

# It's Been Quite A Year!

The Channel  
TGSF  
TRANS GENDER SAN FRANCISCO



## Photo Retrospective Inside!

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

# The Channel

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

## ExCom 2002 - 2003 Officers

(Fiscal Year: May 1 - April 30)

President ..... Rachael Janelle  
 Vice President ..... Rachael Hill  
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## Membership Report

Final 2001-2002 Membership as of:

May 24, 2002 ..... 230

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

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Editor ..... Ayme Michelle Kantz  
 Advertising ..... Inquiries to TGSF Excom  
 Contributing Photographers, this Issue: ..... Kris Davidson  
 Rachael Janelle & Telzey Adams

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<b>Business Card</b> (3-1/2 x 2)	\$ 25	\$125	\$ 250
<b>4x5</b>	\$ 60	\$300	\$ 600
<b>Full Page</b>	\$100	\$500	\$1000

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## FROM THE EDITOR...

It's been quite a year indeed. Lessee, in the last 365 days or so I've come to terms with being a non-operative transsexual; wore my cranky pants for a few months and bitched about the club doing the folding chair routine (which thankfully didn't come true due, in no small measure, to Rachael Janelle's excellent leadership); found a new partner and moved in with her to Walnut Creek; had LASIK eye surgery; marched in the Pride Parade and actually kept my bra on; lost 15 pounds with Weight Watchers; finally got my hair cut; quit smoking tobacco; became more active at Wells Fargo in support of transgendered employees; and started singing regularly again after an 11-year hiatus.

Yet despite these personal accomplishments, the emotional vortex created by the murder of Gwen Araujo still lingers and colors many of my thoughts and feelings. Local High Schools have been producing the critically acclaimed play, "The Laramie Project," to sold-out houses. The evil hate mongering generated by Westboro, KS seems to have had little sway with the public at large, and the Newark Police have remained diligent about pursuing justice for Sylvia Guerrero. I've been keeping an eye on the local news as best I can, and hope to document some of the better media coverage of her case as it plays out. You'll find some follow-up material of interest beginning on Page 22. And please - wherever you go - stress the importance of educating our youth about differences. Stop the Violence - Stop the Hate.

But it is not all disheartening news and there is always a reason to be grateful, no matter how small. Another of our elected officers is also doing her part to be giving and share her story, so that perhaps someone out there will read and learn that they are not alone, and that someone else out there feels the same way she does. If we can reach our parents, and they in turn teach our children, then we can truly say that we are making progress. Rachel Hill's amazing story about how she told her parents the truth of her feelings begins on Page 3, and I challenge you to find a more intelligent treatise that so eloquently expresses the emotional agonies and triumphs we all have felt at one time or another.

If you thought last month's issue was expanded, then the monster you now hold in your hands has it beat, if not for the 4 extra pages, then for the four pages of Calendar items, four pages of letters, announcements and club business, four pages of TG's in the news, a four-page photo collage of the entire year in pictures, several pages of (what I hope is) excellent commentary on happenings and events that have impacted our community, and lest I forget, you can find your favorite and mine, Miss Shirley Faire on page 25.

Yes, 2002 has been an intense year, a regular roller coaster that found more and more cities adopting anti-discrimination laws protecting the rights of the transgendered (New York, Boston, and Chicago just to name a few), the City of San Francisco is the place to be if you're transgendered, and the transgendered have even been appointed/elected to the local Human Rights Commission and Democratic Central Committee. And hey, Theresa Sparks - You Rock!

And in a real sign of true progress and solidarity, all the Bay Area TG support groups have banded together to sponsor a single event (a Holiday Dinner - see the ad on Page 9), and in the spirit of the Holidays may I heartily endorse the efforts of our collective Leaderships in building bridges and fostering good will. And on behalf of the entire TGSF Executive Committee, may I wish you and yours all the blessings of the Yuletide Season, and may the Spirit of peace and love guide and keep you now, tomorrow and always.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Rachael Janelle

Well I like to start with some thank you's. First, to our editor, Ayme, for an awesome November newsletter. I get requests for more copies of this Channel all the time. Another thanks to Rachel Hill and Susan Laird for putting on a great Halloween event. I would like to thank all the TGSF members who helped out this year to make TGSF a better place and keep the doors open for the new people. It was fun to review all my photos of the year and see all those smiling faces and all the events we have this year. It's been a very special year for me being the President of TGSF

I'm looking toward to having a Thanksgiving dinner at my house because I get to be with my extended TGSF family for that day. I look forward to planning and shopping for dinner with one of my best girls. The gift that I receive from TGSF is all these priceless friendships.

Cotillion is on schedule for January 25, 2002. We could still use some help and if you want that gift of a priceless relationship get involved or get reconnected. This is going to be a very special night. If nothing else come to the event to celebrate TGSF's 20th year which will help the Transgender Community.

There are a couple of planned Christmas dinners in mid-December. Please check out the ad for the bay area TG group Xmas dinner on December 15, 2002. TGSF is very proud to be involved with this event this year. I have attended the past 3 dinners and it's always been a fun event. TGSF's December end of the month Xmas party will be a little more informal than the group dinner, but will come up with some surprises.

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

### 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!

**Wendell Debele** M.S. (T.C.M.) Dipl. L.Ac.



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## GENDER TALK WITH MOM & DAD

Rachel Hill, Vice President



This had been on my mind for quite some time. I actually wanted to tell them at the beginning of the year, but with dad's surgery and their traveling there just didn't seem to be enough time. I then set the goal of telling them before they went to visit my sister since she could be good support to them. That time came and went with more excuses.

My sister is coming in about 10 days so I thought this would be a good time. Last night on the way home from work I dialed my parents phone number. It rang and rang - I didn't want to leave a message. As I got to my freeway turn off, about 20 minutes later, I dialed again. This time I didn't expect an answer but thought I would try anyway. Mom picks up. I'm shaking and have to pull over.

After a few minutes of small talk I said, "Do you and dad have some time either Wednesday or Thursday night this week for us to get together and talk about some of the differences you have seen in me?" After a short quiet moment she asked if she could check with dad and get back to me. Dad called that night and we set up tonight for dinner. I had this letter written some time ago, but had gone back through to update it.

I entered their home and tried to act as casual as possible. My stomach was shaking so terribly. Mom had trouble looking me in the eye - dad didn't seem out of the ordinary. As mom was fixing dinner she said, "OK son what is it? What's been going on?" I told her that I had a four-page letter that I wanted to read to them so we sat down. I gulped several hard swallows and pushed air through my throat but no sound came out. I pushed harder and started to read.

While reading, I looked up once into my father's eyes and knew that I could not do that again. I focused on the words. I had read this so many times I almost knew it by heart. When I paused I could feel my throat constrict and I almost froze twice. But I kept reading. Without looking up I could see my mom bow her head and cry. Dad would not take his eyes off of me. Below is the letter I read:

### **Mom & Dad**

I'm sure you have noticed some things different about my appearance, especially over the last few months. Many small things that have accrued over a period of time. Things that have added up after a while. I had plans to talk with you earlier this year, but it was easy to find excuses to delay and one delay rolled into the next. This conversation may very well be the most difficult thing I have ever done so I decided to write it down in letter form because there are many important things to say and I don't want to leave anything out. I may only get one shot.

*Continued on Page 4*

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## Dear Mom & Dad...

Continued from Page 3

For most of my life I have felt different. I have an attraction to clothing and interests usually reserved for girls. I learned early on through a great deal of shame that what I felt was not acceptable so I hid it with all my being. In private I found great pleasure in feminine things yet was very confused by these desires. We all know the story that you (mom) had wanted a girl when I was born and that I was even wrapped in a pink blanket at the hospital. I know very well that neither of those things had anything to do with my situation, but I always wanted to hide when the story was told. I felt so transparent, as though everyone looking at me knew the truth.

By the time I reached puberty I had become an expert at hiding my desires with the ongoing fear of embarrassment and ridicule, yet it didn't stop my activities. In my teens I overcompensated with the biggest hat and belt buckle I could find. I made sure to hang out with the tough cowboys, yet my best friend was a girl. From the moment I could have facial hair I made sure it was prominent; I was determined to squash these feelings at all costs. There was a time during adolescence, not sure what age, when I was allowed to dress up as a girl for Halloween. I distinctly remember the body suit and skirt I got to wear. I took (sister) around the neighborhood and everyone thought I was her older sister. I remember how wonderful that felt.

When I was about 14 you found a pair of girls zip up boots in my room that I had locked in the middle drawer of my desk. I thought they were secure, but you pulled out the drawer on top and saw them. Later that evening dad had a talk with me. He asked me questions like; "Do you wear these?" I lied and said no. There was no other logical explanation, but after 10 minutes of my humiliation I was told to get rid of them. It was never brought up again and I learned a valuable lesson...Don't ever get caught again.

When I moved away to school, I had much more freedom and could explore more within the confines of my apartment. I started to gather my own wardrobe, jewelry etc. At this point I still viewed it as quirky behavior that I would outgrow. Odd but nevertheless harmless. It would be another 20 years before I learned that it was something I would never outgrow. More on that later.

I hid my activities and desires during 14 years of marriage. At times the feelings were very strong and at others they would completely go away. Sometimes for several weeks. I hid boxes of clothing in various places in the house always shifting their location so as not to get caught. I became a master at deceit (not something to be proud of) and dressed whenever I had the opportunity. The guilt was incredible. The self-hatred was almost unbearable. Each time I encountered a difficult situation in my life I assumed it was God's way of punishing me for whom I was. This caused me to purge several times during these periods. Purging is when everything that has been gathered is disposed of with the thought that if there weren't any clothes around, the desire could be controlled. It doesn't work.

November 1999 late one evening the weight of my secret became too much to bear. My eyes blurry from tears, my body shaking with fear I confessed my deceit to the woman I have loved for most of my life. Her words were lost, but I could see her struggle to understand. Oh the awful thoughts that must have been running through her mind. Do I really know this person? Has our whole marriage been a sham? Is he telling me he wants to have a sex change? Is he gay? Am I not pretty enough? What did I do wrong? We talked for hours and were emotionally drained by early morning. Yes, I am the same person inside that you fell in love with. No, our marriage is the most important thing in the world to me. No, I'm not saying I want a sex change, I just don't know how to deal with these feelings alone anymore. No, I am not gay. And nothing you did is to blame for this. No one is to blame; it just is what it is. Unfortunately we had no idea at that point what "it" was.

The next year I spent all my spare time on the Internet and reading books to find out what "it" was. Sharing my condition with (my wife) made my life so much more bearable. At least I had gotten out from behind the hiding and deceit. Now I could concentrate on learning as much as I could about my feelings. The Internet was a fabulous place to give me a start. Unfortunately most of what I found was sexual in nature; as in the act of sex not the identity of gender. I stumbled upon a web site where the author told her story from childhood to where she is now; a cardiac surgeon in Phoenix. It took me several hours to read but I was mesmerized that there was another person on this earth that had the same feelings that I had. This site led me to others and to books that I bought and read with a voracious appetite. I was introduced to words that made me ill: Transgendered, transsexual, cross dresser, transvestite. I had to put books down at times because I just couldn't accept that I shared the same feelings as this derelict, disgusting group of people. Over the past year I have learned a great deal about the different categories of gender conflicted individuals, how they differ and society's prejudices towards them. I learned that society's views of gender dysphoria have been shaped by Montel and Mory Povich. That most people will never understand the pain and anguish that accompanies the condition unless they have felt it themselves or felt it through a loved one. And that for the most part these folks do not fit the stereotype of dirty, disgusting or perverted.

