The Channel
TGSF's
TransGender San Francisco
(formerly ETVC)

June 2001 "Real" Millennial Issue! Volume 20, Issue 6

Lookin' Fine at Cal Dreamin'!

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 2001 - 2002 Officers

(Fiscal Year: May 1 - April 30)

President ..... Aiyana Eveningstar
Vice President ..... Rachael Janelle
Secretary ..... Janis Ryan
Treasurer ..... Stephanie Ann Blythe
Education ..... Annie / LeChara Johnson
Outreach ..... Kalani Makanani / Ally Grillo
Social ..... Tianna Marie DeVil / Savannah

Membership Report

As of May 15, 2001

Current Membership 257

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

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

Newsletter Staff

Editor ..... Ayme Michelle Kantz
Advertising ..... Ayme Kantz
Contributing Photographers, this Issue: ..... Telzey Adams

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!***

WWW.TGSF.ORG
NEW SITE! GET ONLINE!

Hotline & Voice Mail
415-564-3246

FROM THE EDITOR...

Well, I'm still here. For weeks after the May issue hit the streets, I gingerly approached my mailboxes expecting the worst. While I did receive several responses to my last column (reprinted in their entirety beginning on Page 8), there was nary a diatribe nor letterbomb in the bunch, for which I am grateful and somewhat relieved. Those that chose to respond have some interesting things to say and a few good suggestions as to how we might move forward. I'm sure our new ExCom will give them full consideration. Still, I did expect a greater response from you. I can only conclude that by your silence do you give your consent.

But getting back to the Cotillion for just a moment - and then I promise I'll leave it alone - I understand the (perceived) value it has for the membership and the community at large. I realize that it's important to some of you and that you think it should continue. But I also think the club is faced with two choices here in terms of fiscal responsibility: either hand the whole kit and caboodle over to the producers and say, "here - spend YOUR money any way you wish to put on a great show. Here's a contribution from TGSF (that hopefully doesn't represent a whole year's budget), by way of our sponsorship with prominent display in the program, holler if you need volunteers and we'll see you there," or scale the whole thing down and do it at the socials. Have a beauty pageant or debutante walk every month. Sign up at the door. Make the socials the focal point for getting the newbies out and welcomed. Make them feel at home, introduce them to the community from a short bio they fill out when signing up, and let them strut their stuff - a mini-Cotillion every month at very low cost, that offers more opportunities for new and existing members alike than just once a year.

A Different Model...

In its formative years, ETVC had this wonderful space called the Chez Mollet - a central meeting place available at any time for members to congregate and feel welcome and safe. It blossomed and grew to become the major hub of what then passed for the transgender community. Up to the moment when the Chez was finally sold and closed down, having that one focal point for the club was a model that worked, and worked very well. Now hindsight is always 20/20, but when left without their refuge, instead of moving forward in an adaptable (and hopefully proactive) way, what did the club do instead? They spent many of the ensuing years searching for another Chez, bouncing from one venue to the next, trying to pigeon-hole its model into one space or the other - with absolutely no success. It was a fool's errand and sadly so much time was (and continues to be) wasted on it. Well it's time for a different model.

Even back then, some members advocated that ETVC fund a permanent space - even it if was just a small office where records, the hotline and the library could be centrally housed. (Anyone remember the Home for ETVC Fund? Whatever happened to that money?). Now *that* would be imminently more useful and beneficial to the organization than a flashy drag show once a year. We could use those resources instead to acquire a little space, even shared with another organization to defray expenses, at the new LGBT Community Center currently under construction on Market Street. No more PO Boxes! An actual, physical address!

As tenants, we would then have access to the larger spaces in the Center for our ExCom meetings, our education programs and/or other events. It could be staffed by volunteers (yeah, right). OK, maybe it could be staffed by a member or members willing to accept a small stipend in exchange for running the office. They could be selling newsletter advertising (perhaps on a commission basis?),

Continued on Page 3

Our Goals For This Next Year

By Aiyana Eveningstar

How to state in understandable terms everything we would like to say is always a difficult proposition. I have re-written this several times in my head before trying to put it down on paper.

I have always been a person who is painfully slow in the way that I get things done. As your President I have resolved that I personally need to be much more timely in the way that I do things. I have changed many things in my life and this is something that can be changed too. Change within us is good as the world is always changing around us.

For this Ex-com I have a very simple agenda. Once these goals are attained we can start to think about how to start some really substantial programs. First I would like to finish our transition of names from EVTC to TGSF. Second, getting our tax status current. Third, implement all the changes recently enacted in the TGSF by-laws. Fourth is to deal with our group image in that we are perceived as being more exclusive than inclusive in the community.

The first three goals are purely business oriented. They need to be done so that we can finally try to receive funding for education and support programs through grants. The fourth is a much harder goal to attain. In order to attain this goal we might have to change ourselves. The ExCom needs input from members. Who are you, what do you want us to do as a group, and what needs changing. We are here to express your wishes. Make them known to us. We need to overcome the tendency to divide ourselves into little cliques. How can we expect the world to accept the complexity of transgenderism when we fail to accept it ourselves? None of us has an exclusive on what is right. I would like TGSF to represent a wide spectrum of TG people. I am not writing this article as a response to any recent comments aired recently in the Channel. To do so would be, for me, just a series of excuses as to why things have gone the way they have and hurt the feelings of those who only tried to help by volunteering their time. I say, "Let me hear from you." Write the editor, come to an ex-com meeting (visitors are allowed and can make comments), or e-mail me at the address listed in these pages. We need your comments.

As for Cotillion it is the event that is made for us as we are and should be the group that welcomes new arrivals that are coming out. Almost all of the people I talked to throughout that Cotillion said it was a good moment in their lives and one of their first experiences of being in a community. There are some things wrong with Cotillion. We should find a better way of choosing our representative than running a beauty pageant. For those who are just passing through or get bored easily it's easy to criticize. The only way to change an organization is to work within the group and get involved. This ExCom is already talking about how to change the way that Miss or Mr. TGSF is elected. The current format probably deters some people from even trying who would be good representatives for us. As for putting together a "manual" that contains information about what is needed for the Vice-President to do an event as large as the Cotillion, it is not to perpetrate an albatross/white elephant. A guide is needed to give an overview to the producer of where expenses lie. This will give the VP a way of seeing where the money has gone in the past and cut down on overspending.

In outreach we do need to promote education in the subject of trangenderism, but what kind of programs are you interested in attending? Too many programs have been sparsely attended in the past. We need you there.

I have realized that if I don't see all the different ways people express themselves then how can I expect society to accept a subject as complex as transgendered people.

From the Editor...

Continued from Page 2

or eliciting sponsorships and donations, answering the hotline, processing the mail, or be available for members wishing to access the library. All manner of things that would get TGSF back on track to becoming an effective non-profit organization again, and the one, central focal point for the group that we've been searching for. And then think of it! The TGSF café where you could meet for lunch! Or the Ye Olde TGSF Gift Shoppe where you could buy your visiting friends and relatives all manner of TGSF logo-splattered goods as souvenirs from their enlightening tour of the Bay Area (all proceeds back to the group for the running and staffing of the organization, and the funding of its services, of course).

That's one idea of a different model. What's yours?

Wasted Breath?...

In her letter on Page 8, Lynnea Stuart raises a valid point about the role Ms. (or Mr.) TGSF plays. So I've got a homework assignment for you. I'd like to publish in July, your responses to the question, "What does Ms./Mr. TGSF mean to me?" I'd particularly like to hear from the title-holders themselves (past and present). A public opinion poll, if you will, essay style. Any length (up to 500 words please) will do, I'll make room for it. All of a sudden I feel like I'm facilitating a focus group! I've been in HR too long!

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

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

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

May 2001

ExCom Meeting Minutes

The first meeting of the TGSF Executive Committee (ExCom) for the one-year term beginning May 1, 2001 was held in San Francisco at the office of the incoming President, Aiyana Eveningstar, on Sunday, May 6, 2001at 4:00 pm. Notice of the place and time of the meeting had been given to those present at the previous ExCom meeting, published in the TGSF Newsletter and posted on the TGSF web site.

President Aiyana called the meeting to order at 4:15pm. Also present from the new ExCom were Vice-President Rachael Janelle, Secretary Janis Ryan, Treasurer Stephanie Ann Blythe, Outreach Co-chair Ally Grillo and Education Co-chair LeChara Johnson, constituting a quorum. Outreach Co-chair Kalani Makanani arrived at 4:21 pm. Present from the outgoing ExCom were President Nicole Cook, Secretary Debbie Cook, and Outreach Co-chair Telzey Adams. Absent were Social Co-chairs Tianna Marie DeVil and Savannah, and Education Co-chair Annie. No additional guests were present.

