



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN - Winnie [REDACTED]

A few months ago, Gina Marie proposed that our 2nd and 4th meetings of the month be designated no-smoking nights, a reasonable compromise to a long-standing problem, and it was so agreed by all those present at the time, smokers and non-smokers alike. Unfortunately, voluntary compliance has been very lax, leading to the flap you can read about elsewhere in this issue, followed by letters of complaint from Katherinne and Gina. If the first to arrive were a smoker, she would have a cigarette before others came. But if the next person were also a smoker, she would light up, too, and the smoke would linger long after a dulled-sense nose could detect it, thereby ruining the air for non-smokers.

We are now asking that the no-smoking rule be in effect from **6 p.m.** on the day of these meetings, which will be so marked on our *Calendar*, last page. If you are the first to arrive, please put up the no-smoking signs. If anyone sees another light up, first assume they have simply forgotten, gently remind them of the rule and ask them to either put it out or go outside. If you are the offender, please comply immediately - if you don't, people have a right to get angry at you.

Let's be civilized about this. On smoking nights, we will continue to provide what ventilation we can. Special interest meetings on other nights of the week will be no-smoking unless all in attendance agree otherwise.

On another matter: It has been brought to my attention that some members listed in our Directory mailed last month have received letters expressing sexual interests.

Please do not send such unless you know beforehand that the other person is interested. Most of us are not so inclined.

NOTICE: Our meeting on *April 11* will be a **TGIC BUSINESS MEETING**. I will put on my hat as treasurer and present a financial report; we are in good shape. Let me know what other matters you want on the agenda.

DINNER PARTIES

Once again, our February party was cancelled because only two had signed-up by the deadline. Well, let's keep on trying - the next dinner party is scheduled for **March 9** at 8 pm, at a restaurant to be determined. Please sign up at the club room or call 436-4513 and leave a message for Joan by Thursday, March 7, or call Joan at [REDACTED]. Leave your number so we can confirm the location, etc.

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Piggy is as Piggy Does

Callan [REDACTED]

Is TGIC a serious support group for those who are transgendered or simply a club for well-to-do white boys who have the hobby of dressing up now and then?

This question can be answered by looking at the "President's Column" of the February 1996 TGIC Transgenderist. In this column, under the heading *No Spare Change*, Winnie Brant notes that the Pataki administration is seeking to end Medicaid funding of genital reassignment surgery.

What assessment does [REDACTED] make about all this? "**Fatten your piggy bank, girls!**"

For those who are in line for Medicaid funded SRS, this must seem a cruel joke. They have a person who lives comfortably as a white man, a retired engineer, telling them that all they have to do is get more money to get the surgery that will let them move on with their lives. Facing a difficult battle every day of their lives, a publication that is supposed to be sensitive to the issues of the transgendered tells them "just go get more money."

Of course, very few of those who may be in-line for Medicaid funded SRS will read the TGIC Transgenderist. The conventional gender community in this country is an off shoot of Virginia Prince's crossdressing community, rich white men who dress up as a hobby. It is a group that like to regale themselves with stories of how TG people as a group are smarter and better off than the rest of the population, not recognizing that they have raised the barriers to entry – both monetary and social – so high that it becomes impossible to have less.

Are there working class transgendered people? You bet. But these men and women are not found at weekend events at posh suburban hotels. They are found in barrios and city streets, just trying to make a life in a culture that lays stigma and criminalization on people. And for the working class TG people, they must transcend not only the stigma of TG, but the stigma of being poor and often being ethnic in this white, heterosexist, and classist culture.

Transgender is not always pretty. Look at Jenny Livingstone's *Paris Is Burning*, a film about the voguing sub-culture in NYC, trannys who dream not only of simple gender shift but of making a place for themselves in this culture. Life is hard for these people – and they don't have a nice home in the suburbs to retreat to when it all seems too much.

Many of these TG people are ones that we don't want to look at, working as hookers or as She-Males in the sex industry. But Brant's comment of **Fatten your piggy bank, girls!** tells them that they have to go and do whatever they can to make the money to change – and find a way to live with the squalor of that life, for example by taking drugs just to keep their mood off their situation.

To ignore the very real plight of those who are transgendered and are not able to be educated, trained and white enough to build a life is the most callous kind of thinking, the myopic vision of someone who has spent too much time in a comfortable, warm closet. The world can be harsh, and if we have no sympathy for those who are facing tough, often impossible, choices, then they will have no sympathy for us.