By November/December 2000 I had a self diagnosis. Gender Identity Disorder. When (my wife) and I chose medical coverage for 2001, serious consideration was given to the extent of psychiatric coverage provided by the plans. Little by little I realized that this had effected many things in my life without my knowing it. An example would be that my rejection of religion stemmed from my personal belief that God did not love me. How could he...I was a terrible person. I remember finding a verse in the bible that, read all by itself, labeled people like me as "abhorrent in the eyes of the Lord". With (my wife's) help I found that this was written as part of the "laws" in the old testament along with other laws that may have been important at the time, but have long since been replaced by the Lord's rule in the new testament of loving thy neighbor. I now believe that god is love and it doesn't matter what color you are or where you were born or anything else. God made us all just the way we are.

In January this year I was determined to seek out others like me and joined a gender group that meets twice a month at a church. I have met many wonderful people and have been able to share with others the feeling, the thoughts, the difficulties, the family issues and so much more. At the beginning of April I volunteered to speak to a class on Human Sexuality at Gavilan College. Here is an excerpt from what I wrote about the experience:

...I walked into the classroom and they were really just settling in so timing worked out well. The room was actually a lecture hall with theater style seating where each consecutive row was elevated above the one in front of it. The room could fit 100 students but there was more like 30, most being in the 18 - 25 age range. My peer group consisted of two post ops and two cross dressers. Each person gave a bio and I was fourth. The others talked about their gender reassignment surgeries, early addiction to S&M, losing their families, multiple careers, not being able to keep friends or find someone special to share their lives. One even talked about her brain tumor. So when it came time for me I felt quite boring. I really didn't spend as much time talking as I thought I would, but I did want to make several points. For me it is not about sex. That how one identifies (gender identity) is different from whom one is attracted to (sexual preference). That it is not a "choice" or a "lifestyle" - it is who I am inside. I talked about my career so they lost the notion that we are derelict losers. I talked about the length of my marriage and the well being of my kids so they could see that GID (gender identity disorder) does not translate into an inability to love and cherish others. And I talked about the reason I was there that night - that gender dysphoria can effect

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# HISTORICAL RECORD REVEALS RICH PAST OF TRANSGENDER PEOPLE

By Monique Beeler - STAFF WRITER  
The Oakland Tribune

There's nothing novel about men dressing as women and women passing as men. As far back as ancient Greece and Babylonia, transgender people fulfilled central roles in certain temple ceremonies.

Hippocrates tells of Scythian nomads, ferocious warriors who rode horseback across the steppes but otherwise lived as transvestites. Wearing women's clothing, he writes, they "do women's work, live like women and converse accordingly."

"Many societies accepted people in the cross-gender role," says history and sexology professor Vern Bullough, author of "Cross Dressing, Sex and Culture." "It's hard to say how many there were. There were probably hundreds of them."

Through the ages, some cultures proved more accepting than others of people who preferred living as the opposite sex. Historically, roles available to transgender individuals have proved as diverse as the human personality, ranging from artisan weavers to powerful shamans.

Several societies around the world cultivated groups of emasculated men who performed specific tasks, whether the eunuchs in China who guarded the emperor's wives and concubines or the castrati of Italian opera who gave up their genitalia to maintain boyishly high voices for life.

Less coerced were transgender American Indians, who were generally free to follow their own inner promptings, says Diane Pearson, professor of American Indian Studies professor at University of California, Berkeley. "They could be medicine people, they could be healers, transgender men could be hunters," Pearson says. "It was how people wanted to develop."

Some limits applied to women living as men, who likely would have been banned from joining a war party. In most tribes, a woman - with her ability to menstruate, give and renew life - would have been considered too powerful. "Warrior societies having women ride out with them probably was not the ideal thing to do, because (menstruating women) override men's power," she says.

Practices and attitudes varied among the approximately 600 North American cultures. Some groups, including the Zuni, used a term called "two-spirit," a concept reflected in the black and white photos of a well-known transgender individual named We'Wha, Pearson says. Famed Western photographer Edward S. Curtis snapped the images in 1886.

Born a man in 1849, We'Wha lived daily life as a woman. In photos, her face, with its broad cheekbones and chin and heavy brow, clearly appears masculine. Her off-the-shoulder dresses, upswept hair styles and accessories such as gold hoops indicate a feminine leaning.

"The anthropologist who worked with him thought he was a woman for years," Pearson says. "Part of his role was as a protector of children." When she died in 1896, We'Wha's people buried

Continued on Page 17

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## Dear Mom & Dad...

Continued from Page 4

anyone in any family, across socioeconomic boundaries, religions, nationalities, genders etc. That there is much misunderstanding, discrimination and persecution of gender variant people. I felt that I needed to take every opportunity to educate and change the perception of others. I asked each of them to think about it as if their son or daughter turned out to be gender dysphoric. How difficult that child's life would be in today's society and what changes would they want to see made to change current societal behaviors. It was probably my age being closer to their own that prompted many of the questions to be directed towards me. But I felt good, I felt right, and I felt like I was reaching some of them...

I wanted to share the above with you because it contained several key points.

- Transgenderism is not about sex, sexual behavior, or sexual orientation - it's about gender or, more specifically gender identity. It is not a sexual perversion.
- It is not a choice or a lifestyle. Most medical researchers favor a prenatal neurohormonal explanation for gender identity disorders and believe that gender is determined long before birth. They propose "a disturbed interaction between the developing brain and sex hormones". All embryos start out as female. In the twelfth week of the prenatal cycle the genitalia differentiate as either male or female. It is not until the sixteenth week that the gender identity portion of the brain differentiates in the unborn child. Researchers believe, therefore, that if certain hormones are not present or are out of balance during this critical four-week period that gender identity may not differentiate along the same lines as the genitalia.

Why am I telling you all this and why now?

All my life I have lived in secret and with overwhelming guilt and shame. A monstrous dark cloud hanging over me. I do not want to live the rest of my life in this way. The pressure of being transgendered exists in every second of every day and earlier this year I spent a great deal of time curled up in a ball crying. I was frozen, unable to move. And, yes, thoughts of taking the easy way out have entered my head. Easier for me, easier for (my wife), and easier for my kids I thought. But my talks with God and unwavering love from (my wife) have pulled me through. I refuse to live in shame any longer and most of that shame lies in the secrecy. Obviously (my wife) has been taking this journey with me. The boys are also aware of who I am and we have talked about it many times.

So Mom & Dad that is my dilemma.

I know this has been long, but like I said in the beginning, I may only get one shot and I wanted to tell you as much as I thought necessary for you to have some understanding of my situation. You may have many questions. I am prepared to answer all of them. I love you very much.....(male name)

At the end I folded the paper and put my hands in my lap.

That was only 15 months ago and yes my relationship with them is still difficult. But they are trying.....and that is all I can ask.

Since that time I have gone full time, have legally changed my name, transitioned at work, worked through the ending of my marriage (a happy story for both) and will be moving into my new place shortly. I have gone from being a part time participant at socials to serving as your Vice President. My first big outing was the 2002 Cotillion and now I find myself competing for the Title in 2003. I recently completed some facial surgery (nose) and breast augmentation and feel wonderful inside about all the changes. I have met more wonderful people than I ever imagined and owe a huge thanks to so many people for their love, support and encouragement.

Thank you for the opportunity to share.

**Thursday / December 12 / 6:00-9:00pm**

## TRANSGENDER WINTER FESTIVAL

An evening of entertainment for the transgender community. Hosted by TG Forum, the TG Steering Committee of the LGBT Community Center, and in conjunction with UCSF Trans Project. Fun, entertainment, food and just plain socializing! At the Center, Rainbow Room. FREE!

**Saturday / December 14 / 3:00-5:00pm**

## TGSF EDUCATION SEMINAR

TGSF presents an education seminar featuring Amanda Styles who will be presenting "The Essential Transgender Girl Outfit, and The Greatest Places to Shop in San Francisco." LGBT Center, 1800 Market Street in San Francisco. See announcement elsewhere in this issue for more details!

**Saturday / December 14 / 8:30pm**

## TRANSGENDER HOLIDAYS PARTY

Transgender Holidays is hosting a fun-filled evening of music, fun and food at the LGBT Center, 1850 Market Street. DJ and live music with Michelle Garcia and hot performances by Hula Tahiti and other groups will make this a fun-filled event. See ad elsewhere in this issue for all the details!

**Sunday / December 15 / 7:00pm**

## BAY AREA TRANSGENDER GROUP XMAS DINNER

All local Bay Area support groups unite to celebrate the holidays! Location Tarragon restaurant in Sunnyvale. See ad elsewhere in this issue for all the details!

**Thursday / December 19 / 8-10pm**

## TGSF CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS

The Blue Muse 409 Gough Street, San Francisco. For more information contact Rachael Janelle!

**Sunday / December 22 / 7:30pm**

## RGA - ANNUAL NUTCRACKER BALLET

Join the Rainbow Gender Alliance on their annual outing to the San Jose Silicon Valley Ballet's presentation of the Nutcracker. SJ Center for Performing Arts. Call Warmline at 408-984-4044.

**Sunday / January 5, 2003 / 4:00pm**

## TGSF ExCOM MEETING

Next meeting will be held at Susan Laird's house in Santa Clara [redacted] on Sunday January 5th! Call 408-430-2196 x1230 - all TGSF members in good standing are invited to attend. Please note, there will be NO meeting for December 2002!

### Significant Other Support - East Bay

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

## December's Birthdays

12/03	Sheila Faulkner	12/18	Susie
12/03	Elizabeth Walters	12/20	Jill O'Brien
12/05	Mary Anne Sales	12/20	Barbara Lokker
12/06	Ally Grillo	12/23	Cynthia Young
12/07	Kathryn L. Skeens	12/23	Toni Martinez
12/11	Billie Cox	12/23	Gabrielle Taylor
12/12	Linda	12/24	Janis R.
12/13	Tammi	12/27	Jill Dettmer
12/17	Paula Dancer	12/29	Charlene Marie
		12/30	Michelle Crawford

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# Calendar of Events - December 2002

## OTHER BAY AREA GROUPS

### Pacific Center for Human Growth (PacCtr)

A counseling oriented growth center sponsors all-inclusive gender support groups on every Friday at 8:00pm, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. 510-548-8283

### Rainbow Gender Association (RGA)

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

### Sacramento Gender Association (SGA)

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

### Diablo Valley Girls (DVG)

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

### DVG Rap Group (RCC)

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

### FTM International

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

### TGIF

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

### Silicon Valley Gender Association (SVGA)

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

### Far West Women (FWW)

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

### Santa Cruz Trans (SCT)

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

### The Mid-Peninsula Transgender Group (MPTG)

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

### Central City Hospitality House (CCHH)

288 Turk Street, SF. 415-749-2167. Facilitated TG discussion group every Monday, 5:00pm - 6:30pm.

### Transcendence Gospel Choir (TGC)

Ashley Moore 510-██████████ <http://tgchoir.home.attbi.com/>

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1	2 5:00 PM CCHH 8:00 PM DVG	3	4 7:30 PM MPTG	5 7:00 PM DVG (RCC) 7:00 PM SCT	6 8:00 PM PacCir Rap 8:00 PM RGA	7
8	9 5:00 PM CCHH	10	11 7:00 PM TransBay	12 6:00 PM TG Winter Festival	13 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCir Rap	14 3:00 PM TGSF: Education Seminar 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA 8:30 PM TG Holidays Party
15 7:00 PM TG HOLIDAY DINNER	16 5:00 PM CCHH 8:00 PM DVG	17	18	19 7:00 PM DVG (RCC) 7:00 PM SCT 7:30 PM TGSF: End Of Month Event	20 8:00 PM PacCir Rap 8:00 PM RGA	21
22 7:30 PM RGA Nutcracker Ballet	23 5:00 PM CCHH	24	25	26	27 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCir Rap	28 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
29	30 5:00 PM CCHH	31	<b>Sunday / January 5, 2003 / 4:00pm</b> <b>TGSF ExCom Meeting</b> Next meeting will be held on Sunday January 5th! Please note, there will be NO meeting for December 2002!			