Nicole presented a proposed agenda for the meeting.

Janis pointed out that the first order of business was the report of the Election Committee, and Debbie presented the results of the voting by the membership as follows:

President: Aiyana Eveningstar 38, Leslie Bailey 1 (write in)

Vice President: Rachael Janelle 26, Serena Anderson 14

Secretary: Janis Ryan 40, Gwen Smith 1 (write in)

Treasurer: Stephanie Ann Blythe 40

Social Co-chair: Tianna Marie Devil 38, Savannah 29

Outreach Co-chair: Kalani Makanani 39, Ally Grillo 30

Education Co-chair: Annie 37, LeChara Johnson 30

Debbie did not have the total number of ballots received. On a motion by Aiyana seconded by Rachael the report was adopted by a voice vote with no dissenting votes.

Outgoing President: Nicole reported that in response to a letter sent to all surgeons performing SRS Dr. Sanguan has pledged $500 per year to the TGSF Education Fund. The proceeds from this fund are to ultimately be transferred to a program at San Francisco City College.

All of the property of TGSF, which had been stored at her house and was not distributed to the new ExCom, was placed in a storage locker in San Francisco. She has paid the rent for the locker through July 2001, and gave the key to the locker to Aiyana and directions to it to her and other ExCom members.

Nicole has donated a black CRS to TGSF. She requested that $40 of the proceeds from this donation be applied to the Family Membership of her and Debbie. She stated that any additional proceeds may be used by TGSF without restriction, but she requested that any left over funds be placed in the TGSF Education Fund.

Nicole stated that calls to the TGSF Hotline would not be directed to her and Debbie during their absence to attend the Gender PAC meeting in Washington, DC.

Nicole presented the key to the TGSF Post Office Box to Aiyana.

Outgoing Vice President: Aiyana confirmed that Nicole would rent and drive the TGSF truck in the San Francisco Pride Parade. She recommended a thirty-foot flat bed truck with a wood bed. The truck would be rented for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday and in the past $350-$450 has been paid for the rental, including insurance. Aiyana suggested that Nicole rent the truck in Santa Rosa.

Approximately $1300 to $1350 remains outstanding from the *Cotillion* to the San Francisco Design Center.

She had nothing to report about the upcoming *Big Shew*, and will work with Rachael on it.

Outgoing Secretary: Debbie initially reported that the current membership count was *exactly* the same as the preceding year. Janis then presented her with a membership application and check that she received at *California Dreamin'*, increasing that total by one.

The minutes of the previous ExCom meeting were passed by voice vote with no dissenting votes.

The federal taxes for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2001 were sent. Files and data from Deborah, Roxanne, and Janis are still required to complete the taxes for the Fiscal Year ending April 30, 2000.

The donation check to FXB was returned. We will need to get a new address for them and issue another check.

Two boxes of files were transferred to the incoming Secretary together with a diskette containing updates to the TGSF Membership in both ZIP format of an MS Access file and Excel files.

Outgoing Outreach Co-chair: Telzey presented the following:

- A request for information regarding SRS benefits for San Francisco city employees.
- A request from KQED for information on TGSF for inclusion in their Resource Guide which will be published in June 2001.

Telzey also indicated that she would continue to answer the TGSF Hotline.

Outgoing Education Co-chair: Stephanie Ann stated that she has flyers remaining from last year. She also has graphic pictures from Dr. Shrang. She was also planning a future seminar on hormones.

This concluded the presentations from the outgoing ExCom members.

President: Aiyana thanked the members of the new ExCom. She outlined her priorities for the coming term:

- Complete the name change from Educational TV Channel (ETVC) to TransGender San Francisco (TGSF),
- Catch up on corporate filings with the IRS and other agencies,
- Work on the creation of a foundation,
- Implement the 12-month term of membership as specified in the Bylaws,
- Improve our income from advertising, and
- Improve the cash flow

Vice-President: Rachelle stated that her first priority was to implement the San Francisco Pride Parade. She also wants to increase the number of advertisements in *The Channel* by making phone calls and following up on leads from the Cotillion.

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June 1, 2001

TGSF Balance Sheet

(April 23, 2001 through May 21, 2001)

Assets	
Cash	$844.38
Event Equipment	
Decorations	$1,000.00
Food Service	$200.00
Office Supplies	$50.00
Total Assets	$2,094.38
Liabilities	
Accounts Payable (Cotillion Expense)	$1,351.88
Educational Fund	$100.00
Taxes	$0.00
Insurance	$0.00
Utilities	$0.00
Operations	$0.00
Total Liabilities	$1,451.88
Equity	$642.50
Total Liabilities & Equity	$2,094.38

Monthly Income Statement

(April 23, 2001 through May 21, 2001)

Revenue	
Membership	$710.00
Advertising	$0.00
Cotillion	$0.00
Donations Received	$375.00
Social	$60.00
Education	$0.00
Outreach	$0.00
	$1,145.00
Expenses	
Cotillion	$1,500.00
Halloween Party	$0.00
Big Shew	$0.00
Pride Parade	$0.00
Social	$110.26
Education	$0.00
Outreach	$0.00
Newsletter	$422.51
Operations	$191.72
Donations Paid	$0.00
	$2,224.49
Net Income (Loss)	**($1,079.49)**

Dress for Dinner ??

Private crossdresser and wife looking to make friends with similar couple (35-45) for dinners at home in San Francisco. Bring your wit, sense of humor, and favorite dress, and lets have some enjoyable evenings. Anyone out there ??

[redacted]@hotmail.com

(Paid Advertisement)

Meeting Minutes...

Continued from Page 4

Regarding the Cotillion, she wants to address some of the issues raised in the editorial in the May issue of *The Channel*. The ExCom needs to revisit these issues, and develop a Cotillion Handbook.

Aiyana emphasized that we will continue to have a Cotillion, but the location and amount of money to be spent were to be determined. Examples of excessive spending were $3000 for the program and $1700 for the rehearsal. She will also write an article to address the concerns stated in the editorial.

Janis indicated that she felt that the Cotillion was important both for education of our members and others in the transgender community, outreach to the larger community, and for providing a forum for personal growth.

Rachelle will begin work on the Cotillion after the San Francisco Pride Parade. The selection of a Director, and possible changes to the judging points to reward the contestants for their length of membership in TGSF will be addressed.

Secretary: Janis reported that she had already prepared the documents to be filed with the Secretary of State to change the group's name.

Aiyana asked if *The Channel* was being used to contact the media. Janis replied that it was sent to members, advertisers, and a list of friends. Janis agreed to send the current list of friends to Aiyana and Rachelle by Email.

On a motion by Janis, seconded by Rachelle, a resolution was adopted confirming our checking account with Bank of America and authorizing the President and Treasurer to establish additional accounts and designate the persons to operate each account.

Treasurer: Stephanie Ann mentioned that Janis had, in addition to publishing the financial information in *The Channel* also posted it on the TGSF Web Site. She asked if that was necessary, and it was the consensus of the ExCom that it was not.

Social: Neither of the Social Co-chairs was present. Aiyana stated that she would contact Tianna. She also recommended the show *Dirty Blonde*, which features a cross dresser who likes May West. She stated that there was an opportunity to have a group outing to the show on Tuesday nights , and will prepare an article for *The Channel*.

Outreach: Ally stated that she was happy to be on the ExCom, and that this is an exciting time for transgendered people in San Francisco.

Kalani reported an upcoming Outreach event at Stanford University on May 11 at noon. It will deal with health care issues involved with transitioning, and is sponsored by the Gay-Lesbian Medical Association. Nicole Cook, another Nicole, Kalani, and Thomas Kennard will be participants.

Education: LeChara had had to leave early, and Annie was not present.

It was agreed that there needed to be more educational seminars in the future. Janis, Aiyana, and Rachelle described some of the seminars held in prior years.

Adjournment: The next ExCom meeting will be held on Sunday, June 3, 2001 at 3:00 pm at the office of President Aiyanna a[redacted], San Francisco. The meeting was adjourned at 6:24 pm.

TGSF
TransGender San Francisco
(formerly ETVC)

TGSF Events in June

Sunday / June 3rd / 4:00pm

ExCom Meeting

The next ExCom meeting will be held on Sunday, June 3, 2001 at 3:00pm at the office of President Aiyanna at [redacted], San Francisco. Call Aiyanna at 415-[redacted] for directions and how you can participate!