Of course, there is a requirement to have an open discussion about the issues involved in government funding of gender related medical costs. This is a time when we need to spend

every penny effectively, to get the most bang for the buck and cut government waste.

But it can be very powerfully argued that the best thing that government can do for some is to help them resolve their gender issues and let people get on with their life. SRS and other support is an investment in a person, in making that person more whole and more complete and more able to be an effective citizen. By offering public funding we may get them off the streets, away from prostitution and drugs.

The issue of how queer people – and make no mistake, no matter how much in the closet you are, you are queer to the Radical Religious Right – are supported in their choices and in their requirements are key today.

TGIC has chosen not to print reports from Pennsylvania that they have a policy of not delivering any Medicare services – from basic health care to abuse recovery – to transgendered people. They are cutting TG people out and letting them drift, telling them they are not a part of this culture. "There are no transgendered people in Oklahoma," said the staff of one congressman on Lobby Day. We are being marginalized, swept off the plate of America and into the dustbin.

If government does not take care of us, who will? The real communities in this country, the ethnic ones, have been built not just on parties but on real social programs, on the taking care of each other – building hospitals, old age homes, child care centers, and more. The history of immigrants building community is one of building caring institutions.

But the TG community has failed miserably in this process. At this time in America, we expect the government to take that role, but government won't speak for us, the transgendered and the queer, unless we demand it.

As long as our only response to government taking away benefits to our sisters and brothers is "**Fatten your piggy bank, girls!**" we will continue to allow each other to be victims, to allow ourselves to be a victim.

A wise and thoughtful discussion of these cuts would be useful. How many surgeries does Medicaid fund each year? 10? 100? 1000? Is this a legitimate saving, or only a sop to the right? Who benefits? What other way can this be funded? Are there ways to save money and still accomplish the goals? Are transsexuals really freaks against nature?

But the president of TGIC has chosen not to address these hard issues, simply to give a unthinking, flip and insulting response to those sisters and brothers who need our help. This is tragic, and indication of the overall distance between TGIC and the person who needs help to deal with their transgender issues.

To many today, TG isn't a hobby – it is a life. To ignore that is to miss the point – and to guarantee that TGIC, along with many other components of the gender community will continue to become less relevant with every passing day.

JOSEFINA A. SPECKERT M.Ed.

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CABIN FEVER INFECTS TGIC - Winnie

In reporting last month that the Pataki administration wants to end Medicaid coverage of SRS, condensed from a short article in the *Times Union*, I added my summary assessment of the situation in the form of a practical suggestion with a touch of black humor: "Fatten your piggy bank, girls!" I have empathy for those in transition who are doing just that, while working in a modest job, paying taxes to support Medicaid, as well as paying premiums for health insurance that, likely, does not cover SRS. A cruel joke, indeed. To some, being transgendered is a cruel joke of nature. I should have said something like: "In my opinion, in the present political climate, the only reliable way of funding SRS is to pay for it yourself".

At our meeting on February 8, Jennifer came in, gave me her well-researched article on the same topic (*Albany Watch - Pataki's War on Transsexuals*) and began to discuss it, suggesting the issue is a bare bone thrown to the cost-cutting dogs. Then, Callan entered and handed me *Piggy is as Piggy Does*. Glancing over it, I thought I had stepped on a land mine when I saw the verbal shrapnel of phrases like *rich white men, poor and ... ethnic, prostitution and drugs*, flying off the page. So I poured a cup of coffee, lit a cigarette without thinking (why do I need drugs like caffeine and nicotine?), sat down and prepared to get into the discussion. Then, there was a commotion; Katherine wadded up some paper and stormed out. "What was *that* all about?", I thought. Somebody unwadded the paper and I saw it was our "No Smoking" sign, looked down and saw the butt in my hand. Earlier that evening, I had twice reminded Joan that it was a no-smoking night.

Callan's divisive article is so uncharacteristic of her usual appeals for inclusiveness that I feel it must be attributed to an infection of Cabin Fever. She later told me that my words had struck a sensitive nerve. But she seems to share the assumptions that make reasonable political discussion in America almost impossible. Statistical correlations between race, economic status, and crime rate are used to chain these topics together, like

slaves. Mention of poor black women (as opposed to *rich white men*) conjures up images of unwed mothers living on welfare, while the fathers push prostitution, drugs, muggings, and worse on the street corner. So we get into a vicious circle: prejudice > discrimination > rotten job > poverty > hopelessness > crime > fear >> more prejudice >> more discrimination, etc., etc., ever spiraling inward, like matter falling into a black hole from which there is no escape and no communication. Previously distinct words are deemed to be "code words" for something else, whether so intended or not, and we are led into an endless chase after the current "politically correct" euphemism.