## TGSF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

Please Print / Check all that apply:

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

Preferred Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate (Month/Day): \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Your Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Website URL: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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.

May we use photos of you taken at TGSF events in our newsletter or website?  Yes  No

# Special Events This Month!

December 14<sup>th</sup>

## TGSF EDUCATION SEMINAR

TGSF presents an education seminar featuring Amanda Styles who will be presenting "The Essential Transgender Girl Outfit, and The Greatest Places to Shop in San Francisco." The presentation will be from 3-5pm on Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, at the LGBT Center, 1800 Market Street in San Francisco. Check the board in the lobby for the room location.

Amanda will present a seminar on the "must have" items of clothing in a CD's, TS's, or even a GG's closet. She'll also address the issue of Style and what it means to you? Finally, she will address places to shop for clothes in the city.

Amanda Styles worked at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM) in 1995, afterward working with two Fashion designers doing Marketing research for the latest trends and the history of fashion. She has worked as both a model (male and female mode) and photographer in multiple fashion shows as well. In 1996, she worked as a Production Assistant for a Clothing company that made casual clothes for women, and learned what it takes to create garments and to market them (and how they end up at Ross!)

In 1996, she began working as Personal shopper/Personal Assistant taking clients to high-end clothing stores such as Chanel, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Needless Markup. Amanda mentioned, "As a cross dresser I am very conservative in what I wear because my goal is to be passable in public. You cannot be passable if you if you don't know how to dress properly." She currently shops approximately 3 times per week in San Francisco shops.

Amanda stated, "We all have our own sense of style, this is true but some of us need a little guiding in the basics. There really is no place I won't shop for clothes, as long as it is within my price range. You have to be confident in yourself with who you are or you will always feel intimidated. I tend to walk into department stores knowing what I want and how to find it. If I need help I never hesitate to ask a sales person. They respect you for it."

There is limited street parking available near the LGBT Center, so public transportation is recommended. The Center is accessible by MUNI J, K, L, M, N, or F, or bus lines 6, 7, 61, or 71. A suggested donation of \$3 is recommended to help defray the costs of the room rental. Contact Kara Flynn at [redacted]@aol.com or 650-[redacted] for further information.

Saturday / December 14 / 8:30pm

## TRANSGENDER HOLIDAYS PARTY

Transgender Holidays is hosting a fun-filled evening of music, fun and food at the LGBT Center, 1850 Market Street. DJ and live music with Michelle Garcia and hot performances by Hula Tahiti and other groups will make this a fun-filled event.

This is a fund raiser for future social events, cruises, and tours. Suggested donation is \$10 to \$25, but no one will be turned away for lack of funds. This event is drug and alcohol free. Transgender persons and their friends, families, and admirers are invited.

Write to Cathy at party@tgholidays.com or go to www.tgholidays.com for more information.

December 5-14 Only!

## Holiday Chocolate Offers...

## THE ULTIMATE PEEK AT THE BIRTH OF A SEX CHANGE

(SAN FRANCISCO) The new play, *Worse Than Chocolate*, titillates San Francisco audiences for six performances beginning December 5. Playing at the EXIT Stage Left, 156 Eddy Street (between Mason and Taylor), the show runs Thursdays through Saturdays, December 5-14, at 8:00 p.m., with a special "Pay What You Can" preview on Wednesday, December 4. Tickets are \$15-\$20 and can be purchased by credit card at (415) 339-8015 or online at www.TicketWeb.com. More information about the play is also available at www.worsethanchocolate.com.

Follow the tale of a real-life lesbian following one of her own dreams — to become a man. Actor-playwright Jaeson Post (born Lisa Post) has already begun "his" transition from female to male on paper, but purposely delayed the start of hormone treatments and surgery to play the lead in this sitcom-paced office romp with a transgendered twist. "The role has sort of evolved into my 'swan song' as a dyke," comments Post, who will complete his own physical transition to male after the play concludes. Largely autobiographical, *Worse Than Chocolate* passes on Post's wisdom surrounding at least two things he confesses to know too much about — working for lawyers and life as a lesbian misfit.

Looking for the real office party this Christmas? Meet Alex, Frankie, Shelly and Paul — four orphans in a storm of mismanagement and romantic underachievement. Cheer them on as they sidestep Bob, their supervisor nemesis. Marvel at their command of useless information. Feel their pain as they watch their dreams of a better life get carelessly deleted. Co-directed by Post and Jeffrey Hartgraves, with sets by Bert van Aalsburg, *Worse Than Chocolate* also features Maia Bradford, Cynthia Burgess, Sina Eiden, Alan Haley, Megan Harding, Jeffrey Hartgraves, Desirée Rogers, Liz Ryan and Matt Weimer.

Jaeson is especially happy to be premiering at the EXIT Theatre, in the heart of the Tenderloin. "I like the symmetry of opening in the neighborhood where it all started," he explains, since many consider this longtime haven for transsexuals and gender queers as the birthplace of the transgender rights movement. "I also wanted something live that my friends could come to and see me perform one last time without noticeable facial hair — a transition for my transition, you might say."

Some wishes do come true. It could happen to you. Merry Christmas, Mr. Post.



Hula Tahiti

## Transgender Holidays

Transgender events fundraiser

Live Entertainment - Hula Tahiti

DJ - Michelle Garcia

Evening of Fun - Free Buffet - Don't Miss It!

8:30 P.M. Sat. Dec 14

LGBT Center, 1850 Market St.

Suggested Donation  
\$10 to \$25

For more information contact: party@tgholidays.com  
Dressing & makeup assistance contact: makeup@tgholidays.com



# Special Events This Month!

**December 12**

## **TRANSGENDER WINTER FESTIVAL**

Transgender Community Forum in conjunction with UCSF Trans Project presents an evening of fun, entertainment, food, and just plain socializing.

Come see community members strut their stuff and get important information at this Holiday Party/Variety Show on **December 12 from 6pm - 9pm** in the Rainbow Room of the LGBT Community Center located at 1800 Market Street at the corner of Octavia.

\$1.00 Raffle for Surprises! Donations are appreciated to help offset the cost of the event. For further information, please contact the LGBT Center.

**Sunday, December 22**

## **RGA: NUTCRACKER BALLET**

RGA's annual night at the Nutcracker Ballet will be Sunday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>, with the 7:30pm performance by Ballet San Jose Silicon Valley at the San Jose Center for the Performing Arts (at the corner of Almaden Blvd and Park Avenue, downtown San Jose).

Tickets will be \$26.00 for Orchestra Side, or alternately, Balcony Side. Both will have good sight lines in this modern, compact theatre. We plan to buy our ticket block soon! Prepaid reservations are needed for this event! Please see Gelsey or Jasmine at any RGA activity or call the Warmline: 408-984-4044.

Because we already moved the date to Sunday by request for a more leisurely preparation, there is no meal planned before curtain. But we probably will adjourn to a nearby venue for coffee and dessert after the show.

**TGSV, RGA, Carla's, TGSF, MPTG, SVGA and DVG**

## *Invite You to a Holiday Dinner*

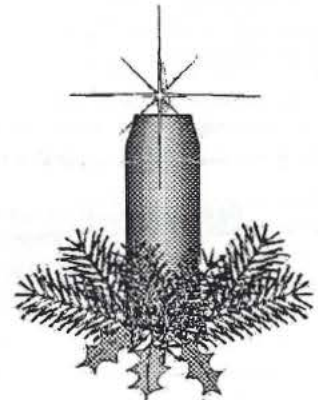
### **When**

Sunday, December 15, 2002  
7:00 P.M.



### **Where**

Tarragon  
140 South Murphy Avenue  
Sunnyvale, CA 94086  
408-737-8003



### **Dinner**

Dinner includes a salad, entrée, dessert and coffee  
Entrée choices are prime rib, chicken, salmon or vegetarian  
\$40.00 per person

Hors d'oeuvres will be served beforehand, but drinks are on your own

### **Gift Exchange**

Each guest is requested to contribute a gift-wrapped present  
Suggested price range: \$5.00 - \$10.00

### **Prizes**

Two \$50.00 tickets to the January 25, 2003 Cotillion will be raffled, courtesy of TGSF  
A gift certificate for a paraffin manicure will be given away, courtesy of Carla's

### **Reservations Required**

Please contact [REDACTED]@earthlink.com at least two weeks prior  
Please indicate how many guests will be attending, and their dinner choices  
Pre-payment is preferred, if possible, but cash payment will be accepted at the restaurant.

# Readers Respond & Announcements!

## DEAR TRANS COMMUNITY MEMBERS,

Many of you have asked about this so here it is. YES! Jamison Green confirmed. Plan now to attend!

The Monterey Transgender Support Group, for both FtM's and MtF's/Pre-op and Post-op, will be having Jamison Green as a special guest speaker at our **Saturday, February 8th, 2003** meeting. Jamison is one of the world's most famous FtM's as he is also one of the most vocal advocates and educators about trans and trans rights. He has spoke to groups all over the world on this topic and appears in "You Don't Know Dick", a film on the topic, and maintains a well supplied website on TS issues. This will be a "must attend" group session.

For those who do not know, this is a closed (see note regarding guest below), confidential therapy support group run by gender specialists Stephen L. Braveman, M.A., L.M.F.T., C.S.T. (Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, Certified Sex Therapist) and Maren Martin, M.A., L.C.S.W. (Licensed Clinical Social Worker). The group meets at Stephen's office in Monterey. There is a \$25.00 fee per group and a free, one hour intake is required to be a regular part of this group. There are currently a couple openings for new members available.

Guests in the trans community, who are not part of this group, are welcome on special occasions such as this one. However, this is by **reservation only**. Sorry, no drop-ins are allowed.

Call or write Stephen at the number/e-mail address below if you are interested in joining the group, being a guest at this special meeting and/or both.

**All my best,**  
**Stephen L. Braveman, M.A., L.M.F.T., C.S.T.**  
**Phone & Fax: (831) 375-7553**  
**Web Site: [www.bravemantherapy.com](http://www.bravemantherapy.com)**  
**E-Mail: [stephen@bravemantherapy.com](mailto:stephen@bravemantherapy.com)**

## ONLINE SO LIST!

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

## TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP

Safe ongoing group  
All gender queers welcome  
Transitioning NOT required  
Monday eves \* East Bay near BART  
FREE interview \* Sliding scale \$20-45/wk



Valerie Igl, Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist  
<http://members.aol.com/valigl/page/feministtherapy.htm>  
[valigl@aol.com](mailto:valigl@aol.com) 510-527-5662

## DEAR TGSF:

I would like express my appreciation for the quality and literary insight in Jamison Green's article on Remembering Alexander Goodrum. I too am saddened by the loss of any of our trans brothers or sisters, especially those who have actively fought for trans rights.

But my comments are more directed toward the gratitude and appreciation for people like Jamison Green who have given of themselves to voice the thoughts we need to hear. His ideas which are eloquent, insightful and appropriate, flow with disarming ease. As he stated in his article "show your appreciation for the people you love" which is why it is so important to say thank you, you are one of our own.