Tuesday / June 12th / 7:30pm

TGSF - A Night at the Performing Arts: "Dirty Blonde"

Join us at the Threatre on the Square, 450 Post St. between Mason & Taylor Cost; $30. Parking at Union Square garage. Catch this chance to see an award-winning play that the critics are raving about. Mixing drama, music, and comedy the story follows a relationship between a man and a woman and their fondness for Mae West's clothes. Contact Aiyana at [redacted]@earthlink.net or call (415)[redacted] by June 10th to reserve a seat with the group.

Thursday / June 21st / 8:00pm

TGSF - TransTastic!

Warm up to Pride weekend with a rockin' show featuring our own talented members. At Diva's 1081 Post Sreet, 3rd Floor. Donation: $5

Sunday / June 24th / 9:30am

GLBT Pride Parade - Queerific!

If there's one thing you do this year as a transgendered person, you gotta march in the biggest parade of its kind in the world. Join TGSF members, Ms. TGSF 2001 Savannah, and gazillions of adoring fans as you proudly march and party like you've never done before! The Parade starts at Market and Beale at 10:30am. For information on being a Parade Monitor, building the Float, or staffing the TGSF Booth, call Racheal Janelle at 408-[redacted]

New 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 Jenni at **www.aluckywife@aol.com** and explain a little about your situation.

June's Birthdays...

6/1	Dianne Shephard	6/17	Lynnea S
6/1	Westy Pendragon	6/18	Catherine Rose Lurton
6/2	Nancy Cupps	6/20	Rose C
6/8	Vikki F	6/23	Joanne H
6/8	Jenny Marshal	6/23	Hiroaki Nakanishi
6/11	Kaycee C	6/27	Melissa Robinson
6/11	Karen Andrews	6/28	Stephanie Ann Blythe
		6/28	Teri Lee

Many Happy Returns of the Day!

New Members since May Issue:

Rebecca Martin

Welcome!

Cosmetics Lingerie Fem Fashions Wigs Nails Shoes Cosmetics

Nails Wigs Lingerie

CARLA'S
Salon & Boutique
128 Race Street
San Jose, CA 95126
(408) 298-6900
www.carlas.com

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

The Current Location of the TGSF Library!!

Cosmetics Fem Fashions Shoes

Cosmetics Shoes Nails Wigs Fem Fashions Lingerie Cosmetics

Calendar of Events – June 2001

Other Groups

Pacific Center for Human Growth
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.sga-tg.org; 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
A support group for Female-to-Male CDs and TSs; Holds open Informational Meetings and closed Support Meetings. Write FTM International, Inc., 1360 Mission Street, Suite 200, 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.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM RGA	2
3 4:00 PM TGSF: ExCom Meeting	4 5:00 PM CCHH 8:00 PM DVG	5	6 7:30 PM MPTG	7 7:00 PM DVG (RCC) 7:00 PM SCT	8 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM TGSF: Game Night!	9 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
10	11 5:00 PM CCHH	12 7:30 PM TGSF: Mid-Month - "Dirty Blonde"	13 7:00 PM TransBay	14	15 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM RGA	16
17	18 5:00 PM CCHH 8:00 PM DVG	19	20	21 7:00 PM DVG (RCC) 7:00 PM SCT 8:00 PM TGSF: EOM - Really Big Shew!	22 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap	23 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
24 9:30 AM TGSF: Pride Parade!	25 5:00 PM CCHH	26	27	28	29 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap	30

TGSF Membership Application

Membership Year Renews Annually at Sign-up Date / $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.

Our Readers Respond

Dear TGSF:

Ayme's editorial last month really got me going because it hit a nerve. She had a lot of real things to say about the direction of the club and the role of the Cotillion. As enriching as the Cotillion was for me as a contestant in 2000, there was a particular quality that stood out I my initial decision not to run in 2001.

When I first came to TGSF I never heard of the Cotillion even though I was hounded to compete almost from the first month. Even when I went into rehearsals I didn't understand what a debutante was supposed to be. But that wasn't what bothered me. What worried me was the flack I took for deciding that I was going to go through preferring the other girl to myself. I do not make apologies for this attitude even if it reeks of non-competitiveness. Such a preference is a commitment to that principle called "brotherly love", a concept practically unknown after Vietnam. My transgenderism seeks to bring out this and other "feminine" qualities, even if it appears ridiculous.

I think that before we evaluate what the Cotillion should be we need to consider what Ms. TGSF is supposed to be. A club representative? Of course. A media spokesperson? Is that realistic? Will the media flock to Ms. TGSF for answers about TG life or will they go to an activist or maybe a sociologist? It's unlikely that Ms. TGSF has such credentials. Ms TGSF has been most visible at the Coronations. Is this the message we want? Are we really just forming a stepping stone for the Imperial Court and others (not that the courts are unworthy, they are excellent)? Observing the reigning Ms. TGSF during the months I was in the bay area I often wondered what the goal was. Tianna contributed the most of each I saw in that office in her efforts to bring unity among various organizations. That was her vision. But most of us will never want to be divas let alone The Diva. She turned to good something for which there were hardly any guidelines at all. Another in a given year wouldn't have a clue about what to do with it. The interview process is no assurance of a girl's creativity.

As for the Cotillion itself, does the event really lend to everyone feelings that the girl in the tiara represents them? Face it. San Francisco has pageants in drag galore. The feeling may be more far reaching if the selection process were more democratic. The judges can still have a key role while a percentage of scores can be attributed to a popular vote. The closest thing anyone has to that is an applause meter in the head of a judge who may not be listening at all.

I'm with Ayme. The Cotillion should be fun, but not just an extravagant party. And it needs to establish its uniqueness and common worth.

Love and Light,
Lynnea Stuart

Transcending Transgender Support Group

Sponsored by
City of Refuge UCC Outreach Ministries

Facilitators: 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.

Dear Editor,

I am responding to your recent editorial in the Channel. Please know I could not agree with you more. I have long since lost interest in the organization as it became very apparent this was not a place for transsexuals. Over the past few years I witnessed several dedicated people (TS) being forced out of the organization. I still remember going to hear a presentation by Dr. Meltzer several years ago. Being in the health field, I was appalled at the site (Kimo's) that was chosen. That was the last time I ever or will attended [sic] an educational activity.

As admirable as your intentions are of creating a situation of support for the organization, it does not change the fact that it is a bunch of crossdressers looking for a party. I still reluctantly support the organization, hoping that it will do some good. However, I find the majority of it to be an embarrassment. It would be nice if there was locally an organization that was strictly TS oriented. Yes, I realize that would not be viable for a number of reasons.

Any way, that's my two cents worth and a belated welcome back to the Golden Gate.

Heather

(Editor's Note: I responded to Heather personally and encouraged her to continue supporting TGSF, because I was at the Meltzer seminar she mentions. At the time, ETVC had a wonderful relationship with the owner of Kimo's, and he would let us use his upper space rent-free. Free is always good for a non-profit, and Toby gave a good presentation and it was well attended. Overall, it worked very well. TGSF needs to get back to things like that.)

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Our Readers Respond

Swatting at Hornets

Commentary by Janis Ryan

Our teams in High School were the "Fighting Yellowjackets," named after the pesky critters that we had to learn to *carefully* swat away from our food and drinks at picnics. Later I moved to Texas, and had to deal with actual hornets' nests. So I'll try to use some of the same care in replying to some of the points in Ayme's *Editorial* in the May issue of *The Channel*.

Inclusion

In the past 12 months, while I have not been a member of the ExCom, I've gotten to know a lot of people in a lot of different transgender groups in the area. I've met several of the people who were present at the first meeting in an apartment in Oakland when the idea of forming our group was raised. From the outset, *Educational TV Channel* was created as an organization for *all* members of the transgender community, unlike organizations such as Tri-Ess which restrict themselves to male, heterosexual crossdressers and their spouses. It took a lot of courage for them to form an organization back in the time when people were arrested and thrown in jail for the crime of "impersonating a woman."

Looking back at the history of the organization, there has always been a mix of crossdressers, transsexuals, and importantly people who, like me, are discovering for themselves where we fit in the transgendered spectrum. But having a group with diverse interests and ages and ranging geographically throughout northern California and beyond makes it difficult to schedule events to attract people to attend.

I have spoken to long-time members who have stated that they will not renew their membership, since they feel that "leg and breast shows" and the are not relevant to them as transsexuals. I don't claim to have the answer for them. But for me the most effective social events were the simplest. In one Social Co-chair Nicole Cook handed out strips of toilet paper, and people then introduced themselves by stating a number of things about themselves corresponding to the number of pieces that they had taken. Another event, which attracted a large group of people, ranging from long-time members to those who had recently joined, was the birthday party for Debbie Cook held at the Cliff House. There we were just another group of people enjoying ourselves. I feel that events like these need to be repeated.