Callan does a disservice by bringing this manner of thinking into a transgender publication. I grew up during the Great Depression with unemployed parents, living in a dinky house with no electricity, no gas, no plumbing, no telephone, and no car; doing homework by kerosene lamp to get myself out. But in a mono-racial, low-crime environment, so I do *not* automatically link poverty with race and crime.

I agree with Callan (in her article *Fundamentally Different?*, January issue) that the difference between transvestites and transsexuals is more a matter of degree than kind; I feel close to those who wish to present themselves as ordinary women. Many years ago, a TS friend advised me: "If there's any possible way you can live without going through transition, take it. I simply *had* to do it, and it's been hell. But I know many self-proclaimed transsexuals who are destroying their lives." I have been able to heed her advice; going to crossdressing conventions is my method of survival.

It is therefore surprising to see Callan bashing *rich white men who dress up as a hobby*. Likening crossdressing to a hobby is a ploy to gain acceptance from wives, and many can restrain their impulses so it occupies no more time than a typical hobby. But I've never heard of a philatelist who periodically burns his stamp collection, only to run down to the post office a month later to replenish it. Of course we realize that *events at posh suburban hotels* limit attendance to those who can afford it. Does she expect us to meet in the middle of a

ghetto? We know there is no correlation between transgendered feelings and economic status or race. But getting together in pleasant surroundings has given us the confidence to educate psychologists and other professionals of this fact, and provided a forum for activists like Callan to urge inclusion. This has countered the visible evidence of drag queens, seen by the general public as representative of all transgendered or gay males. Suit-and-tie gay men as well as "straight" crossdressers are gradually, if reluctantly, beginning to recognize that we are all being branded as "queer", and turning to fight together, rather than hang separately.

Callan should know better than to describe closets as *warm* and *comfortable* - more comfortable than the perceived alternative, perhaps. Closeted crossdressers, rich enough to pay the rent, provide our TGIC meeting space, and we are open to all who need it, if they can find us. It is largely *rich white men* who lend financial support to organizations like IFGE and ICTLEP. Conservative CD or radical activist, we *need* each other, so let's not engage in mutual bashing.

Concerning health care, you can read my comments on the defunct Clinton plan in *The Transgenderist* for May, 1994. With the present attempts to push us all into HMOs run by bottom-line insurance accountants, I believe our best bet is to convince them of the cost-effectiveness of SRS, as Callan and Jennifer imply. The first step is to compile hard data. So, if you know any post-ops who have merged into the general population of women, urge them to participate in Dr. Kirk's survey - see *The Transgenderist* for January, 1996.

Wearing my hat as editor of this newsletter, I chose not to print the report on the Pennsylvania Medicaid situation because I thought it would be of less interest to readers than other material that Callan and others provided - I try to maintain a balance of contents. If you wish to keep abreast of transgender activist issues, you can subscribe to *In Your Face* from:

Riki Anne Wilchins
[redacted]
New York, NY 10014

It's free, but Riki would welcome a donation of \$10 or more, if you're rich enough.

A few days after the February 8 meeting, Callan delivered *TGIC In Crisis* to my door. In this, she is much kinder to my stewardship of this club, and we really are not far apart. I represent the faithful Old Guard, hanging on until new blood steps up to move us forward. The Club Room is available for special interest groups to meet. For several years, Jennifer has attempted to organize a TS group, without success.

I am glad that Gina has put TGIC On-Line and volunteered to take on the task of contacting prospective new members, and thank her for it. My seeming reluctance to pass the baton was just a pause to mull over the best way to make a smooth transfer, and I have settled the matter with Gina. She has also offered to produce this newsletter next month, when I will be at the IFGE Convention. With an up-to-date computer, I know she will do a good job.

TGIC

PO Box 13604, Albany, NY 12212-3604
(518) 436-4513 (live Thurs. 8-10 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	Joan [redacted]
Secretary	Joyce [redacted]
Treasurer	Winnie [redacted]
Newsletter Editor	Winnie [redacted]

The Transgenderist is the newsletter of TGIC, published monthly and mailed First Class to members, prospective members, friends, professionals, and exchange publications.

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TGIC General Membership Dues: \$40/yr

Albany Watch

by Jennifer [REDACTED]

PATAKI'S WAR ON TRANSSEXUALS

During his 1996 State of the State speech, Governor Pataki commented that he had given directives to the state funded Medicaid plan to no longer allow payments to those wanting sex change operations.