I have had the pleasure of working with Jamison when he served as a Cotillion Judge. His intellect and charm made the judging task a pleasure. This organization has been very fortunate over the years to have outstanding elected officers, and key support individuals, like our editor Ayme Kantz. For you I also want to say thank you for your support, endeavor and outstanding judgment in choosing quality writers like Jamison.

For all the other contributors in the Channel, who give us a voice, for Ayme and Jamison, we may not say it often enough but we appreciate your efforts.

**Cheryl Sheppard**

## DEAR TGSF,

I wanted to apologize for the miscommunications experienced at the LGBT Center this past Saturday, November 9th. I was not able to attend the event due to a family gathering out of state. In a recent email I sent to Dr. Kaplan, I reminded him of the day and place of the intended event, but I did not inform him of the time in the heading of note (it was listed in the forwarded section). Since Dr. Kaplan did not see a standard time listed in the header portion of the note, he probably misinterpreted the 1800 Market Street (the place of the event) to be 1800 hours, which is 6pm.

I had also told him that the Center nor TGSF would be able to provide an overhead projector of any sort since the Center does not maintain projectors at their facility. In his graciousness, Dr. Kaplan was actually attempting to buy one for the presentation at the time that Rachael was finally able to contact him.

I had asked Rachael Janelle to attend the event in my absence, which she very kindly did. I sent her a note informing her of the information on the event, but I did not give her Dr. Kaplan's phone number to contact him in case of problems. This caused further problems at the event since no one knew if he was attending or not.

In the end, it appears there were some 20 individuals who attended this event that were upset and disappointed. I am sorry that I was not able to provide full information to all of the parties involved, nor properly coordinate activities for the event.

If there is still interest, perhaps we can schedule this educational seminar again in the future.

**Sincerely,**  
**Kara Flynn**  
**TGSF Education Co-Chair**

# Readers Respond & Announcements!

**Call to fund a National Center for Transgender Rights in D.C.**

## **THE DEFINITION OF INSANITY**

**By Diane Dale, The Transgender Fund, [www.tgfund.org](http://www.tgfund.org)**

A 17-year-old California high school student by the name of Gwen Araujo was brutally murdered in early October by four young men she encountered at a friend's house party. The men, suspecting that Gwen was in reality a genetic boy, forced her to remove her clothes. Their suspicions were confirmed. According to the police report, the men allegedly beat her, gashed her head, and dragged her semiconscious body to the garage where they tightened a rope around her neck until she seemed dead. Then they drove her body 150 miles to a remote spot in the Sierra foothills and buried her in a shallow grave. One of her assailants was a teenager.

Reading the accounts of this story, I could not help envisioning the Brandon Teena tragedy that was recounted so vividly in the movie, *Boys Don't Cry*. Images of the slaying of Matthew Shepard, although not a transgender youth, came to mind as well. There have been numerous other instances of violence perpetrated by young men against transgender and gay youth over the past handful of years. Some have resulted in death.

I have felt for a decade that even with extraordinary efforts it is going to take a generation to achieve our goal of freedom of gender expression. I felt too that the youth would be leading the way. Now I wonder. The notable fact here is that these are youth against youth hate crimes: Younger generation against younger generation.

There have been other recent tragedies and setbacks within our community: The suicides of Alexander Goodrum, an Arizona trans-activist, and Shoshanna Gillick M.D., a trans-activist and educator; the squelching of the Christie Lee Littleton and J. Noel Gardiner cases by the Supreme Court; and an Appeals Court upholding Winn-Dixie's right to fire a good employee who crossdressed off the job.

Perhaps I have been lulled into a false sense of security over the years because today there are more supportive resources and welcoming venues for transgender expression than ever before. But, have I been looking at this all wrong; been ignoring the signs that count? Ignoring reality? Being able to stick our big toe out of the proverbial closet is one thing. Having equal rights is an entirely different matter. Maybe the glass is half empty!

Well, some would argue that the glass may be half empty, but it's not entirely empty. There many things in which we can take a lot of pride and encouragement. But, this has not been a good year for us. We have hit a wall; and, it begs the question, "What can we do about it?"

The first thing we can do is recall that management guru Stephen Covey's definition of insanity: Insanity is doing the exact same thing over and over again, and expecting a different result. It concerns me to see our legal advocates like Phyllis Frye Esq., Alyson Meiselman Esq. and others working their hearts out trying to win our human rights in the Courts only to be pushed aside. It pains me to see our advocacy groups lobbying legislators for our rights only to be patronized and told to "have patience...now's not the right time." The truth is that it will never be the right time unless we do something different than we have been doing.

Legislators and judges reflect the prevailing cultural norms and standards of society. It is the majority of the people whom they represent. Indeed, for most in power it is the electorate that has given them their jobs, and it is the electorate that keeps them

**The American Boys to Hold Seventh Annual True Spirit Conference**

## **MASCULINITY:**

## **THE MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR**

*February 14-17, 2003*

The American Boyz is pleased to announce the seventh annual True Spirit Conference (TSC), to be held at the Washington Court Hotel, Washington, D.C. from **February 14-17, 2003**. TSC focuses on the social, physical, emotional, spiritual and relational health of all gender variant people on the female-to-male (FtM) spectrum and their partners, family and allies.

The workshops and panel presentations to be held during this event will address a variety of topics from a trans-positive perspective, including relationships, health and wellness, legal, political and employment issues, spirituality, and the specific concerns of diverse groups such as youth, older people, people of color, and individuals with physical challenges. Town Hall meetings will provide an opportunity for highly focused group interactions with a panel of experienced transgender activists, while workshops and support groups will provide participants with increased opportunity for in-depth discussion and examination of specific issues. Conference entertainment will provide regular opportunity for social interaction and networking on a different, more relaxed level and is planned to cover the spectrum from artistic to gospel to spoken word performance. This year's conference continues to feature keynote speakers, access to medical screenings with trans-sensitive providers, author readings and a film festival.

The focus of the True Spirit Conference is to provide a forum for individuals who were designated to be female at birth, yet who express masculinity along a wide and diverse continuum. TSC provides a space for FtM/transgender people's partners, family and allies to join together for support, information and celebration. This past year's conference drew over 700 attendees from the United States and abroad. The transgender community is a growing and diverse group of people spread out geographically across the United States and abroad, and this conference provides not only education and support, but also networking opportunities for this increasingly politicized and visible community.

Workshop submission requirements may be found on the website ([www.true-spirit.org](http://www.true-spirit.org)), along with increasingly detailed programming information as the conference date nears. Conference registration fees range from \$50 to \$90 and a discount is given for early registration.

Representatives of the press are invited to attend TSC 2003 but are required to register as a press person as well as sign and comply with all TSC press and camera regulations no later than February 1, 2003. All registered press will receive a TSC 2003 press kit upon their arrival at the conference.

The American Boyz, Inc. ([www.amboyz.org](http://www.amboyz.org)) is a national organization for people who were labeled female at birth but who feel that is not a complete or accurate assessment of who they are (FtM) and our significant others, friends, families and allies (SOFFAS). Founded in 1994, American Boyz provides education, support, social events, newsletters, web sites, email lists, local meetings, political action and the annual True Spirit Conference.

*Continued on Page 12*

# Readers Respond & Announcements!

## Call For Student Presenters

### SYMPOSIUM ON

### TRANS IDENTITIES IN ACADEMIA

Saturday, February 1, 2003

Brown University

On Saturday, February 1, a one-day symposium will be held, in which there will be three 90-min. dialogues on how trans issues and discourse can complexify the curriculum taught in colleges and universities. There will be transsexual and transgender-identified students and professors who will speak briefly at the beginning of each dialogue. These conversations will include what students want in terms of what they are being taught in school, and how this teaching can incorporate trans identities/experiences.

We are looking for student presenters. Presentations can be based on what students are working on, how they are trying to implement changes in their departments, and if folks have incorporated their own trans identities into their actual scholarship. This is an opportunity for students and professors to talk together and crystallize in language what a lot of students already feel about what is missing, or what can be improved upon.

The three topics or sessions will focus on feminist studies, ethnic studies, and queer studies. We want to view these fields as not disconnected, but rather look at how curriculum can include and/or discuss race studies, trans theory, and gender identities/expressions.

Right now we are trying to locate transsexual and transgender-identified graduate and undergraduate students, particularly people of color, people with disabilities, people of lower-incomes, and immigrants/first-generation people to present their work in these fields of study. We want at least half of the presenters to be students. We are wondering if you might be interested in attending, presenting, and/or helping with the organizing of the conference. I would also like suggestions of people that you know that have been doing this kind of work and are good presenters (which of course includes your own work), and might be interested in such a dialogue.

Everyone is welcome to attend the event. However, all the presenters will be transsexual or transgender-identified. For more info., please email: Cole Krawitz at [redacted]@email.smith.edu, or Sel Wahng at [redacted]@nyu.edu

## The Definition of Insanity

Continued from Page 11

in those jobs. Nothing will change unless and until general society understands, respects, and accepts us as human beings with the same right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as they. Once that happens, the laws and judicial decisions will fall into place and we will attain our goals.

But, it will have to be earned. It will only happen when and if we mature as a political constituency. Our weakness as a community is that not enough of us take ownership of the responsibility for our movement's growth and development. For too long, we have sent others into the fray alone. We must begin to move from a "volunteer-based" infrastructure to one driven by adequately community-compensated professionals and activists.

A few months ago, The Transgender Fund posted an initiative designed to help create and fund a National Center for Transgender Rights. We need this entity now. Its function will be to approach our development as much from the bottom up, as from the top down. Until now, our legal and legislative activists have attempted to effect change from the top down; i.e., working with federal and state regulators, and helping adjudicate both civil and criminal cases. There has been no broad based, sustained public education initiative designed to foster understanding, respect and acceptance of gender variant peoples. Trying to push laws through is one thing; but isn't it better to have those laws pulled through by the sheer sentiment of the people? So, in addition to addressing changes in the law, the NCTR would perform a profoundly important education and outreach role that will aim to break down the wall of ignorance about us within general society.

If the murders of our brothers and sisters, trouble you; if the suicides of those of us who have lost all hope, trouble you; if your State or employer says that you don't deserve the same rights as your co-workers, troubles you; then please do something about it. Help us establish a National Center for Transgender Rights. Help us establish an action epicenter staffed by competent, adequately compensated professionals who will work hard for you and for those you care about.

That's why we say, please "Make a Difference. Make a Donation. Make it Today!"