Education

While I was on the ExCom in the 1999-2000 Fiscal year Education Co-chairs Nancy Cupps and Tianna DeVil scheduled monthly Educational Seminars on Saturday afternoons at Kimo's. The topics included photography, presenting oneself in public, safety, dealing with family issues, and coming out as a transgendered person. I attended many of these myself, but for whatever reason few people other than us "regulars" were there. Was it due to scheduling, lack of interest in the topics, or other factors? I don't know.

Nancy laid the groundwork for the presentation on Sexual Reassignment Surgery by Dr. Preecha which was held during the 2000-2001 Fiscal year. She stated at the ExCom meeting where she made that announcement that only such events would have a large turnout, and she was correct. I helped Stephanie Ann put on that session, and there was a large turnout. But we can't have well-known surgeons at every meeting, and the topic of SRS is not of interest to everyone.

Continued on Page 10

Dear Editor,

I really appreciated your editorial in the May newsletter. Sad to say, you are quite right that TGSF is primarily a crossdressers' club. And there is little to hold the interest of those who have completed transitions and moved on to the next phase of life. As evidence, I would point to the dozen or so of us who transitioned a couple of years ago. When the "Class of 1999" were just coming up through the ranks, there was much we needed to learn, and TGSF was there for us with education and introductions to like-minded friends. When we "graduated", though, lingerie contests and splashy drag shows ceased to offer much attraction. My "classmates" and I are still friends, but now we meet outside the club context.

TGSF gave me a lot when I really needed it, and for that I will always be grateful. I will continue to support it with dues and contributions. But I do hate to see its resources squandered on the Cotillion (fun though it may be) when there is so much more that could be done with our limited resources. The Cotillion's appeal is primarily to the CD and DQ communities. Yet there is no shortage of drag shows in this town. What is more critically needed is information and social contact for those on a transition path, for their spouses and SO's, and for those who aren't sure. I certainly hope the new officers will restore the TS education seminars to a regular schedule, and will continue to strive to serve ALL members of the wider transgender community.

Janet Bowman

P.S. Some suggestions for seminar topics: Introductions to life in the post-transition world. Perhaps one on the history and dynamics of the lesbian community, including prevailing attitudes toward TS women; and another on dating men, including the tricky issue of how and when to "disclose".

TGSF Donations - Our Friends Who Give
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Jennifer Anderson	$25.00
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Our Readers Respond

Swatting at Hornets

Continued from Page 9

Stephanie Ann's request for suggestions for future Educational Seminar topics has so far received exactly two replies. I don't claim to have the answers for what to cover and where and when to hold these events during this Fiscal year. We will discuss this in the ExCom, and I'm sure that incoming Education Committee Co-chairs Annie and LeChara will welcome your suggestions and assistance.

The Cotillion

As I've stated before on these pages, I feel that the *Cotillion* is an important event. Jennifer Anderson wrote a letter to *TGSF* about her experience in self-affirmation by coming out as a debutante at *Cotillion 2001*, and hope to reprint it in the next issue. Since the first *Cotillion* that I attended in 1999, I have felt the same, both with regard to myself and to the many people that I have encouraged to attend, and make that walk across the stage as a debutante.

It is also one of the few opportunities that we have to reach out to the outside world. *KPIX Evening Magazine* featured Cotillion 1999, including an in-depth interview with Serena, one of the contestants. Other stations featured contestants for *Miss TGSF 2000* in interview programs. I applaud the courage of those people who not only braved appearing on stage, but also served as spokespersons for the transgendered community.

In producing the event in the future we need to learn to reduce our expenses, come up with a realistic budget, stick to it, and focus both our finances and efforts by volunteers on the objectives of the *Cotillion* itself.

Coming Out

To paraphrase Neil Sadaka, "They say that coming out is hard to do." It only took me 50 years to work up the nerve to attend my first *ETVC* meeting. Meeting other transgendered people in person for the first time and being warmly received by several individuals was a very important step for me. Since then I've always tried to encourage others whom I meet online or in person, or reach with articles here in *The Channel*, to come out, and have been richly rewarded by seeing them come to share the same satisfaction that I have felt.

This is where I disagree most with what Ayme has stated in her editorial. I know that many of you reading this are not out to family, friends, and coworkers. From my personal experience I understand many of the reasons for this. I admire your courage to become a member of *TGSF*, if only to receive this newsletter, since before February 1998 I lacked the courage to do even that.

I've learned that it is important that we create a safe, comfortable space for people to make that first step, and be there as individuals to help them. That, to me, is the most important reason for having our group. So if any of you are ready for that step, by all means contact me by email at [redacted]@tgform.com or any of the other ExCom members listed in this newsletter. I'll be happy to contact you beforehand and meet you at a meeting.

Finances

As Ayme has stated, the new ExCom has the task of rebuilding our finances from near bankruptcy. To prevent this in the future, the entire ExCom has to assume its responsibility for generating, adopting, and sticking to budgets. In past years, before I was a member, Ginny Knuth was instrumental in bringing this about, but now we're on our own and have to do the job ourselves.

While I was Treasurer I accepted some of the responsibility as for not following up with newsletter advertising. Both I, and later Jennifer, tried to solicit additional advertising, but with limited success. Most of our current and prospective advertisers are small businesspersons, and have to carefully target their advertising expenses. Many of them have been extremely generous in the past, both financially and by participation in events. But we can't expect them to repeatedly come to our rescue to bail us out. And I firmly believe that we have to get our own house in order first before reaching out to individuals and foundations for grants for specific projects.

Conclusion

I do agree with some of Ayme's conclusions. "Hey, it's your club. You need to set the priorities." That is why we have elections. Both our Bylaws and the California Corporations Code under which we operate guarantee this. While proposing changes to the Bylaws, and in all of my campaign statements I have stated my qualifications, made proposals, and compared those to the ones presented by my opponent. There is no room in our group for personal attacks against other members. I pledge, as Ayme has, to continue to do *my* part to keep this an all-inclusive organization. But, as she has stated, "it's going to be up to you, TGSF Member, to reaffirm the honor and value of the organization as it moves into the 21st Century."

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Special Events This Month!

June 9th

Gender Art: A Performance by Transgendered Artists

Saturday, June 9th, 7-10 p.m.

Pro Arts Gallery

461 Ninth Street (near Broadway)

Downtown Oakland

For more information, contact: Patricia Kevena Fili at (510)[redacted] This event is free to the public, and is sponsored by AIDS Project East Bay and The Butterfly Project.

June 11

Breast Care Session at Billy deFrank

The second annual "Tea for T's" for the women of the transgender community will be held at the Billy deFrank Community Center (938 The Alameda, San Jose) Monday June 11, 2001, from 7 to 8:30 PM.

Suzanne Dibble, D.N.S. will facilitate—and if last year is any guide, it should be a very worthwhile and instructive evening. I highly recommend it. If you have questions, please contact Marianne at 408-293-3040 x 116.

Jennifer Wolcott

Volunteers Needed!

KQED TV Pledge Drive

KQED is seeking volunteers to answer telephone for its June TV Pledge Drive. This is a fun way to help KQED and it gives TGSF visibility to the KQED viewers. It is also pretty hectic when the phones jump off the hook during the pledge breaks. You get rewarded with snacks during daytime shifts and dinner during evening shifts.

We will have to get at least 5 volunteers to fill a slot for a shift. You have to be available for the entire shift. Dates and times available are:

Sat June 2, 5:30pm - 11:00pm	Thu June 7, 7:30pm - 11:20pm
Sun June 3, 2:45pm - 6:30pm	Sat June 9, 1:45pm - 6:30pm
Sun June 3, 6:00pm - 11:00pm	Sat June 9, 6:00pm - 11:20pm
Mon June 4, 6:50pm - 11:00pm	Sun June 10, 1:30pm - 6:00pm
	Sun June 10, 6:00pm - 11:00pm

Some of these shifts may already be filled up.

Please contact me by email or phone if you are interested. Let me know your preferred date and time. If we get enough volunteers and can agree on a time and date then I will sign us up.

Stephanie Ann Blythe
(510)[redacted]

Sunday, July 29, 1 to 6 PM

Summer Picnic and Barbeque

Sponsored By TGSB

It's that time again—and we want to make sure that you save the date. Another announcement will be sent out in early July. Here are the details—please share them with your friends and families—this is an inclusive event, including kids. A flye

Sanborn County Park, Saratoga, Costanoan Group Site

Fun, food, friends, games, sun

The TG community and family and friends

BYOB-bring your own drinks and a Picnic side dish to share (potato chips to yummy salads to non-melting deserts)

Hot dogs, chicken and hamburgers Provided!