Later that week political commentator Dr. Alan Chartock writing in his "Publisher's corner" column in the *Legislative Gazette* (January 16, 1996) offered his take on why this was done by the Pataki Administration:

"One has to admit that this Pataki position will find a lot of positive reinforcement from the general public, most of whom have no tolerance for the paying \$10,000 for sex change operations from public funds. When you are doling out money for health care, I guess decisions have to be made. The only thing that can be said for the other side is that rich people who want sex change operations are able to pay for them or get them paid for through insurance policies. For those who are poor and in need of sex change operations, it will be a "no-go" policy.

Of course when you are paying out billions of dollars for Medicaid, it seems to me that one would want to know exactly how many sex change operations the state does, in fact, pay for every year. My bet is that there are damned few of them and that by raising this whole issue in the first place there is an attempt by the governor's people to demonstrate how profligate and wasteful the system is. Perhaps that's why we're hearing about this now."

Sensing the uninformed nature of this discussion by both the administration and Dr. Chartock, I sent off the following letter:

Dear Dr. Chartock:

I recently read your article in the *Legislative Gazette* on the governor's change of Medicaid regulations to disallow the payment of sex-change surgery. As a vocal advocate for transgender rights, (the rights of those who feel trapped in a life that does not fit neatly into the categories we allow in a bipolar gender system -- male vs. female -- including transsexuals) let me assure you that this is another Pataki red herring.

How could Pataki find anything but "positive reinforcement from the general public"? After all, take your least understood minority -- one that the public in general knows nothing about (ignorance), feed it with an unhealthy stereotype (intolerance), add a touch of bias (bigotry), throw in a generous helping of suppression and fear of the unknown... and Viola! Take me back 50 years -- its fascism!

If I may, let me give you some facts. Transgendered people are some of the most discriminated against members in our society. We face: discrimination from families -- who often turn their backs on us. Employers -- who often fire us if our transgendered nature comes out (often about bathroom privileges). Discrimination from the public -- we are one of the last classes of people who can apparently be legally discriminated against -- the Supreme Court has consistently ruled against us in issues of Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights. Therapists -- who have almost no knowledge on this subject continue to treat us a pathological disorder under the DSM-IV - (its not - more on this later), force us into more familiar categories i.e. Homosexual which they are more familiar with -- (its not -- its an issue of gender not sexuality). Many other therapists consistently testify as "professional witnesses" in family court that we are a threat to our children when they have no proof to substantiate this testimony. Lawyers -- who are fearful to represent us. Judges, who are afraid to rule in our behalf for fear that it would look bad. Civil support systems that shudder when they see one of us coming as we do not fit neatly into their categories either. Landlords who evict without due process. Should I continue?

Who are we? As I said before, we are a broad category of humanity that represents all aspects of civilization; who, for one reason or another, do not fit neatly into the categories of male or female. Transsexualism is neither limited to rich people nor those who are chronically psychotic. Many, are highly intelligent people who try their damndest to fit what is essentially an arbitrary gender roll to which they were assigned at birth based on whether they had an "innie" or an "outie". Science now knows that this is not always the case. Following conception the human fetus starts as female. That is, regardless of chromosomes -- which for sex can be XX, XY, XXX, XYY, XXXX, XXXY, XYY, or XXY and several other combinations -- if certain things do not happen then a female is produced. At certain stages of fetal development hormones are introduced which -- if all goes right -- turn us into

males or females in accordance with the chromosomal plan. For one out of every 10, or every 100 -- depending on whose research you read -- something goes amiss. These people are to some extent transgendered. For one in every 10000 or so this problem is severe enough to cause someone to seek sexual reassignment.

The bipolar gender system fortunately works for the majority of the population who find they are near enough to one of the poles to claim the role as male or female. When the system breaks down and the person finds that they are unable to fit into the role society has decreed, they are devastated. Often they go through extended periods of depression, unemployment, and general turmoil. Often people in this condition are chronically unemployed or under-employed, involved in law suits for custody, discrimination or whatever, and generally suffering medical problems. This causes a greater drain on state resources through such programs as unemployment, and welfare than paying for sex reassignment would. To deny the benefit is fiscally irresponsible. Oh, by the way, most insurers find a way to avoid their responsibility to pay for this procedure as well -- calling it either cosmetic or experimental surgery.