## Cotillion 2003

January 25, 2003

"AN ENCHANTED EVENING IN THE ISLANDS"

The 20th Miss TGSF Pageant and Show

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

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

Hors d'oeuvres served



Out of town guests will have activities for Friday night

A hospitality suite at the host hotel all day Saturday

**Sunday January 26, 2003: Post-Celebration Brunch**

Host Hotel: Holiday Inn Golden Gateway

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

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

Please mention TGSF to insure hotel rate

Hotel deadline January 6, 2003

### Ticket prices:

Orchestra Seats \$60 • Premium Seats \$50

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

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

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

For program advertising or any other questions

contact Rachael or Cotillion2003@msn.com

# Takin' Care of Biz...

## TGSF BALANCE SHEET

(October 19, 2002 through November 15, 2002)

### Assets

Cash .....	\$4,169.40
Event Equipment	
Decorations .....	\$1,000.00
Food Service .....	\$200.00
Office Supplies .....	\$50.00
Total Assets .....	\$5,419.40

### Liabilities

Accounts Payable .....	\$5,000.00
Educational Fund .....	\$0.00
Taxes .....	\$0.00
Insurance .....	\$0.00
Utilities .....	\$0.00
Operations .....	\$0.00
Total Liabilities .....	\$5,000.00
Equity .....	\$419.40
Total Liabilities & Equity .....	\$5,419.40

### Monthly Income Statement

#### Revenue

Membership .....	\$280.00
Advertising .....	\$60.00
Cotillion .....	\$0.00
Donations Received .....	\$70.00
Social .....	\$0.00
Education .....	\$0.00
Outreach .....	\$0.00
Halloween Party .....	\$445.00
.....	\$855.00

#### Expenses

Cotillion .....	\$0.00
Halloween Party .....	\$0.00
Big Shew .....	\$0.00
Pride Parade .....	\$0.00
Social .....	\$0.00
Education .....	\$120.00
Outreach .....	\$0.00
Newsletter .....	\$388.45
Operations .....	\$300.48
Donations Paid .....	\$0.00
.....	\$808.93

**Net Income .....** \$46.07

## TGSF DONATIONS

*Our Friends Who Give  
as of November 15, 2002*

**Ann Hart .....** \$40  
**Anonymous .....** \$10

*Bless You and Thank You!*

## CONTACT TGSF!

### ExCom Members

#### President

Rachael Janelle .....@hotmail.com

#### Vice President

Rachel Hill .....@aol.com

#### Secretary

Susan Laird .....@hairzapper.com

#### Treasurer

Stephanie Ann Blythe .....@tgforum.com

#### Education

Ally Grillo .....@msn.com

Kara Flynn .....@aol.com

#### Outreach

Kalani Makanani .....@tgforum.com

#### Social

Aiyana Eveningstar .....@earthlink.net

Gia Luisa .....@pacbell.net

### Other Email Addresses

#### Editor, The Channel

Ayme Kantz .....@aol.com

Or .....tgsfeditor@yahoo.com

#### Webmistress

Susan Laird .....@hairzapper.com

*Comments and suggestions concerning the  
TGSF web site [www.tgsf.org](http://www.tgsf.org)*

#### Information

**Rachael Janelle .....** .....@hotmail.com  
..... or 408-.....

*Requests for information concerning TGSF and  
upcoming events*

**Calendar .....** [www.tgsf.org](http://www.tgsf.org)

*Submissions can be made online directly. Cancel-  
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the Webmistress.*

# 79's In The News!

## BRANDON TEEN CASE HEADS BACK TO COURT

by 365Gay.com Newscenter Staff

The several-years-long battle to secure justice and accountability for the murder of Brandon Teena — a transgendered 21-year-old who was brutally raped and then killed by his rapists after law enforcement failed to intervene — today reaches the Nebraska Supreme Court for the second time, when justices will hear arguments over financial damages awarded to the victim's mother.

"It's tragic when any parent loses a child to violent crime, but when that crime could have been avoided had law enforcement done its job instead of reacting with hate toward the victim, it becomes an outrage," said David S. Buckel, Lambda Legal Senior Staff Attorney representing JoAnn Brandon in the case.

"Brandon Teena was devalued as a human being by his murderers. We can't let law enforcement get away with doing the same thing." The state Supreme Court ruled last year in favor of JoAnn Brandon, the mother of Brandon Teena, holding Richardson County Sheriff Charles Laux accountable for his failure to protect Brandon Teena.

A lower court had shifted most of the responsibility away from the sheriff, finding Brandon Teena partly responsible for his own death, and had awarded minimal damages to JoAnn Brandon.

The Nebraska Supreme Court ruling sent the case back to the lower court for a reassessment. Even though the state Supreme Court had said unanimously that the minimal damages award to JoAnn Brandon "shocks the conscience," the lower court recently awarded just \$7,000 for the emotional distress to Brandon Teena before his death and just \$5,000 — less than even the funeral expenses — for the loss to the mother. Tuesday's arguments mark the third time the case has been appealed.

Brandon Teena was born Teena Brandon and raised as a girl. In 1993, he was living as a man in Falls City, Nebraska, when two male acquaintances discovered his physical sex and raped him. Brandon Teena reported the rape to Sheriff Laux who notified the rapists of the complaint and took no steps to protect Brandon Teena, despite strong evidence that his life was in danger. Laux was abusive and accusatory in interviewing Brandon Teena about the rape, and forbade a deputy from arresting the two rapists. Within days, the men tracked Brandon Teena down and murdered him.

In the Nebraska Supreme Court's April 2001 ruling in the case, the justices said the sheriff's abuse of Brandon Teena during the rape investigation was "extreme and outrageous, beyond all possible bounds of decency, and is to be regarded as atrocious and utterly intolerable in a civilized community." Tuesday's arguments come just days before two men accused of a strikingly similar murder in California are set to enter pleas on murder charges. Gwen Araujo, a 17-year old transgendered youth from Newark, California, was allegedly beaten, raped and then murdered after several young men at a party discovered that she was anatomically male.

"The same sense of devaluation of a person's life and worth that caused Brandon Teena's death is behind Gwen Araujo's murder," Buckel said.

## Teen's Journey To Transgender Identity

### BERKELEY STUDENT, BORN A GIRL, NOW SEES HIMSELF AS A BOY NAMED JACK

Kelly St. John, Chronicle Staff  
Writer

Jack Thompson wears baggy cargo pants and steel-toed sneakers. He's a slender 16-year-old with a shaved head, tawny-colored skin and a swath of disarmingly cute freckles across his nose. His bedroom walls are plastered with photographs of Blink 182, Eminem and Ozzy Osbourne. A Raiderettes calendar hangs on the wall, and his girlfriend is a cheerleader.

A regular Bay Area high school guy. But look again. Jack wore a dress to his second-grade birthday party and still has a collection of teddy bears in his room, which, with its pink trim, makes him wince. There's the nagging struggle of his little sister and others calling him she. And a persistent fear that cruel insults — or even the kind of violence that has taken the lives of other transgender teens — could be right around the corner.

Jack, a 16-year-old Berkeley High School student, is biologically a girl but identifies as a boy. Five months ago, Jack told his family and friends that he wanted to stop using his given name, Devin. He told them he considers himself a he, and asked stop calling him by female pronouns.

"You wouldn't call a regular guy a she, because it's not who he identifies as," he said. "I just want people to see me as any other guy." Jack is among a small but growing group of teens who are living openly as transgendered in the Bay Area. Their exact numbers are unknown, but "we do know they are coming out more," said Wiggys Sivertsen, director of counseling services at San Jose State University and an activist who works on behalf of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. "Sadly," Sivertsen said, "what we also know is that as a result of this, the consequences have been quite severe."

In many respects, Jack is one of the lucky ones. Born and raised in famously tolerant Berkeley, he has a supportive family, community and school. But one doesn't have to go far, even in the Bay Area, to find examples of transgender teens who have been killed for expressing what they believe is their true identity.

Last month, 17-year-old Eddie "Gwen" Araujo, a boy who dressed and lived as a girl, was beaten and strangled allegedly by three men who discovered the girl before them was biologically male, police say. In 1999, 19-year-old Alina Marie Barragan, a biological male who identified as female, was strangled in San Jose.

The most publicized case of rage against a transgender youth was the 1993 killing of Brandon Teena, 21, of Nebraska, who was born a female but identified as a male. Her murder was the subject of the movie "Boys Don't Cry."

"It's such a threat to a lot of the ways people think," said Lark Ashford, a longtime friend of Jack's family. "Living in Berkeley, going to Berkeley High, having liberal parents who are mixed race, (Jack) is very blessed to be living in the setting she is in to be who she is."

### More Than Just A Phase

Since grade school, Jack has struggled with many of the same identity issues and intolerance that Araujo faced, from cruelty at school to well-meaning adults who think he's just going through a phase he will grow out of. It has been a process of self-discovery that involved coming out twice — first as a lesbian and ultimately as transgender. Through it all, his parents have worked hard to be understanding, though they are the first to admit it hasn't been easy.



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# 79's In The News!

## A Boy Named Jack...

Continued from Page 14

Jack "has guts and I take my hat off to her, but now I'm really scared," said Jack's mother, Corinne Thompson. "I'm just worried about how she'll be received. People are mean. She could get hurt. She could get killed." The worst hate incident Jack endured was in eighth grade, he recalled, when he was once followed home by a group of older boys snickering words like "dyke" and "lesbian" behind his back. They pelted him with rocks, and he escaped by running home. "I didn't want to cry," Jack said. "So I went home and lay on my bed and cried there."

Jack was born in 1986, the first daughter to Scott and Corinne Thompson, and he has lived in the same tidy Berkeley home his entire life. He has always been different.

### 'I've Always Liked Girls'

"I've always liked girls. I had a big crush on my preschool teacher's daughter. She was in kindergarten," he recalled. In sixth grade, Jack began coming out to himself, acknowledging that he was attracted to girls and not boys.

In seventh grade, while attending Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School in Berkeley, Jack was talking to a friend who asked him to tell his deepest secret. He sighed, took a deep breath and said that he had a crush on a girl at school. He was outed as a lesbian. "After a week, everybody knew," Jack said. "A lot of friends I'd had for so long stopped talking to me."

In the aftermath, Jack stopped attending school. His parents, who hadn't heard about the schoolyard outing, got him into counseling and helped him return to school. A few months later, on Easter weekend, he blurted out to them that he was a lesbian.

"The night they found out, her mom stayed in her room crying all night, and her dad went out drinking," said a close family friend, Lark Ashford. But after the initial reluctance, Jack's parents were supportive of their child. They helped Jack when he was battling deep depression, and then encouraged Jack when, as an eighth-grader, he helped found a Gay Straight Alliance club at King Middle School, one of the first such clubs at a middle school in the country.

"The level of intolerance and verbal harassment is at its worst in middle school because that is the time when adolescents are identifying a sense of sexual identity," said Carolyn Laub, executive director of the state network. "It's a really intense time."

When Jack was a freshman at Berkeley High, he met a man named Lawrence at a social function. Lawrence seemed outwardly to just be a "short, cute gay guy" but Jack soon learned that Lawrence had been born a woman and underwent hormone treatments and gender reassignment surgery. "I didn't even realize you could do that. It just clicked. The whole cartoon bulb popped above my head," Jack said. "When I came out as a lesbian, I had felt better, but there was something missing. The outwards of me wasn't how I felt on the inside."

### Gender Reassignment Option

Jack did some research and decided that when he turns 18, he wants to begin taking male hormones that will deepen his voice and allow him to bulk up and start to grow facial hair. Ultimately, he hopes to have gender reassignment surgery. He also decided to take a new name. His given name, Devin, can be a boy's name, but it doesn't feel right because it was given to him as a girl, he said.

So he settled on Jack. "It's strong. It's singular," he said. "Jack sticks. Jack feels good." But he waited until five months ago to tell his parents and family friends that he was transgender. He broached the subject with his father first, armed with a stack of papers explaining transgenderism.

"He was just quiet. He looked away," Jack recalled. "Then he said, 'As long as you're not hurting yourself or anyone else, I'm OK.'"

He said, 'It will be hard to think of you as my little boy, not my little girl.' " "You love your kids. They are going to grow up and make their own decisions," Scott Thompson said last week. "The concerns I really have are for her health and safety. I hope she's happy. I hope she's not discriminated against."

A month later, Jack told his mother. Her first words? "She said, 'Oh Lord, give me strength. Oh Lord,'" he recalled. "She said, 'I had my baby girl, and I'm happy with my baby girl.'" Corinne Thompson said she had just gotten used to the idea that her child was a lesbian when Jack came out to her as transgendered. "It's kind of blowing my mind. Being gay is one thing, that's fine, but this is something completely different, and I'm trying to deal with it," she said.