Suggested donation is $10 to cover location costs and food; parking is $4 per car

RSVP - For count purposes, please email RSVP to Jayni Butterfield at[redacted]@earthlink.net (but come anyway, even if you don't RSVP)

HELP: We need a small group (4-5) to help get set up, buy food, etc. Contact Carolyn Noel if you can help: 408-[redacted]

It's time to have some fun in the sun and fresh air with a summer picnic and barbeque! We have a beautiful site, larger than last years' site, with grass and sun, at a new location (see directions below). Questions:[redacted]@eldil.com or 408-[redacted]

Getting There

From Hwy 85, take the Saratoga Avenue exit South (toward the hills) and go straight several miles, through the small town of Saratoga and into the hills (Saratoga Ave turns into Big Basin Way at Saratoga town). Continue until you pass Saratoga Springs Campground on your right, and just before the bridge turn left (there is a sign for Sanborn). Go a couple miles until you see the entrance to the park on the right. Our campsite is Costanoan, past the entrance booth, around to the right and up the hill.

See you all there!

Maxine, La Verne and Patty entertain at California Dreamin'

Of Particular Interest...

July 13-15

Young, Loud And Proud!

Dear Friends,

We at LYRIC are thrilled to announce that the sixth annual **Young, Loud, and Proud (YLP) Youth Leadership Conference** for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning youth will be held in San Francisco, California over the weekend of **July 13th-15th**. The YLP conference is organized and produced entirely by youth and is free for all youth participants. We are expecting hundreds of young people from all over the world to attend. YLP is an exciting opportunity for queer youth from all across the globe to come together to exchange ideas.

YLP's workshops and caucuses present rich resources and tools for queer youth to become leaders and activists. The workshops serve to educate and provide a space for dialogue on topics ranging from Communication and Empowerment to Gay/Straight Alliances 101 to Anti-Racism. The caucuses work to break down isolation and provide a chance for young people to connect with others who identify in similar ways.

This year YLP will furnish an all-new adult track for service providers and parents that will include workshops on topics like LGBTQ youth/adult partnership, youth development, and an adult ally caucus. The conference promises to provide an outstanding opportunity for young people to network, socialize, and build coalitions and allies. Also included is a dance at the Columbia Boys and Girls Club, a newly renovated building with pool tables, movies, music, and more!

If you would like printed copies of our material or want more information about the conference please visit www.lyric.org, or contact Lena Turner at 415.703.6150 x25 or ylp@lyric.org. Thanks so much and we hope to see you there!

Sincerely,
YLP Steering Committee

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]

Support Group for Trans Folks
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Meets Mondays, 1:30 - 3:00pm

Open to MTF, FTM, third-gendered, undecided, at any stage of transition. A safe place to receive support from peers and explore a variety of issues. Can fulfill the therapy requirement of the current standards of care.

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Co-facilitators: **VALERIE IGL**, licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, and **REID VANDERBURGH**, MA in Counseling Psychology student and FTM.

SUNDAY, July 15

SF AIDS Walk

AIDS Walk San Francisco is a 10K walkathon in Golden Gate Park benefiting San Francisco AIDS Foundation and 38 other Bay Area organizations. This year's walk is on Sunday, July 15, 2001! Please be a part of it and show that TG's are here, proud and a force Sign-In Opens at 8:30 a.m., Opening Ceremony Begins at 9:15 a.m. REMEMBER, THE WALK IS ON, RAIN OR SHINE!

The AIDS Walk begins at 10:30am. Since thousands of people will be participation, we suggest you arrive promptly at 9:00am. Most people will take about 2.5 hours to walk the 10 kilometers (6.2 miles). After the first few kilometers, you will probably begin to get warm. We recommend dressing in layers. It is also a good idea to wear sturdy shoes in good condition. Sandals are not recommended. Water and restroom facilities will be provided at checkpoints along the route. Sign up for a great cause - call Racheal Janelle at 408[redacted] for sponsor forms and information.

July 25

SF Intersex Education Program

Dear Friends,

A few months ago, I proposed the following program to The James Hormel Gay and Lesbian Center staff at the San Francisco Public Library. It was enthusiastically accepted and Thea, Taylor and I had a productive brainstorm with them Center staff. Together we have scheduled an Intersex Public Education Program called: Intersexuality: Redefining Sex | A Dialogue.

This event will be held on **July 25, 2001 at 5:30pm in the Latino Community Rooms on the Lower Level of the Main Library.**

We plan to have a reception at 5:30pm and an Intro. and video screening of "Intersexuality: Redefining Sex" at 6pm. At 6:30pm there will be a panel of 5 Intersex persons (Howard, Hida, Soli, Taylor and myself) speaking about one's own personal history prior to a Questions and Answers period. A staff person of the Hormel Center will moderate the program.

So far, PFLAG-SF, IGLHRC, Harvey Milk Institute, and ISNA have agreed to co-sponsor the program. They will be spreading the word and the Hormel Center will be sending out press releases by mid May.

I hope you will join us for this event.

Love and Peace,
David

Hey!

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

Shirley Faire

Nothing

The doctor held open the door for the nurse's rattly cart. "Good-bye."

"Good-bye, doctor."

The door closed and now the room was silent. I was alone. I lay on my bed, turning my head to look outside the sliding glass balcony doors to the sky where clouds were gathering, the wind freshening. Minutes ago, the doctor removed the catheters that had been draining my pee and sucking blood and debris from my new vagina. With the taping that secured the tubes gone as well, I thought the awful tightness in my crotch would go, too, but it stayed. My new breasts stabbed me with pain however slightly I moved. A few more days in the hospital and I would be discharged, but that was too far ahead to think about. I had spent the past five days in bed. I needed a shower. I needed to see myself naked.

Slowly pushing my body upright, I swung my legs cautiously over the edge of the bed and lowered them toward the floor. As I became vertical, the breast pain eased while the pain in my new vagina intensified. I felt on the verge of light-headedness. Bracing my right hand against the mattress, my left grasping the steel railing at the foot of the bed, I gently settled my feet to the cool floor. Though I was not light-headed, neither did I feel confident of my ability to walk all the way to the bathroom and sustain the effort to shower my frail body, towel it dry and climb into fresh bed clothes.

Rain was on the way. A streaky mist painted nearby hills. I could not linger to watch. My bowels were stirring, and I did not want an accident before reaching the bathroom. I walked carefully, my hands always on something solid, the bed, the dresser, a wall, and into the bathroom and onto the commode.

After finishing, I stripped and looked at myself in the tall, wide mirror. I was thinner, I was pasty, my breasts were round as parachutes and ridiculously big for my body. "Barbie," I said to myself. "Believe me," the doctor had said, "in time they will settle into their natural shape." Hard to believe. Ugh. My hair looked like it had been glued on my head in haphazard patches. And there was my...nothing. Between my legs, nothing. I couldn't look. What had I done? This is insanity. I was going insane. Panic thumped in my chest.

Take a shower. Just go. Turn on the water. Feel it on your face and body and in your hair. Shampoo your hair. Work it in. Rinse and re-soap. It lathers nicely. Soap the breasts. The skin on my breasts felt as if they'd been shot with Novocain. They only hurt on the inside, deep down. I soaped my tummy and legs, but not the vagina. What have I done to myself? What the hell have I done? Don't think about it. Rinse everything. Rinse. Oh, god, what have I done? Turn off the nozzle. Dry yourself.

I grabbed the towel, suddenly breathless, feeling overwhelmed with emptiness, shock, dismay. What have I done? What the hell have I done? I'm going insane. The towel only seems to slide the water. I'm tired. I'm on the edge of some kind of cliff. Do I want to throw myself off the balcony? I've got to get out of the shower. I don't care if I'm wet, I must get out of here. I'm going to faint. Go. Grab towels and go back to bed. I walk like a drunk trying not to fall before collapsing. One towel on the pillow for my wet hair, the others for my wet body. Ease onto the bed. Drop onto the bed; welcome, welcome bed.

I lay still on the bed, where I wanted to stay and never be moved, hoping no one came into my room because there was no one I could talk to about this. This was awful. I had a vagina. This thing I had thought about all my life, sometimes thought I wanted, sometimes thought I didn't. I had it. It had me, and this was how I would die. And it was nothing, nothing. I was nothing.

The sky was darker. Thunder cracked and rolled. Rain fell. I lay without moving, watching, grateful for the storm, each breath releasing the horror, bringing a new feeling I had not had before. I thought, "What is this? There are no words for this." I lay watching the storm and there were no words and no thoughts. I cannot tell you what I felt, and I will not try.

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Cynthia Young, M.A.