Choosing reassignment is a difficult decision not taken arbitrarily but with the support and recommendation of therapists and medical professionals. Then, there is extensive involvement in counseling, a "real-life test", hormonal intervention, and finally surgical intervention. At any stage the person can back-out. Only one in ten do go on for the surgery.

Personally, I know about two hundred transsexuals in the capital district. Not one of the post-operative people I know has taken advantage of the former Medicaid benefit. One reason is that to be eligible, you had have to live for four years, full time, without benefit of surgery. Further, you had to be approved for surgery by a doctor appointed by Medicaid. In the capital district, only two or three doctors know enough about this procedure to be qualified. You would have to be eligible for Medicaid for the full four years -- something that is virtually impossible. Finally, you would have to seek out the services of a doctor to perform the surgery in New York State -- only two do this surgery (if both do, still) -- or go through a long process to prove that it is in your best interest to go out of State. Even then, no surgeon performs this type of surgery without payment in advance -- even though they have been given

assurances of reimbursement by Medicaid or insurance. If a person can lay their hands on that kind of cash then they are not eligible for Medicaid - Catch 22. The two surgeons doing this in New York do not have good post-operative records, report a large amount of complications, and generally charge almost two and a half time the \$10000 figure cited.

Given this situation, it becomes an issue of, not how many times the state paid for this benefit, but whether the state ever paid for this benefit. Personally, I doubt it. Hence, I say this is a typical Pataki red-herring -- make an issue out of a non-issue to say that you have responded to the tax payers mandate.

It's sad too, research has shown that post-operative transsexuals do remarkably well based on factors that contribute to quality of life (from a low of 83% successful in one study to a high of 98.5% in another). Unfortunately, on the negative side, each year many are murdered due to lack of understanding, and homophobia.

If you would like to find out more about transsexualism please contact me at the Albany Gender Project, P.O. Box 6307, Albany, N.Y. 12206, or leave a message at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,
Jennifer [REDACTED],
Coordinator
Albany Gender Project

Did the letter do any good? You Be the judge:

"Dear Jennifer:

Thanks for your most interesting letter. I appreciate the depth of your writing. It is fair to say that I learned a lot from your words.

Sincerely,
Alan S. Chartock"

Albany Gender Project

P.O. Box 6307
Albany, N.Y. 12206

Education, Information, Referrals, Publications, Seminars
Transgender Issues, Rights, and Policy Counsellations

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TGIC In Crisis

Callan [REDACTED] Copyright © 1996

It was a rough night. Katherine came in and wanted to talk about Pataki's removal of SRS coverage from Medicaid, and Jennifer talked about the limits to that coverage, including a very limited number of approved doctors and a four year RLT, during which you had to be on Medicare constantly -- or the clock would reset. It seems doubtful many operations were paid for at all under those policies.

But then Katherine tore down the sign that said *No Smoking 2 & 4th Thursdays*, called the policy void, a sham. It wasn't just Joan puffing like a chimney in her corner, ready to give her view of the world to scared new people, it was Winnie lighting up, who was smelling Joan's smoke and feeling the stress.

Katherine walked out. And many followed. Melodie, who had gone outside to smoke, mumbled about the Gestapo, as somehow a democratically agreed on compromise about smoking was about others acting like Nazis.

TGIC is in crisis. It started as a simple social club for TVs to get together, in the home of one of the members, or in a quiet gay bar. It was a shared closet, a place to get affirmation, meet people like you, and do what you couldn't do anywhere else.

But it's 1996. Transgender has taken to the streets, coming out of the closet, following the gay & lesbian liberation movement. We now talk about direct action groups, talking action to make the world a better place -- a concept Katherine was discussing when she was forced out by people who wouldn't compromise their own comfort.

To make it in this new world, TGIC needs to change. How does it give a place for the still closeted to feel safe, a place for the newcomer to learn, a place for those who are leaving the closet to find their wings, and a place for those who are working for change to come together? Much as we each need to be reborn, so does TGIC.

TGIC has been working to change itself. The newsletter today reflects much of this energy, keeping people up to date on liberation topics and social events. But the core of the group, the welcoming of others, outreach into the community and events that educate and entertain have not yet been addressed.

Is this someone's fault? No. Winnie became president over five years ago, and has understood her own limits. Her benign leadership has always given others a chance to do what they will with the club. She never claimed she would be a go-getter president, developing a cadre of new leaders, just to be a caretaker, and she has done that admirably. That doesn't mean she doesn't get her share of complaints and headaches that she often doesn't deserve.