Jack and his mother attend monthly counseling sessions together, and Corinne Thompson said she loves Jack unconditionally and could never "turn my kid out" like some parents of gay or transgender teens. "My mom's really great," Jack said. "I could have gone through so much worse than I already went through." Jack, who always has turned to humor to deal with his problems, has started performing as a stand-up comic. His routine has incorporated his experience as a transgender youth, and at one point during a recent performance he riffed, "I've lost so much thought of my own gender that I don't even know what's what anymore."

Jack gradually introduced the idea that he wanted to change his name and be addressed as a boy rather than a girl. While his close friends and girlfriend Ellessa have complied, some of his friends and most of his family slip up. Or like little sister Danielle, they simply refuse to give in. On a recent afternoon, Jack sat in his bedroom next to his 11-year-old sister, who was not shy about crinkling up her nose and saying what she thinks about Jack. Boys, said Danielle, don't have teddy bears in their rooms like Jack does. Boys, she said, don't wear dresses to their second-grade birthday parties, like Jack did.

"She's my sister," said Danielle, with a sigh of exasperation. "When I was born, she was my sister, and she's going to be my sister until I die." Jack, who passed his high school equivalency exam and is taking independent study courses at Berkeley High, plans to enroll in a community college next semester and ultimately transfer to a four-year college and study sociology and biology.

In another sign of progress, Jack's father has recently started referring to him as "my son" instead of "my daughter," while his Berkeley High friends are also using the male pronoun. "It's comforting that they're trying," Jack said. "There's no other way to say it. I'm your regular Joe."

## TS COMPETES TWICE IN GAY GAMES

Transgender ice hockey athlete Jamie McCulloch competed twice on Monday in the Gay Games — once as part of the Boston men's hockey team, and a second time as part of the women's team. McCulloch is one of a handful of transgender athletes at the Sydney-hosted games who have found themselves in the middle of consternation about whom they should be competing against, reports The Australian.

McCulloch dismissed female athletes' concerns that transgender athletes — particularly male-to-female competitors, such as McCulloch — have an unfair advantage because of their strength. "We have to go through extensive hormone replacement therapy and anti-testosterone treatment so that by the time we have had surgery our muscle mass has reduced by at least 50 percent," she said.

At the Amsterdam Gay Games four years ago, transgender competitors were required to provide documentary evidence of "complete gender transition," but Sydney organizers dropped that requirement. McCulloch had gender reassignment surgery five years ago. She believes that men living as women who have not had surgery should not be allowed to compete against female athletes. "But for post-operative transgenders like me, it's not an issue — look, I was going to a gynecologist who didn't even know," she said.

# 79's In The News!

## THAI KICKBOXER CAST AS FIGHTER-TURNED-TRANVESTITE IN NEW FILM

By Uamdao Noikorn  
Associated Press Writer

When Assani Suwan was cast to play Thailand's most famous transvestite kickboxer, he thought boxing skills, looking good in makeup and enthusiasm were all it took to play the part. But months have passed and Assani, 22, says he still has not been able to overcome the "challenge" of getting under the skin of the former male boxer with a woman's heart, whose life is being immortalized in the multilingual movie "Beautiful Boxer."

Director Ekachai Uekrongtham said Monday at a news conference that filming with debutante Assani, a professional kickboxer, will start in February. The movie is about Parinya Charoenphol, who shocked the boxing world by appearing in the ring wearing lipstick and mascara, and kissing opponents on the cheek.

But his highly skilled classical style soon won him fans, fights and fame that spread to other parts of the world. Parinya began fighting at 13 and stopped in 2000 at age 19 after undergoing a series of operations to change his sex. Parinya then became an entertainer in a nightclub and a drama teacher for young children.

Since Parinya had won most of her 60 fights, the candidates for her role had to undergo two auditions including kickboxing skills and acting. Assani, ranked fifth by the World Association of Thai Kickboxing, fit the bill, outclassing more than 300 candidates.

While fighting was "a piece of cake," the hours of ballet, singing, English and Thai musical folk drama lessons he has had to take were an altogether different story, he said. "Although I think playing her role would help promote Thai kickboxing and make people understand her better, I never thought I had to do all these things," said Assani.

But that was the best way to have the lead actor get in touch with his feminine side, especially Assani, who was thrown into the masculine sport at the age of 12, said Ekachai. "We need someone with enough confidence to be a man to express his gentle, female side without feeling awkward," Ekachai noted.

Asked if he feels awkward about playing the role of a transvestite, Assani who bears a striking resemblance to Parinya said: "If you play the role of a serial killer, it doesn't make you one." He said he would like to act in more movies while continuing to kickbox.

Ekachai has produced and directed more than 100 plays and musicals in Singapore, where he is based, and in New York, Beijing and Bangkok. His most famous work was "Chang and Eng" the acclaimed musical about conjoined twins born in Thailand who gave birth to the term "Siamese twins." The US\$1-2 million budget "Beautiful Boxer" is targeted for released in late 2003. It will have subtitled versions in English and Japanese. The movie will be co-produced by GMM Grammy, Thailand's largest multimedia entertainment company, which began producing movies five years ago.

### Transcending Transgender

Sponsored by  
City of Refuge UCC Outreach Ministries

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

## 400 TRANSGENDER & GAY PROTESTERS TURN OUT IN TECATE, MEXICO

By Rex Wockner  
International News Report

About 400 marchers and more than 1,000 spectators turned out for the protest march by transgendered people and gays in this small Mexican border city of 125,000 people November 12. The protesters sashayed down the city's main street behind a sound truck playing I Will Survive, Girls Just Wanna Have Fun, Supermodel (You Better Work), Vogue and Livin' La Vida Loca. The march was a protest against a new city law that criminalizes any "man dressed as a woman who transits in the public way causing social perturbation." City councilors passed the law (Article 34.15 of the Police and Good Governance Act) October 21 because, they said, crossdressing prostitutes are soliciting clients in the central plaza, behaving crudely and spreading HIV.

The law has not been well-received by local residents, who lined the street to cheer the marchers. It also has been widely denounced by newspaper editorial writers, talk radio hosts and callers, and by local, state and national human-rights officials. "The Tecate mayor is trampling on our rights," said marcher Oeuki. "We are in a free country and he can't violate our rights like that." "We want this law repealed," said marcher Miguel. "We want the city government to respect every person's way of being." Jacqueline Ordhez and three of her transgendered friends came from far-away Mexico City for the march. They belong to the Active Homosexual Revolutionary Front. "The city officials and the police, those fucking people make me sick," Ordhez said. "In Mexico City we are very free. The police don't bother us. If all the gay people get together, we can do something for this state, Baja California."

Tijuana activist and marcher Max Mejía said Mayor Juan Vargas Rodríguez "is trying the rule people's lives as if Tecate were a tiny village far away from anywhere." "It's important to respond to this as a supporter of gay and transgender rights, and of human rights for everybody," Mejía said. "The support from the people on this matter, if you listen to the radio stations, is just incredible. All the media people are speaking very strongly against this law. The media is really laughing at the mayor."

Tecate residents lining the parade route were unanimous in their support for the marchers. "It's great. They should be who they are. It's their right," said Israel Morales. "They have the right to defend themselves," said Ana. "I have nothing to say against them." "It's important that the international community know what's going on here," said spectator Felipe. "Tecate is a very nice town with nice people but the government is not respecting human rights. It's political repression. We have a new president nationally who ended 70 years of one-party rule, but Tecate has not changed politically."

Roberto Vázquez, the Tecate representative of the Baja California State Office for Human Rights and Citizen Protection, joined the march. "We are trying to help the homosexuals," he said. "City officials are having good times making laws. Most of the people of the city are against the law; they are calling to the radio stations and speaking against it." The march stopped for half an hour two blocks short of the central plaza when police had cleared traffic on one side of the street but not the other.

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## Mexico TG Protest...

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"Our permit gives us the entire street, from sidewalk to sidewalk," said Sheila Obregón Mange, president of the Tecate Rainbow Gay Association. The march resumed only after several marchers carrying a huge rainbow flag ran ahead and used the flag to block oncoming cars — something police had been unwilling or unable to accomplish.

"In Tijuana, we do just march on one side of the street," said leading gay activist Enrique Alejandro García. "It appears the gays are a little more radical in Tecate. They have their permit and they want the whole street." Following the march, a large rally took place in front of City Hall which sits on the southeast corner of the central plaza. City Hall spokesman Roberto Rodríguez said it was scandalous that three transgendered persons stood atop a van in front of City Hall, raised their blouses and showed their breasts.

"Did you see that?" he asked this reporter. "Did you see that? Do you think that's right, in front of little children? This is exactly what this law is trying to regulate. This is exactly what we mean by 'social perturbation.'" As the rally continued, 12 local transgendered persons went upstairs to the city council chambers for an impromptu meeting with the police chief and seven members of the 10-member council. (Two non-councilors, one the mayor, also have votes on the council for a total of 12 votes.)

Although only three councilors voted against the law when it was passed, at least five of those present voiced support for repealing it. The next City Council meeting is Nov. 21. "This is not a regulation against gays or homosexuals," City Hall's Rodríguez explained in an interview. "The sexual contact of every person for us is intimate and free. I want to be very clear about this. We are not against homosexuals, we're not against lesbians, we're not against gays. "This regulation speaks specifically to a man dressed as a woman transiting in the public way causing a social perturbation," he said. "It's a matter of the image of the city. They are bothering people, with words and gestures and actions."

Rodríguez said crossdressers are free to walk around Tecate if they do not cause social perturbation, but Mayor Vargas told the local weekly, *The Newspaper of Tecate*, that even crossdressers who do not "upset public order" will be arrested.

The punishment for violating Article 34.15 is arrest and a fine equal to 40 days' salary at the national minimum wage. That would be about \$152. Tecate sits on the U.S. border 42 miles southeast of San Diego and 25 miles east of Tijuana. It is known for its typically Mexican downtown plaza, wineries, ranches, and the Tecate brewery.

### New FTM Group!

#### SOUTH BAY TRANSMEN

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

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

## Rich Past Of Transgender People...

Continued from Page 5

her in a woman's dress with a pair of men's trousers underneath, signaling her role as a bridge between the roles of men and women, Pearson says.

Other known transgender American Indians include:

- Finds Them and Kills Them, or Osh-Tisch, of the Crow nations (1854-1929). Born male and earned warrior status by joining an attack against a Lakota group for one day only. Thereafter, she dressed and lived as a woman, becoming an accomplished artisan.

- Woman Chief, a Crow warrior (early 1800s-1854). Tall and strong, he became adept at the skills of warriors, hunting, wrestling and horsemanship, despite being born a woman. Earned a position as a warrior after shooting and killing several attacking enemies. The Crows sang songs of his prowess and war powers. Woman Chief counts as a rare figure in history. Accounts of female-to-male transgender individuals are less common than those of male-to-female.

Experts say fewer accounts of transgender women exist because typically it has been easier for women to pass as the opposite sex. Historians report, however, many instances of women dressing as men to escape the confines of their prescribed sexual roles.

In 18th century Holland, for example, many women dressed as men to immigrate as colonists to Indonesia. "Most of them did so to get some of the advantages of the male role," says Bullough, founding director of the Center for Sex Research at California State University, Northridge. "We have records of hundreds and hundreds of them."

Additionally, women were known to have dressed as men to fight in the Revolutionary War, in the Civil War and with troops on the Western frontier. Some also dressed as men and worked as cowboys. "As late as the first World War, a number of women fought as men in the Russian front," Bullough says.

### Church Harder to Infiltrate

Some institutions proved more difficult for transgender people to infiltrate or influence, particularly the church. "There were stories of women dressing as men to enter monasteries," says Bernard Schlager, program director for the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies at the Pacific School of Religion at Berkeley's Graduate Theological Union.