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2001-2002 ExCom

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She Said, With A Sense Of Acerbity...

"There's Trouble In The Balkans!"

by Miss DiDi Mau

It might seem to you that these events never happened - - now, do you think I could make something like this up? Do you, huh huhhuhdoyoudoyou? I have never related it before, due to the mind numbing humiliation I had suffered, and my oppressive shyness.

It was in the summer of the year 2000 - I had been invited to attend a State Dinner, for the National Committee to Bring Vowels to Serbia. So I dressed in my very finest - My Best(shortest) Dress, My Bettie Page wig, my extra large breast forms, and my six inch pumps from Foot Worship in San Francisco.

P'raps it was by some fluke - or it could have been the six inch pumps, or it could have even been the torpedo tits, but somehow I found myself seated near the front table, where all the dignitaries, and also all the action was!!

Things opened on a very high note - I almost missed it, my attention being confined to the rapid consumption the large bowl of bean dip on the table, but the Saudi Arabian Ambassador, Prince Ak-Sar-Ben, arose to announce that his country had more than enough "A's" and would be happy to trade vowels for consonants, and urged other countries to do likewise!

You no doubt saw this coming - someone had to do it, and it was a delegate from Scotland who spoke up, saying "Hoot Mon, Laddie, wooot abooot 'Y', and 'W', eh? Errrrre they nooot vowels, too?"

"FAIR DINKUM, MYTE!!!" Yelled the Australian Prime Minister, and it was on!! Everyone seemed to be yelling in many different languages at once, and accusations flew left and right. In the ensuing commotion, with everyone distracted, I was able to quickly gobble up the whole tray of escargots, meant to be shared with the entire table...

The heated argument was getting even hotter with pushing and shoving, but what finally calmed things down, was the entry of the entree'...

And the dinner - - oh my it was soooo good - - we had some delicacies from Eastern Europe - Sauerkraut, and Sausage - Sauerkraut and Bratwurst - Sauerkraut, with Sauerkraut! - - spicy, and hot, and it all tasted so fantastic!! There was so much to try, and I tried it all - stopping the waiter, every time he came by for another generous helping of whatever he had.

Hungry as I was, and, as the proud possessor of a cast iron stomach, I never anticipated any unpleasant results, but the constant assault upon my poor digestive tract was beginning to have a reaction that would have astounded J. Robert Oppenheimer.

Seated very near me was that total HOTTTTTIE, none other than Mr. Sam Donaldson!!! (he's mine - I saw him first) - - I would just mellllt when ever I looked at him. And when I leaned far over to pass him my hastily written mash note, I put just a little TOOOO much pressure on my midsection, and that is when it happened...

Some of those present said the ensuing roar sounded like the space shuttle taking off, others compared it to Mt. St. Helen's - in any case it stopped all activity in the room, including the President's Speech -He stopped in mid sentence, his mouth hanging open - everyone sat in stunned silence, except for a scattering of Secret Service Agents who began to reach for their weapons.

Continued on Page 18

The Dreaming TG

By Lynnea Stu

My daughter was even more a rebel than I was. For years had tried to get into her head to teach her anything. Eventually I stumbled upon the answer. I began to work with her dreams.

That girl responded remarkably. She caused me to look afresh at the role dreams play in our lives, shaping our characters and building our personal and collective myths. It's fascinating how we all manage to get zapped by a powerful dream from time to time. I make no bones about it. We are dreamers. If they were just the flotsam of the day, there shouldn't be any reason that they should have such power over the development of a human being.

From time to time I ask transgender individuals about their dreams. The responses are discomforting. The majority seems to have shut out their dreams, or at least most aren't talking. But there seems to be a common type of dream that occurs early in life among TG's.

I will use one of mine as an example. When I was 8 years old I looked into a mirror and a pretty girl looked back. I felt my hair, my skin. I was convinced that I had turned into a girl and I felt happier than I had ever known. Then I awoke and realizing I had dreamed, I cried till there were no tears left. That dream began 2 things for me: a lifelong study of dreams, and cross-dressing. In both cases I was desperate to bring back the girl in the mirror.

Since that time when I might mention that dream to another transgender, I would learn that she had a similar dream. One individual working in a boutique in Los Angeles said she still has a dream about a girl in the mirror. Another dreamed of being swallowed by a machine that changed her into a girl. At any rate, the dream stunned them profoundly.

Such a dream must be Freudian in nature, indicative of the desire to bring out the true individual, the fulfillment of a deep-seated wish. The desire to transition should already be there. But it is the dream itself that charges the desire to an essential drive.

That it should occur so early in life is often cause for it to be buried. One's own identity isn't usually defined before the teen years. Play is typically done with a mask. A boy may see himself as a sports star or an actor in last week's movie. The question of "Who am I?" looms large in the diaries of adolescents who wonder what they are really going to do with their lives.

But forgotten dreams often don't rest. Issues left alone will return, usually in another way, even in another dream. It's enough to make anyone feel trapped with feelings of denial, of being pursued, even fight. It's the stuff that makes purges so painful.

Then again, there are those who have embraced their dream. There was a third group of TG's who indicted that they stopped dreaming so powerfully after they came out of the closet. They became their "girl in the mirror", giving life to that formerly imprisoned self. There was just no need to energize that issue further with a dream. For some, it's blissfully the *only* issue.

While like my daughter, the world considers us to be rebels, we have chosen to be true to ourselves. In awakening from a dream our dream becomes us. That is simply the power of the dream.

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Transgender History Made in San Francisco

Commentary by Janis Ryan

It was truly a historic moment. Monday, April 30, 2001. The San Francisco Board of Supervisors became the first governing body of a local government in the United States to vote to include medical coverage for transgendered people as part of its regular employee benefits.

It was a tense and dramatic meeting. No one knew what the outcome would be, and the Supervisor who ultimately cast the deciding vote had left the room, and had to be located by the Sergeant at Arms. While he was being sought, those of us in the audience anxiously waited while the Board went on to discuss other more mundane issues, such as outdoor signs and zoning.

I was there, part of a group of what the *Chronicle* called "transgender activists." Joan Roughgarden, who herself had been a candidate for the Board of Supervisors, was there. Several transgendered city employees were there as well. Gwen Smith, leader of the *Transbay* group, reporter and columnist for several newspapers, and webmistress of many web sites dealing with transgender issues was present. The *TGSF* Newsletter editor, Ayme Kantz, was there, as well as several other present and former *TGSF/ETVC* ExCom members, including Tianna, LeChara, and Theresa Sparks.

The media was there. Newspaper, television, and radio reporters asked many of us for pictures and interviews. I saw my picture in the *Chronicle* the following day, and saw myself on the *KPIX Evening News*, which also featured an interview with Theresa.

She deserves much of the credit for what happened. She has spent years "in the trenches" in political activity in San Francisco, and was appointed to the Human Resources Commission by Mayor Willie Brown. She organized a rally the Saturday before the vote, which many of us attended along with some attendees of *California Dreamin'*. At the rally leaders of the local Gay and Lesbian political groups and Supervisor Mark Leno voiced their support.

Supervisor Leno had authored the proposal, and up to the last minute worked to gain the required 9 votes out of the 11-member board. He spoke of how he had come to understand the issues involved, and confronted Supervisor Hall, one of the opponents, who had bowed to pressure from his constituents and opposed the measure. His speech was filled with inaccuracies and misused the terms "transgendered" and "transsexual."

TGSF is not a political organization. We do not endorse candidates or engage in political advocacy. Our principal mission is education, directed both to ourselves in the transgender community and the public at large. We have the opportunity at events such as this and the Cotillion, where we do have the attention of the media, to portray ourselves as we are—just people. I applaud the many people in our community who have appeared on television and been quoted in the media to help us reach that goal. I feel that this important decision in San Francisco will be a first step in granting those of us in the transgendered community the same rights and respect as everyone else.

Significant Other Support - East Bay

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

Transsexuality Is Not A Choice; Covering It Is Morally Justified

By Jamie Fenton
Published Thursday, May 17, 2001, in the San Jose Mercury News

WHILE the decision of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to offer limited "sex change" benefits to municipal employees may seem strange, covering transgender health-care expenses through insurance is both medically sensible and morally justified.

It is a policy that other governments and private businesses should adopt. Transsexuality, while rare, is not exotic.

Though the causes are not fully understood, between 30,000 and 300,000 people in the United States were born with brains patterned with a deeply ingrained sense of gender identity that is opposite to their bodies. This mismatch can cause an intense, pervasive, discomforting feeling called gender dysphoria.

Most transsexuals realize that something is wrong early in life and attempt desperately to conform to the roles and expectations of their birth sex. We endure ridicule, ostracism, shame and, for many of us, violence.