When people complain about aspects of the club, her response is simply and logically "If you want it done better, go ahead. This is your club too, and I'll be happy to let you do what you want."

Winnie herself has seen the need for change, for transformation, and has acted on it by trying to resign from the Presidency -- with no takers. She looks for new blood, but the club has become stagnant and still, and finding new energy is very difficult. Everyone has other projects, other issues.

Change is possible. The landlord has talked about redoing the club space, maybe even moving to the second floor. The clubroom is available 6 nights a week -- a perfect setting for

meetings of a direct action group (Upstate Menace?), a TS continuing workshop, classes or whatever. The G&L Community Center is excited to work on events with us. There is motion.

But what we need to support that motion is a flow of new people, people who are again excited about the opportunity to come to TGIC, who feel welcomed, who have fun and learn something. We must have energy enough to attract and hold people. We can do this in many ways -- developing standardized telephone answering and out call procedures to welcome new members, upgrading the welcome information, having an advertised place for a newcomers social, getting a positive and up-beat message out more widely.

The task may seem foreboding. Some have noted seeing the work of others is tough, because they see people setting standards they are afraid they can't meet. Well, everyone can do their part, just as I have done my part in invigorating the newsletter and Thursday nights for many years.

If you want to complain about TGIC, if you see problems at TGIC -- or in the world -- and you think they should be fixed, I ask you: **If not you, who? If not now, when?**

Life is what happens while we are making other plans. In this moment you can make a change and make TGIC a more welcoming and more active place. We can step away from habits and take charge of our lives, and become more full, and in the process leave the world a little better place than how we found it.

TGIC is in crisis. It needs reinvention. And that won't happen until someone steps up to do the work.

SUNYA Lesbian, Gay, Bi, & TG Conference -- April 19 -21

Dear LGB Organization:

Once again, the LGBA at the University at Albany will be hosting the Second Annual Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Conference. This year, we have expanded to include colleges and universities outside the SUNY system, including the northeast region.

The 1996 LGBT Conference will be held April 19-21 at the SUNY Albany campus. The projected registration fee for the conference will be \$40 per person. This fee includes hotel accommodations; two breakfasts; a dinner; and a dance with DJ on Saturday night. If you don't need hotel accommodations and just wish to attend the workshops, the cost will be \$10 per person. However, this fee will not include any meals. Therefore, those wanting to attend the dinner/dance will need to pay an additional \$15.

Our 1995 Conference was highly successful and received much praise from the faculty and students who participated. Workshops and caucuses included such topics as: networking between college campuses; sexual assault within the LGB community; and homophobia on college campuses. This year, we are expanding our workshops from nine to twelve with hopes of including a more complete and diverse field of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender concerns.

See also page 9

Transsexual Woman Walks Free Following Arrest For Being Shot

[VENTURA, CA - **somedate**] After being held in solitary confinement for 40 days, Candy Walker finally strode from her jail cell today, a free woman. She was released on her own recognizance plus \$20,000 bail after being charged in a bizarre incident in which she was shot and wounded by her own father, only to find herself charged in that very shooting.

A transsexual woman, Ms. Walker came out to her deeply transphobic - homophobic parents on Christmas Day, 1995. Her father responded by asking police to remove her from the house. Just three days later, Ms. Walker returned to her home to collect some of her belongings. Her father then shot Ms. Walker twice, the second bullet wounding her in the head.

Ms. Walker survived her gunshot injuries, only to find herself charged in the shooting by the District Attorney with First Degree Burglary. Justifying her arrest in a statement apparently lifted directly and without attribution from Kafka, D.A. John Vanarelli declared, "I am concerned about the safety of the community. Candy provoked a violent and most likely justified reaction from her father, whose gun shots caused extreme risk of injury or death to people in community."

In addition, Ms. Walker's cane was later discovered to contain a small blade. Carrying a concealed weapon (CCW) was subsequently added to her charges. D.A. Vanarelli requested and received a bail of \$250,000, a figure more commonly associated with first-degree murder than transsexuality. Appalled by the turn of events, Candy's mother offered to take her back, drop all charges, and get her daughter into counselling.

Although all complaints were subsequently dropped, D.A. Varanelli continued to press the weapons charge against Ms. Walker. Her defense attorney unsuccessfully petitioned for bail reduction to a more reasonable amount. After rebuffing this effort, D.A. Varanelli was overheard by Cathy Walker (no relation) of the Transsexual Menace - Central California, to say to his colleague: "At least that will keep him [sic] off the streets in a dress for while."