"The most famous example, of course, is Joan of Arc, dressing as a man and leading the troops" on a religious crusade.

Most Christian denominations have dealt with the transgender issue by not talking about it, an approach that slowly has begun to shift in the past 10 to 20 years, Schlager says.

Despite relatively greater openness, it took one recent transgender graduate of the school of religion two years to find a position as an ordained minister. Broader acknowledgement of the existence of transgender people among church members and the population as a whole — and their right to full enfranchisement — is still several years away, Schlager says.

But Bullough says he has seen great progress since the 1950s when transgender people kept to themselves, meeting only in small, closed groups and avoided public scrutiny.

Bolstered by the drive for human rights led by the feminist movement and the gay and lesbian rights movement, the transgender community may be the next to claim a more prominent civic voice. "They're almost where homosexual people were in 1969," Bullough says. "It's changing. It will be interesting watching how much more public transgender people become."

# The Year in Pictures!



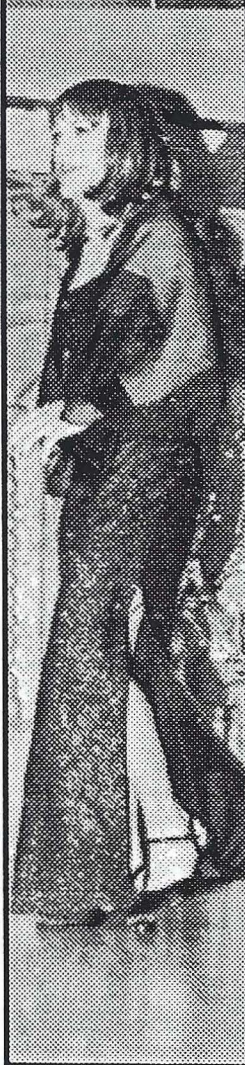
# The Year in Pictures!



# The Year in Pictures!



# The Year in Pictures!





# Remember Gwen Araujo!



## AMAZING GRACE

by Monica Taher

Gwen was laid out in a beautiful black dress, impeccably made up. Her nails were perfectly polished. She looked beautiful. When the family allowed media in and cameras surrounded the casket in the Chapel of the Roses, Gwen's grandmother cried out and fainted. It was just too much.

Last week my colleague Loren Javier and I were in Newark, Calif., to support the community and the family of Gwen Araujo, the 17-year-old Latina transgender teen who was brutally murdered in early October. We arrived expecting that, among other things, we'd be helping to shield the mourners at Gwen's service from a protest by notorious hatemonger Fred Phelps and his band of picketers. Phelps had threatened to protest at the funeral, and media from all over the country were there to cover the event. Hundreds came to the church that day (though not Phelps, whose clan instead paraded its "God Hates Fags" and "Eddie in Hell" signs outside the grieving family's home the night before).

Gwen's relatives and friends carried flowers. Some of Gwen's former classmates wore t-shirts with Gwen's picture and the words, "We really love you underneath it all" lyrics from No Doubt singer Gwen Stefani's latest song.

Back when she was going by the name Eddie, Gwen adopted her name in homage to her musical heroine. And in one of many acts of compassion that day, Stefani had called Sylvia Guerrero, Gwen's mom, to offer her condolences. It was attorney Gloria Allred, hired to represent the family, who had invited and escorted us into the church. And later, as we walked out together, Gloria dropped her professional veneer and began to cry.

She hugged me for the longest time, saying, "Thank you, thank you for the work you do." I was so overwhelmed, I couldn't respond. The outpouring of love and compassion for Gwen and her family was remarkable. Even in a moment of horrific grief, a palpable sense of hope quietly transformed us. That ability to turn tragedy into hope is something I have seen time and again as the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community has struggled to understand the hatred, intolerance and violence that is so often directed against us.

Our community's search for answers and understanding amid tragedy was apparent during the days following Gwen's funeral as community leaders, organizations and individuals gathered throughout the Bay Area to honor Gwen's life and memory.

Groups like AGUILAS; the Community United Against Violence; the San Francisco Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center; GLAAD; El Proyecto Contra SIDA Por Vida; the Transgender Resource and Neighborhood Space; and many others from different backgrounds and histories came together to do what we always do at times like these — speak, cry, honor, pray and work together in hope that it won't happen again.

At Gwen's funeral, students from Newark Memorial High School's production of "The Laramie Project" came to support the family. Dressed in their angel costumes, they lined the sidewalk as Gwen's casket was carried into the church. Afterward, they gathered in a circle to join hands and sing "Amazing Grace" — and slowly, people in the crowd began to sing with them. I looked around and saw Latino, African-American, Asian, Caucasian, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, heterosexual, old and young people singing together.

The experience reminded me that in too many cases, when tragedy strikes, we're not always there for one another. When Matthew Shepard was murdered, the LGBT community stood united in its grief and outrage. Yet others attacks have not connected us in the same way. When Chicana lesbian

Juana Vega or Colombian gay activist Eddie Garzón or African American MTF transgender woman Tyra Hunter or openly gay Two-Spirit teenager Fred Martinez were murdered, fewer people took notice — despite the work of our community to focus attention on their lives and the intolerance that fueled their deaths.

Make no mistake about it: anti-gay and anti-trans harassment and hate-violence are realities that many in our community face each and every day, whether the nation takes notice or not. And the solidarity and outpouring of support we've seen in response to Gwen's murder tells me that it's up to each of us — whether we're community leaders or allies, media professionals or high school students — to tell our stories. Because that's the only way things are going to change.

I hope I never lose my sense of horror at terrible, heinous crimes like Gwen's murder. But I am glad to know that tragedy and mourning are not the only outcomes of such crimes. They can empower and bring a community together. On November 20th, the LGBT community will commemorate the Transgender Day of Remembrance (<<http://www.rememberingourdead.org/day>> >) in different cities around the country. This day has been set aside to memorialize those who were killed because of transphobic hatred or prejudice.

I'll be there on that day, along with hundreds of others. But I look forward to a day when hate-motivated violence is just a footnote in history books — not the headline in today's newspaper. That's what I and so many others work for every day so that people like Gwen can live their lives freely and without fear.

Monica Taher is the Western Regional Media Manager for the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD)

## Youths Decry Response By Newark To Slaying

### NEWARK OFFICIAL MEETS WITH GROUP

By Yomi S. Wronge  
Mercury News

On the eve of Newark Memorial High School's staging of "The Laramie Project," city officials worked Thursday behind the scenes to convince some local youth activists that they decry the death of a local transgender teenager.

Members of Fremont-based Pride!, a small but vocal gay-straight organization made up of high school students, had planned a Thursday protest at Newark City Hall. The group was angry over what they perceive as the city's silence after the slaying of 17-year-old Eddie "Gwen" Araujo of Newark, who police say was beaten and strangled after three men discovered Araujo was not anatomically female. The suspects, who also grew up in the community, each face murder charges with a hate crime enhancement.

Rain spoiled the protest — only five people showed up, so City Manager Al Huezo invited the teenagers into his office to talk things over. He offered them sodas. He listened. "What happened made a big impact on the teen community . . . but adults and the city seem not to want to discuss things or get involved because it's too controversial," said Brandon Nogare, 17, a senior at Washington High School in Fremont.

A packed house will watch "The Laramie Project" when it premieres today, and outside a peaceful candlelight vigil will take place at 6:30 p.m. Araujo's mother, Sylvia Guerrero, is expected to attend along with school officials from Newark and Fremont. Members of Pride! said gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youths don't feel safe in light of what happened to Araujo, and they want Newark to take a lead in fostering a more tolerant atmosphere.

"We think the mayor should make a statement saying he won't tolerate hate in this city," said Felicia Avila, 17, a student at Fremont Adult School. Although Newark Mayor Dave Smith and members of the council already did as much during a recent city council meeting, Huezo assured the group that Smith would attend the vigil and probably make a speech.

He also reminded them that city leaders, like the rest of the community, are struggling to come to terms with the crime and how to move forward. "We've never faced anything like this in our community. It hit us like a two-by-four between the eyes," Huezo said. "I think we need to ask ourselves how did this happen, what led to it, and what can we do to change?"

The proper forum to address those issues, he said, will be at a school-community forum being planned for sometime in December.

*Barbara F. Anderson*

Ph.D., L.C.S.W.  
Clinical Sexologist

Certified Sex Therapist

1537 Franklin St., Suite 104  
San Francisco, CA 94109

Ph (415) 776-0139  
Fax (415) 441-0936



# Remember Gwen Araujo!



## FROM LARAMIE TO CALIFORNIA

The father of a cross-dressing teenage boy is terrified for the boy's safety. He's right to be worried, says Dr. Ponton. It's a scary world for these courageous teens.

By Dr. Lynn Ponton  
Salon.com

Dear Dr. Ponton,

I'm a father and single parent of a 15-year-old son. I'm very worried about my son's safety, and not sure what to do. My son has always liked to wear women's clothing, ever since he was a toddler. When he was 5 years old, his mother thought it was cute and encouraged this behavior. I was not so thrilled, but I thought it would end as he grew older.

His dress-up behavior used to be limited to the home environment, but lately he's been dressing as a girl when he goes to school and the local mall. Other kids have been teasing him. The school officials have not been much help about the teasing, and say that my son has brought this upon himself, given his "provocative" behavior. A boy was recently killed in California for similar behavior and that worries me very much. What do you advise?

— **Worried Father**

This father needs to speak immediately with a support agency such as PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) or LYRIC (Lavender Youth Recreation and Information Center), which will help him better assess the possible risk his child is facing from his peers. In addition, he must insist on help and sensitivity from his son's school. School administrators who look the other way are contributing to the problem.

### Salon Letters

#### READERS RESPOND TO DR. LYNN

Cross-dressing as a profile in courage? No wonder you guys lost last Tuesday.

— **Tim Usher**

I take issue with the article's definition of courage, which implies a sense of moral rectitude that is not evident in the behavior discussed. To me, courage is shown by Catholic schoolgirls going to morning class in Belfast, knowing all the while that some extremist might shoot them down in cold blood for being Catholic. It is evidenced by Christians doing charitable work in Pakistan or China, and by Jews on the West Bank of the Jordan who are surrounded by people who hate them and would like to kill them.

As this world turns a hostile face toward anyone who dares to address God with reverence, the fortitude shown by the believers in the face of secular bigotry demonstrates conviction and dedication to a higher ideal than simple material considerations of fashion. Indeed, daring to be devout is demonstrably more courageous than debating whether or not to wear nylons and stiletto pumps to school.

— **Harlow Keith**

Thank you, thank you, thank you. Thank you. I wish blessings on you, and your children, and your children's children, on all the issue of your house for 12 generations, for your words in response to "worried father," for your decision to honor Gwen Araujo's choices of name and gendered pronoun in life, for your integrity, for your sensible advice, for your humanity, and for being a voice of sanity in insane times.

— **Bear**

Thank you for your detailed and supportive advice to Worried Father in Salon this week. Your ideas were spot-on for a high school kid dealing with transgender issues. However, it's worth noting that the teen might also be a transvestite. Transvestitism in straight, male-identifying men is more common than male-to-female transgendered identity. It's important for kids to see that their options are open — that they are free to redefine themselves, to kiss a boy one day and a girl the next, to be curious about how a skirt feels, to try out for rugby — without necessarily being gay or being transgendered. It makes the figuring-out process seem much safer — regardless of what's eventually decided.