Eventually, we abandon our facades and begin changing our bodies to match our minds. This process, called transition, is a fully developed and well-understood course of treatment. It involves psychotherapy, the administration of sex hormones, and for some of us, surgical gender reassignment.

Those of us who can afford it also have electrolysis to remove unwanted hair, breast augmentation or removal, plastic surgery to enhance feminine or masculine features, and voice therapy. Nothing about the transition process is experimental. There is no active scientific controversy about the validity of this diagnosis or the necessity for treatment. The only reasons this is not covered by most health insurance are ignorance and prejudice. For those who cannot afford treatment, the outlook can be bleak. Gender dysphoria can significantly impair, and left untreated can lead to substance abuse, anti-social behaviors, and suicide.

Gender reassignment surgery has been compared to cosmetic rhinoplasty ("nose job"). This comparison is misleading and demeaning to both transsexuals and those with facial disfigurements.

There is hardly a person so constantly unhappy before treatment as the transsexual. Make no mistake, gender reassignment saves lives.

There is also an issue of fairness. Transsexual people pay taxes and insurance premiums that go to provide benefits for others. While transsexuality is in no way a choice, most benefit plans cover treatments for the consequences of ill-advised activities like smoking and drug use. Why include these and exclude transsexuals?

Many European countries, several Canadian provinces, IBM, Apple, Lucent, and now San Francisco provide transgender health-care benefits. It is time for the local governments and private companies of Silicon Valley to do the same.

Jamie Fenton is a software engineer and a member of the newly formed Transgender South Bay group.

Expanded Hotline Hours!

Hotline hours have been expanded to include 10pm to 2am. It's a great time for those of you that wait until the kids or other family members are asleep to address your transgendered correspondence. Telzey still answers the phone live from 7pm to 10pm. And now Debbie and Nicole answer the phone live from 10pm to 2am.

New health benefits for sex-change surgery will help one city administrator on journey to life as a woman.

Claire Skiffington - Changing Times

Rachel Gordon, Chronicle Staff Writer
Monday, May 14, 2001 (SF Chronicle)

San Francisco — The death of Ron Skiffington has been slow and deliberate. It started in earnest 11 years ago and is almost complete. As Ron Skiffington has been dying, Claire Skiffington has been coming alive. "I never felt like I was a man. I always felt like a woman, in some way," Skiffington said.

Skiffington is a transsexual, changing from male to female, and has been active in the controversial push in San Francisco to include sex-change procedures in the health benefits package for city workers.

Despite an outpouring of public reaction — much of it negative — the Board of Supervisors gave final approval to the plan last week. Mayor Willie Brown is expected to sign it into law this week. San Francisco is set to become the only government employer in the nation to offer the benefits. Now, however, officials in Berkeley, San Jose and Santa Cruz are exploring the idea.

A 56-year-old, pearl-wearing administrator with the Department of Public Health, Skiffington is one of 14 openly transgender people employed by the city and the community college and public school districts in San Francisco. The three public payrolls combine for a workforce of 37,000. Skiffington's gender transformation began, she says, with a stirring feeling in grade school. At the time, Skiffington wasn't armed with the clinical definition of what was going on — a condition known as gender dysphoria in which a person feels discomfort with his or her birth gender.

"As a child, I sat back and observed the family, the classroom — and Ron," Skiffington said. "I saw this little boy and never felt it was me." As a kid, Skiffington couldn't wait until he was home alone so he could sneak into his parents' room and try on his mother's shoes. As a teenager: "I knew something was going on, but I didn't know how to express it." That led to a feeling of shame and a reputation "of being a dork."

Later, as an adult, Skiffington started cross-dressing on the job as a secretary at AT&T, but in an understated way. "I'd wear Levi's and a nice top, and sandals."

At home, Skiffington would dress in women's clothes, earning the nickname "Miss Skiffington" and later "Aunt Claire" from friends. Then 11 years ago, after more than a year of intensive psychotherapy, Skiffington took the plunge and started hormone treatment that would begin the physical metamorphosis. The pronoun switched from he to she.

It took about a year for doctors to get the hormone "cocktail" right. During the initial period, Skiffington had bouts of stomach cramps, dizziness and sweating. "I wasn't scared. I would look in the mirror and look for differences and wonder what's going to happen next," she recalled. Slowly, the body hair thinned dramatically, the muscles on the arms and legs recessed, and cleavage emerged. She still has to shave her face, joking that her 5 o'clock shadow is an early riser.

Her hair is kept short but well-coiffed. She dresses conservatively, in sensible dresses and comfortable shoes. A string of pearls, single-pearl earrings and a touch of red lipstick complete the look. "I'm not into a lot of makeup or rhinestones," she said. Her voice is neither deep nor high-pitched, but soft. Backers of the plan to offer sex change benefits for city workers call the move an issue of fairness and civil rights.

But critics say it is an expensive program that caters to a small group at the expense of other health care needs. Some opponents also question the city lending legitimacy to a group that has skirted the edge of societal acceptance. "It's a violation of every established moral law, and one of the reasons we should be concerned is that San Francisco is making other people pay for it," said Art Croney, executive director of Committee on Moral Concerns, a lobbying group in Sacramento.

Skiffington said the opposition doesn't surprise her. While transsexuals, drag queens, cross-dressers and others pushing the gender boundaries have been around throughout the ages, it is only in the past decade or so that the transgender rights movement has started to gain clout here.

Supervisor Mark Leno, chief sponsor of the San Francisco legislation, said public awareness was one of his goals. TRYING TO EDUCATE THE NATION "First of all, it will bring access to our health plan for all city workers.

But beyond that, because of what we're doing in San Francisco, people across the nation are talking about this. We have helped accelerate, if not initiate, a debate and educational opportunity around the transgender issue."

Eight years ago, Ron became Claire to the world. She named herself after St. Clare, who worked on behalf of the poor and was an admirer of St. Francis — San Francisco's patron saint. Around then, Skiffington shed the last piece of Ron's clothing, a teal- turquoise-eggshell plaid sport coat she gave to a friend who was transitioning from female to male. "They're both living fashionably well in Seattle," Skiffington remarked. Skiffington's favorite hobby, crocheting and knitting, mainly afghans and bedspreads, has been carried over from Ron to Claire. She also collects cookbooks.

Still receiving hormone treatment, she hopes to make the change complete in the next year or two with genital reassignment surgery. It will take two operations. The first involves removal of the testicles. In the second, which she refers to as a "snip and tuck," a vaginal canal will be created out of the penis. "I've convinced myself to get modernized, to have my outdoor plumbing changed to indoor plumbing," said Skiffington, who as Ron dated men but is now asexual.

The average cost of surgery to go from male to female is $37,000 — about half the cost of female-to-male procedures. If the new city ordinance takes effect in July, as expected, Skiffington's health plan will fund part of the cost. If she picks a doctor in the city's health network, she'll pay 15 percent; an out-of-network doctor will cost her 50 percent.

Skiffington estimated she already has spent $18,000 to $20,000 on her preoperative therapy and hormone treatment. Born in Oakland to an Irish-Catholic family, Skiffington had shunned her parents and three siblings for years, but now is back in the family fold. Her father is dead, and her mother is slowly accepting her new daughter. "She gets 'Claire,' but she doesn't always get the pronouns right," said Skiffington, who now lives in San Francisco.

When the old family albums are opened, it's as if Ron never existed; all the pictures of him have been removed, at Skiffington's request. It's a decision she now regrets. But it's one of the few regrets she has about her new life.

The change, she said, has "given me a chance to stop hiding from myself, to stop beating myself up. I have never, ever been able to be this free and truthful to myself. I am so grateful, and I'm content."

E-mail Rachel Gordon at rgordon@sfchronicle.com.

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NTAC Press Release

Capitol Hill Inundated By Transgenders, Intersexed

"Oh my stars!" exclaimed U. S. Rep. Kay Granger (R-TX) to lobbyist Jessica Redman's story of being born intersexed – a person born with both sets of genitalia. That was typical of the surprised and surprising reactions as some three dozen gender variant folks took to Capitol Hill on behalf of the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition (NTAC).

The lobbying effort, held May 14-16, was the first organized event for the emerging civil rights group, NTAC; whose core constituency is transgendered and intersexed persons. For their initial foray, the group began with a basic educational approach to familiarize Congress on this little known and widely misunderstood phenomenon .

By initial reports, NTAC's first effort "was a resounding success!" claimed lobby days organizer, Vanessa Edwards Foster. "We covered every office in the Senate, and over 2/3 of the offices in the House of Representatives. In all, 474 packets were distributed."