Local activists, including Shirley Bushnell of the Transgender Menace, LA, and Joyce Andrews of TOPS (Transgender Officers Protect & Serve) provided the Judge and D.A. with copies of the recent ABC 20/20 show on transsexual activism, as well as letters and faxes about transsexuality. They created further pressure by citing the probability of public demonstrations in Ms. Walker's support if her case did not receive just and prompt resolution.

Ms. Walker has undergone psychiatric evaluation from Vista Del Mar Hospital, and was released Feb. 8, 1996. Candy could still face trial in this matter and the next court hearing is scheduled for Feb. 12, 1996.

Said Ms. Bushnell, Ms. Walker and Ms. Andrews, "Although we are glad to see Candy free, we are appalled that she was ever charged in the first place. Virtually her only 'crime' was being a transsexual woman. Charges would *never* have been brought in a domestic dispute of this nature, especially against the *victim* in a shooting incident, had she been privileged, straight, white and non-transgendered. The Menace and TOPS will continue to press on all available fronts for a change in attitude by local police and D.A. until we are confident a member of our community will never have to endure this kind of nightmare again."

Re: TGIC In Crisis

Gina <Jecena@AOL.COM>

Yes, yes, it was a very rough night.

I arrived early, took several live phone calls from very nervous prospective members. I spent about 30 minutes on the phone with each member, packed up an information packet and gave them to Winnie to send out.

I for one am trying to help out and volunteered to take over the task of recruiting new members, sharing information and supporting new members. Hopefully they will join us. But "WHO IS US?" "WHAT IS US"?

When no one came forward to run for the various club elections I was dismayed since I think we need some new life in the club. You don't have to run for office to help out.

I could be negative about it and complain about how difficult it was to OFFER my help, I practically had to beg Winnie to let me help, Is this a control issue? "Please help me but do it, but do it my way", is the attitude I met. I have made several suggestions in the past which were dismissed without discussion. It could be very discouraging.

But I will not be negative. It is difficult to be a club that serves many different interests, Transgendered, Transsexual, White guys in drag, etc. We all know that labels can get us into trouble, limiting our interests and understanding for the public.

So what are we going to be? If no one offers suggestions and offers help, we will remain as what I see as a lackluster, Club for "white guys in drag". Callan suggested that someone start a meeting another night of the week and I am tempted to try that but I can sometimes be naive as to the political implications. I am already scapegoated as the one who complained about the smoking. I can take that heat, especially if it comes from Joan, and I appreciate those who have spoken out and now that it has come to a head, I think we need to follow up.

Perhaps a Wednesday evening meeting to discuss some new ideas and growth for the club would be helpful. We could come up with a written agenda and put it out for a vote. Any takers? As Callan writes:

"... what we need to support that motion is a flow of new people, people who are again excited about the opportunity to come to TGIC, who feel welcomed, who have fun and learn something. We must have energy enough to attract and hold people. We can do this in many ways -- developing standardized telephone answering and out call procedures to welcome new members, upgrading the welcome information, having an advertised place for a newcomers social, getting our message out more widely."

Take care, love to all, looking forward to hearing from everyone.
Gina.

96-02-11 12:23:44 EST

If you are in Montreal, you might want to go to Cabaret L'Entre-Peaux. It's a place where TVs and TSs are the waitresses and performers. I never went but people tell me there's great fun there! It's located at 1221 Ste-Catherine West.

RANDOM THOUGHTS (#12)

by Jennifer [REDACTED]

PERSPECTIVE, POINT OF VIEW,

or...

"I've got that old rationalization blues"

One of the first things taught to you by any good art instructor is that an artist must first consider the perspective from which he wishes to present his work. Perspective is the key to a work which is fresh and interesting, or more mundane. A writer or speaker's point of view allows him to display the strengths of his case or the weakness of others. It allows his work to be more cohesive and focused and better understood.

In human nature, although, when a person uses a different perspective, or looks at their life from a different point of view it's called rationalization. Recently, I was reading an article that stated that all members of the gender community practiced rationalization. Though, it was intended as a positive article, I stopped dead in my tracks. Yes, I thought, we definitely do rationalize, but something about those words annoyed me. After all I had always looked at my healing process as taking a new perspective on my life -- looking at things from a different point of view.

