning, Family issues, Jobs and Careers, Self Esteem. Contact:

Arlene Istar ■ R-CSW, CAS-AC  
Choices Counseling Associates  
■■■■■  
Albany, New York 12206

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## TGIC On-Line

All transgendered people are invited to join TGIC On-Line, an informal e-mail network sponsored by Transgenderist Independence Club (TGIC). Messages exchanged on TGIC On-Line focus on events of interest to transgendered people in a region from Lake Placid to Newburg. If you are interested in joining the network, or want more information about TGIC, send an e mail message to: TGIC-request@hartebeest.com with any subject line and in the message body, the text:

JOIN TGIC  
STOP

(Please note: JOIN TGIC must be on line 1. STOP must be on line 2) You will receive an automated acknowledgment (Journal) of your request, which must be approved with the list moderator.

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## TRI-ESS MEETINGS IN SCHENECTADY

Meetings are held at "YOURS", which is located at 145 Barrett Street in Schenectady. Call Monica at (■■■■■) or Evelyn at (■■■■■) for further information.

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*There is one closet now rental available at the clubhouse. Call TGIC for details. 436-4513*

## Calendar and Events

TGIC meetings are held Thursdays at 7:30 in the clubhouse.

### Events of Note

Note: TransPositions has been rescheduled, and I will get that information to you as soon as I can get it reposted.

- December 11 Christmas Party
- December 13 Twenty Club, Hartford, CT
- December 25 NO TGIC MEETINGS  
January 1 Happy Holidays!
- December 31 CDG & LCC New Years Party; Details Follow
- January 16-19 Dignity Cruise #9 with Peggy Rudd
- February 26-March 1 Texas "T" Party

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## EARS WANTED!

Transgendered? Transgendered friends?

Have you heard about:

- > abuse by public officials?
- > discrimination?
- > public harassment?
- > sexual harassment?
- > assault or rape?
- > remaining silent bothering you?
- > no help from conventional sources?

Call us: (518) 432-7092

Mail: P.O. Box 6307, Albany, NY 12206

### ALBANY GENDER PROJECT

*Building respect - one person at a time*

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## New Year's Eve Party

Bridget Nelson (a mtf ts board member of CDG&LCC) & her wife Debbie (a woman born female), as hosts of the event, warmly invite all transgendered people to: The First Annual Capital District Gay & Lesbian Community Council New Years Eve Pride Party. Bring Pride into 1998

We invite you for a fabulous evening! Serving the community into our future! CDG&CC Wants to show our gratitude to members and community persons who have supported us in the past, present will continue in the FUTURE. Please come and join us for this FABULOUS EVENT.

Included door prizes, buffet, cash bar, DJ & Dancing. Place: The Stuben Athletic Club, 1 Stuben Place, Downtown Albany. Time: Doors Open 10 PM until ????? Members \$25, Non-Members \$30. Tickets go on sale November 1st at the CG&LCC Rainbow Cafe, Fitness for Her (Delmar), Myth & Magic (Troy) and Earthly Delights (Schenectady). Limited space is available, so purchase your tickets early. Call 462-6138 vm #98 for more information or please write to Bridget Elise Nelson at <BriggetEliseN@JUNO.COM>.

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## VOLUNTEER!

Want something to do while expressing your transgendered nature?

Ask Bridget Elise Nelson, MTF TS and chair of the volunteer committee of the Capital District Gay & Lesbian Community Council.

You can staff the cafe, work on the newsletter, stuff envelopes, or lots of other things --and each job is in a TG friendly environment where you can meet other people who want to meet you. They'll be happy to accept gifts of your time, effort and skills to make a safer space for LGBT people. You'll feel proud when you help.

Interested? Write: Bridget Elise Nelson at <BridgetEliseN@JUNO.COM> or call 664-2319 and ask about volunteer opporntunities.

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## Church Bulletin Notes

Thursday at 5PM there will be a meeting of the Little Mothers Club. All wishing to become Little Mothers, please see the minister in his private study.

This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs. Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

The Senior Choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir.

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Comments? Vicky E. [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Albany, NY 12203.

All the news that fits.