Board chair Yoseñio Lewis measured success not only by the number of visits, packets distributed, he also measured it in the encounter he and boardmembers, Roslyn Manley and Jerry McCracken had meeting with an aide to Sen. Diane Feinstein (D-CA).

"At that meeting the aide confided to us that she had a close friend struggling with gender issues and that she'd been trying to help her friend," Mr. Lewis recalled. "When Roslyn, Jerry and I offered NTAC as well as ourselves personally as resources, the aide's face lit up. She thanked us over and over again for being there. That is just another example of how transpeople are touching everyone's lives.

The packets created to achieve this gender diverse education garnered a good amount of positive feedback from the Congressional aides. "There's certainly a need for education within Congress on these issues," stated Scott Dunaway, Office Manager for Rep. Kevin Brady (R-TX), "and in fact that's just what you're doing." Referring to the packet, he finished, "this is a good first step!"

Added Stanley Allen, Senior Legislative Asst. to Nick Lampson (D-TX) "You're doing exactly what you need to be doing!"

Indeed reports coming back from lobbyists Dawn Wilson and Yoseñio Lewis' visit to Rep. Edolphus Townes (D-NY), and by Naomi Goring and Julie Maverick's visit to Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) were very promising. "These were very important meetings for our community," proclaimed former NTAC Board Chair, Dawn Wilson. "They will provide a solid foundation for us to build on in the future."

Ms. Foster, Boardmember Kathy Padilla and first-time lobbyist Janis Stone enjoyed a very welcomed ear in Rep. Jan Schakowsky's office (D-IL). Legislative Aide, Reva Gupta, who was new to the office, invited the NTAC representatives in for an extended chat. "This is an issue I will be covering in this office, and I really had limited information on it." Thanking the lobbyists, Ms. Gupta added, "I'm really, very glad that you stopped by! [The visit and the packet] is exactly what I needed!"

"While the turnout wasn't quite what we had expected," organizer Foster added, "our productivity and our impact surpassed our expectations!"

"The information gathered by this lobbying effort will constitute an extensive database of immediate and ongoing use for lobbyists," added NTAC Secretary, Anne Casebeer.

Some recently notable names within the transgender community took part in the historic first effort for NTAC. Christie Lee Littleton VanDePutte, of the Littleton v. Prange malpractice suit brought against the doctor who treated her late husband. . "I wouldn't have missed this for the world!" exclaimed the San Antonio native visiting Washington DC for the first time. Ms. Littleton VanDePutte teamed up with the transgendered civil rights attorney who filed her case in the Supreme Court, Alyson Meiselman. The dynamic duo of Meiselman and Littleton made an effective one-two punch in Congress.

Peter Oiler, and his wife Shirley, also hit a number of offices, including most of the Louisiana delegation. Peter Oiler is plaintiff in a suit against his former employer, the Winn Dixie supermarket chain. Winn Dixie fired Oiler in early 2000, simply because he was trangendered. The husband and wife combo even managed a photo opportunity with their own U.S. Representative, William Jefferson (D-LA).

The dedicated band of nascent lobbyists produced professional numbers. NTAC Board Chair, Yoseñio Lewis summarized it simply by saying: "We were successful!"

"NTAC distinguished itself by presenting lobbyists from all socio-economic, racial, age and physical ability strata on all levels of transgender and transsexual experience," Lewis said. Numerous congressional staffers commented on "how nice it was to see a diverse group of people that more accurately represented the range of the transgender population and hence, of their constituency."

Chairman Lewis finished by promising that "we will be following up on suggestions made by the congresspeople and aides." Indeed, the up-and-coming transgender rights group is showing a lot of promise of its own.

Please Help!

TG looking for Room to Rent, San Francisco only. I can pay $500-$600 monthly. Contact: Billie [redacted] at (415) [redacted] Thank you!!

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Therapy Group for Partners of Trans Folks

Meets Fridays, May 11 - August 17, 2001, 6:00 to 7:30pm. Pacific Center for Human Growth, 2712 Telegraph Ave. (at Derby), Berkeley; Sliding scale: $8-40 per session

This group is open to partners of those in transition or considering transition, either FTM or MTF. Partners can be any gender, any sexual orientation. The group will be structured to be a safe place to receive support from peers and explore a variety of issues, including sexual orientation, coming out, feelings of isolation, anxiety, self-consciousness, etc.

Intake process required - please call 510-548-8283 and leave a message for either Reid (ext. 534) or Shinobu (ext. 522) to schedule an intake appointment.

Facilitators: Reid Vanderburgh, MFT trainee and Shinobu Ogasawara, Psy.D. trainee. Supervisor: Josefa Molina, Ph.D, MFC #25051

Remembering

By Lynnea Stuart
[redacted]hotmail.com

Somehow we TG's manage to be sex objects, even exotic fantasy beings. Of course there's seldom real love in our admirers. Lots of marriages are like that too. The most profound love I ever knew wasn't sexual at all and so intense that people wondered at it.

It's rare for me to immediately click with someone like Rosanne. In a year's time we were lovers even kissing and hugging like a couple. But we never engaged in sex. Neither of us wanted it. It was real platonic love.

On many afternoons we met for girl talk and more. Rosanne was a shamanness. Her eyes were full of childlike wonder and mischief. We usually bantered about crystals. She was far more intimate with hers than I was with mine and her understanding astounded me.

But Rosanne also had severe endometriosis. Her condition had advanced to where adhesions became cancerous, interfering with other organs. One January day I came in to find her in miserable condition. She had not eaten since Christmas (6 weeks), hadn't slept for days, was weak, vomiting, and hadn't bathed in as long. The adhesions had shut off her colon, the churning spasms jarring her awake every few minutes. She needed a doctor badly. But she was still not willing to go. All I could do was lie next to her and stroke her so she could sleep. She slept 4 hours in that session and slept the next night. Then her mother and sister came and brought her to a hospital.

Her mother demanded to know about me. She was convinced we were having an affair. Rosanne was amused. Her mother was no less concerned when she saw me in a Charlotte Russe dress and a Barbie-doll wig.

Rosanne endured 3 surgeries and 2 rounds of chemotherapy that weakened her to where she could no longer trust herself to drive. Her baldness didn't stop me from kissing her. She found strength in it. A kiss given to a woman whose beauty has faded helps more than words.

When I last saw Rosanne she was eliminating much of what she owned. She had been a Greek belly dancer in her prime. I was her only student and she had no children of her own. She kept 2 dance outfits for herself and bequeathed the rest to me. But then she did something that blew me away.

She found an Altoids tin and opened it. Inside were some rough stones, a piece of glass, a button...a childhood treasure. Rosanne said I was the only one besides her that had ever seen it. Not even her 2 husbands had seen it. She trusted me.

I lost contact that winter and knew she had taken ill again. One day her sister e-mailed me saying Rosanne was in a coma at her parent's home. But I was not to come. Her father couldn't take her being intimate with a transgender.

One night I dreamed of an ocean and crows cavorting in the wind. The dream became bolts of lightning exiting my eyes. I awoke to see a butterfly of light fly away out the window.

The next morning I drove in the city and the view of Ocean Beach compelled me to stop. It was exactly what I saw in the dream. The crows were cavorting in the wind, exactly like I remembered. I knew. Altaic shamans are said to pass on in the form of a butterfly of light. Rosanne was saying goodbye.

Her sister e-mailed me the next day to inform me of her passing and expressing her concern about me.

She didn't understand. She can't. That's platonic love.

Trouble in the Balkans...

Continued from Page 14

All Eyes in now the eerily quiet room were suddenly angrily directed at me - it was as though a spotlight had been trained upon my chair.

Seated next to me, Ms. Eleanor Clift, a journalist from the MacLaughlin Group, hissed into my ear - "HOW-DARE-YOU-DO-THAT-BEFORE-THE-FIRST-LADY???" I could only respond, "I did not know it was her turn...", But to try to recover some sort of composure I weakly croaked out ".....pardon me....", and wished that stuff about Alien Abduction were true, and they knew where to find me...

SO WHAT DO YOU KNOW - here, just a few months later - the BIG GUY had taken me literally!!!! Mark Rich, Pincus Green, Roger Clinton, and now - - - ME!!!! I could not believe the letter - I had to read it over and over again. It was hard to believe that, those silly little misunderstandings with the San Francisco Vice Squad about my waiting for the bus on Capp Street, would be forever banished to the ash bin of history. Pulling the tags off the pillows, and driving the three axle vehicle would not cause me to look over my shoulder any more!!! What a great day it was.

So for those of you who think that there is a cloud behind every silver lining, just remember, that you will get yours in the end.