Rationalization, at least to me, carries a hint of making the irrational real -- to cause it to become rational. It is a frame of reference, a viewpoint, a perspective that assumes there is only one reality -- that which is accepted by our workers in human nature. The fallacy of this thinking is that concepts of reality change as the needs of the people change. Another fallacy is that my life, yours too probably, is already real by the fact of our existence. What differs us from others not so blessed, is how we deal with that reality. Are you valued as a person, or objectified and devalued? By buying into that objectification are we devaluing ourselves?

For me, health meant rejecting that objectification and choosing a positive perspective -- one that recognizes my innate value as a person. I am, after all, here. I am what I am -- me!. Anything else, anything less is irrational.

When an artist paints, he always has to consider the perspective, a good speaker or writer his point of view, a human being their own concept of what is real within the bounds of how they define themselves. You are your best work. Your definition of reality gives you strength. It keeps you focused. It makes you cohesive and better understood. In short, it makes you fresh and interesting. If this is rationalization, then go ahead rationalize!

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TGIC & LGBT CONFERENCE - A PLEA FOR HELP!! -Katherine [REDACTED]

The 1996 LGBT Conference will be held on April 19-21 at the University at Albany. Conference Co-Chair Derek Dayton has selected me, Katherine [REDACTED], to act as facilitator for transgender discussion. Further particulars are not yet available.

It is my feeling that the Conference presents to TGIC and our community a wonderful opportunity to connect to the general public, the Lesbian, Gay, and Bi-sexual Communities, as well as to those individuals directly in need of our support.

In order to insure the success of our participation in the Conference, I am extending a request to all our members for their help. At this point, the process of putting this event together has only just begun. But if you wish to participate in some capacity--as a panelist, as a planner, or as an envelope stuffer--please contact me through TGIC at (518) 436-4513 or attend club meetings on Thursday nights.

TGIC and the Transgender Community as a whole have worked long and hard for recognition and inclusion. Now let's show 'em what we can do!!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TRI-ESS MEETINGS IN SCHENECTADY

The Lambda Chi Lambda Chapter of Tri-Ess holds monthly Saturday meetings at a motel in Schenectady. The planned schedule is: Mar. 16, Apr. 20, May 18, June 15.

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

CROSS-TALK now \$5/issue

Kymerleigh [REDACTED], publisher of the monthly TG magazine *Cross-Talk*, has announced that she will now concentrate on mail order sales at a reduced price of \$5 per single issue of 32 pages. Subscription rates are \$48 for one year, or \$84 for two years.

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) *Albany Area:*
(518) 486-1595 or 1-800-962-5065.

TGIC On-Line

If you want to keep up with the breaking news about TGIC in the Capital District, join TGIC On-line, a very loose Internet mailing list of TG people. Join by sending a note to Gina at Jeeena@aol.com

You will get regular messages from Jeena to make sure you have the latest list, and mail from many others in the area on local events, hot web pages and more. You can send a message to the list by using the "Reply To All" function in your mailing software to create new messages or add to the discussion.

Note that there is no fee and no automated mailing list software used by TGIC On-Line, which uses the KISS principle.

TGIC does not have a web page at this time -- unless you want to start one. TGIC is an all volunteer group, so if you think something should be done better -- like activities or communications, just pitch in and do it! It's your club -- and your life -- to do with what you will!

CALENDAR

Regular Meetings are held every Thursday at the TGIC Club Room on Central Avenue in Albany, 7:30 - 10 pm. 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.

MARCH 1996 (NS = No Smoking Meeting)

Mar 7 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

Mar 9 *Dinner Party*, 8:00 pm

Location to be announced

Mar 14 NS Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

Mar 21 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

Mar 28 NS Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

APRIL 1996 (NS = No Smoking Meeting)

Apr 4 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

Apr 11 NS Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

TGIC BUSINESS MEETING

Apr 13 *Dinner Party*, 8:00 pm

Location to be announced

Apr 18 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

Apr 19-21 *1996 LGBT Conference*

University at Albany

Apr 25 NS Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

MAJOR COMING EVENTS

Mar 24-31 *IFGE Convention*,
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN

Mar 29-31 *XPRESSIONS Spring Gala*,
Niagara-on-the-Lake,
Ontario, Canada

Apr 25-29 *California Dreamin'*,
San Francisco, CA

May 15-19 *Esprit '96*, Port Angeles, WA

May 16-19 *Paradise in the Poconos*,
Canadensis, PA

June 6-9 *Be-All*, Detroit, MI

June 13-16 *Tiffany Club Spring Fling*,
Provincetown, MA

July 3-7 *TRANSGEN'96*, Houston, TX

July 24-28 *S.P.I.C.E.*, Wilmington, DE