— **L.**

Continued on Page 25

An excellent resource for parents dealing with these kinds of fears is a publication, "What Does Gay Mean: How to Talk With Kids About Sexual Orientation and Prejudice," available from the National Mental Health Association. The organization recommends that parents encourage their children to "stand up for themselves without fighting" and take action when they see bullying behavior against others. They should inform a teacher or authority figure if the harassment doesn't stop. But they should also be told to "walk away in dangerous situations."

This father is worried about the dangers his son might face — and he has reason to be. Young people who are courageous enough to express their sexuality often face hatred, name-calling, social ostracism and even physical assaults.

Homophobia and genderphobia can result in serious harm. Aggressive behaviors triggered by homophobia are believed to be linked to the drop in self-esteem and the rise in self-harming behaviors, sometimes even leading to suicide attempts, experienced by gay and transgendered youth. One third of all teen suicides are committed by these sexually questioning teenagers.

This father refers to the recent tragic death of 17-year-old Eddie "Gwen" Araujo, a transgendered youth in Newark, Calif., who was allegedly killed by a group of youths at a party when they discovered that Araujo, who was dressed as a girl, was a biological male.

What can we as parents and a society do to alter this threatening picture? First and foremost we can listen to our teenagers in a nonjudgmental manner. We can support them, as well as teach our children to be tolerant of all forms of sexual identity.

We also need to educate ourselves about sexuality. Core gender identity, gender roles and sexual orientation are often confused by parents. Many falsely assume that a boy with a more feminine gender role will have a homosexual orientation. Core gender identity usually develops in childhood and is a sense of oneself as male or female. For transgendered youth, the feelings of being in the "wrong" body usually begin in childhood, and grow stronger in adolescence.

Gender roles are characteristics, behaviors, and interests defined by society or culture as appropriate for members of each gender. Sexual orientation concerns which gender a person is attracted to. Sexual identity is an all-inclusive category, which refers to how a person describes, expresses and feels about his or her sexual self. Core gender identity, gender roles and sexual orientation are all important parts of sexual identity, but no one of these make up the entire story. Self-esteem, sexual fantasy life, sexual style and desirability are some of the many elements that constitute an individual's sexual identity.

Sexual/gender roles are changing, and today's teenagers are splitting into two conflicting groups. Some are more androgynous, adopting a combination of masculine and feminine traits to redefine their gender roles, and others are polarizing into rigid gender roles, in which teens are the enforcers of social norms.

Girls with a combination of masculine and feminine traits are reported to show greater self-acceptance and be better accepted by their peers. This is not the case for boys. Peer acceptance is greatest for boys with purely masculine traits, and not surprisingly, self-acceptance is also better for sharply defined masculine boys. Interestingly, this is not the case in either childhood or adulthood, when a combination of masculine and feminine traits is associated with good mental health.

Besides being good parents to our children, we can also play an active role in convincing school officials to enlighten students about tolerance. Many schools have already taken the initiative. Eddie Araujo's high school in Newark is one of three Bay Area schools performing <http://www.tolerance.org/laramie/> "The Laramie Project" this fall.

Last week, I attended a performance of this courageous and innovative play, written by Moisés Kaufman and the Tectonic Theater Project, and directed by Lorna Strand at University High School, the first of the three schools to perform it in the San Francisco Bay Area. It tells the story of Matthew Shepard, the gay University of Wyoming student who was brutally beaten, tied to a fence and left for dead on the outskirts of Laramie, Wyo.

High school plays like this can make a difference. Viewing this play performed by young people, close in age to Gwen and Matt, is a transforming experience. "The Laramie Project" captures the voices of the American scene and teaches us about the sexual landscape that teenagers, parents, and other adults are struggling with today. Its lessons are extremely painful, but necessary to hear. It underscores how our communities fail to offer support to young people who are dealing with issues related to sexual orientation and gender.

There is much to be learned. From Laramie. From Newark. And from your town.

## **BANS ON CHANGING TRANSGENDER BIRTH CERTIFICATES MOSTLY ILLEGAL**

*Compiled by GayToday  
Lambda Legal*

On the heels of winning a birth certificate amendment for a female-to-male transgendered person in Virginia, Lambda Legal today released a first-of-its-kind chart identifying laws and policies in every state for amending sex designations on birth certificates.

According to the chart, 47 states have specific laws, more general laws, or administrative processes allowing transgendered people to change the sex designation on their birth certificates, while three states have no laws or processes and have refused to amend birth certificates to reflect a change in sex.

"When states refuse to change birth certificates to reflect transgendered people's correct sex, they are almost always violating their own state laws or policies," said Michael Adams, Director of Education and Public Affairs at Lambda Legal.

"Because birth certificates are so critical in everyday life — for being able to get passports or drivers' licenses and for completing employment documents - we've compiled this information to help transgendered people know their rights and fight for them."

According to Lambda Legal, many transgendered people are not granted the birth certificate changes they are entitled to by law. In one recent example, a Virginia man was denied a birth certificate amendment even though he had undergone extensive medical treatment and obtained a court order seeking to change his sex designation from female to male.

Lambda Legal's Southern Regional Office fought with state authorities to get an accurate birth certificate for the man, identified only as "John Doe" for privacy reasons, and was just days away from filing a lawsuit when the state's Attorney General backed down and followed state law.

In the two months, the man received his amended birth certificate. "We shouldn't have to fight for months to get states to follow their own laws, but that's often the reality," Adams said.

Transgendered people seeking to change their birth certificates should contact the Department of Health or Office of Vital Records in their state to find out what the process is, Adams said. Often, a court order is required to show that medical procedures have been completed.

People should consult an attorney if the state resists changing the birth certificate or requires expensive and uncommon medical procedures (which was the case in Virginia, where the state initially refused to change the birth certificate because Lambda Legal's client hadn't undergone a full phalloplasty).

People should also ask what the amended birth certificate will look like, since some states issue an entirely new one while other states amend the prior one, sometimes noticeably.

### **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]

## **NTAC Press Release**

### **SOCIAL SECURITY POLICY CHANGES HURT TRANSEXUALS AND INTERSEXED**

What does one do if the boss walks in and says, "Hey, I thought you were a woman when I hired you. Why did you lie to me?" Farfetched? Hardly, and the Social Security Administration just made it more likely to occur.

In a mid-October 2002 policy change that took place without announcement or explanation, the Social Security Administration instituted a tougher requirement for changing one's gender marker in the SSA records. The new policy (RM 00203.210 paragraph C) requires a person — the Number Holder (NH) in SSA parlance — to provide "Clinic or medical records or other combination of documents showing the sex change surgery has been completed. All documents must clearly identify the NH." Previous policy required documents that show sex change surgery has either been completed or started.

The new policy might seem reasonable at first blush; after all, it is the same requirement that must be met to change gender on one's U.S. passport, usually satisfied by a notarized letter from the surgeon saying that he had performed female-to-male or male-to-female sex reassignment surgery on the individual.

However, transgender activists and many transsexuals and intersexed people realize that the Social Security situations and the passport situations are not the same. Many people can do without a passport while in transition from one sex to another or in the process of correcting birth defects, but everyone must provide one's Social Security number to an employer.

Problems arise when the SSA runs a periodic audit of company records and the gender markers don't match. SSA advises the company that there is an error in the company's records and directs the company to correct its records. This sends the boss or someone from payroll to the person's worksite asking, "Why doesn't your gender match what Social Security says it is?" And another transsexual is ousted and legally subject to termination in most locations.

The State Department will issue a one-year temporary passport in the new gender for pre-op transsexuals or intersexed people whose surgeons certify that a surgery date has been scheduled. The new SSA policy does not address this issue of people who are in transition or who cannot undergo sex reassignment surgery for health or financial reasons but who live and work in their chosen gender. Because the Benjamin Standards of Care for transsexuals require a minimum one-year 'Real Life Experience' of living and working in the new gender full time before obtaining authorization for sex reassignment surgery, the new SSA policy will adversely impact almost every transsexual in transition.

"This step backwards in the Social Security Administration's understanding and handling of transsexual and intersexed needs will lead to further discrimination against a whole class of people who already have enough obstacles in their way," said Robyn Walters, board member of the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition. "Government should be about making people's lives better, not about making life more difficult."

Walters noted that such actions by a federal agency that impacts the life of every citizen reinforce the need for an Employment Nondiscrimination Act that includes protection for the transgender community. "A transgender-inclusive ENDA would remove the worry of being fired for not appearing as Social Security records indicate," said Walters, "but it would not avoid the embarrassment or exposure to bigotry that would come by being outed as a transsexual."



## IN GODS' NAME

For thousands of years humans lived in a cosmos of mystery animated by spirits and gods. 3,400 years ago the Egyptian Pharaoh Amenhotep IV abolished the gods in favor of one god. It may have been the first instance of government imposed religious intolerance. After his death, polytheistic successors took revenge on his memory by chiseling his name from all monuments, and went on as before. But the virus of religious intolerance, in the name of one god, had been planted....

When the Hebrews fled Egypt they took with them the notion of one god. Their one god was a vengeful god, who punished them if they did not slay all the men, women and children living in lands they conquered. To his credit, the one god, though cruel, was also just, dictating that the law applied equally to all, and demanding that rulers treat their subjects according to the law rather than whim. Even this legal and moral progression, however, was not unique to monotheism, but built upon an earlier codification of laws by the polytheistic Babylonian king Hammurabi, who tempered harsh justice with the edict, "The strong shall not oppress the weak."

Out of the Hebrew tradition came Christianity, which preached mercy while insisting that non-Christians, especially Jews, be conquered, converted or killed in the name of the one god, who (as reported by several Christian councils) had altered his image to include a son and holy spirit, which everyone was ordered to believe were somehow one god, or else.

Six hundred years into the Christian era a "final" revelation produced god's prophet, Mohammed. God's name was really Allah, and in Allah's name vast sections of the Middle East, Africa and Asia were conquered and converted with the usual bloodshed.

When in the minority, the Judeo-Islamic-Christian monotheists resisted polytheistic temporal authority—even if it was benign and relatively tolerant of their beliefs—while they themselves in gaining control persecuted polytheists unmercifully. Triumphant, they went on to wage relentless wars both against one another and between themselves—usually in the name of their one god, the real one, against the pretender.

It gets worse, and is getting still worse. All the major monotheistic religions share the belief that time is like a line with a beginning, middle and end. They all agree pretty much about the beginning. It's the middle and end that separate them. Currently, at least two of them, the Christians and Muslims, or at least their most rabid and active adherents, are eagerly rushing toward their conflicting version of the end time, each of which predicts an ultimate clash between good and evil. Each, appropriately, is the other's version of evil.

Israel is their battleground. Christian television evangelists are collecting and pouring money into fringe Jewish groups that would evict all Palestinians from Israel, including the West Bank, on the ground that god gave that land to the Jews millennia ago, and the Palestinians, most of whom are Muslims, are interlopers. They welcome Palestinian resistance, which they hope and pray sets the stage for a great final battle at a place called Armageddon, somewhere in or near Israel. All in the name of one god.

The Christian fundamentalists tell us that the United States is chosen by god as an agent in this madness; these same people, some of whom serve in the highest offices of the current administration, preach that our country was founded by "godly" people according to biblical principles. They are wrong.

Our country was founded by men of profound religious unorthodoxy, most of whom would not call themselves Christians, but Deists, who believed that the affairs of men were better handled by elected representatives acting under rule of law and rational principle than by divinely appointed rulers. They gave us the first country in the history of the world formed by contract, an agreement among its citizens as to how they would be governed. In formulating it,

Continued on Page 28

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Dear Dr. Ponton:

Regarding your recent Salon piece, I was struck by the conflation of cross-dressing with homosexuality, a widely held misconception. Perhaps I misread your advice to the father but, as I recall, cross-dressing isn't automatically indicative of a gay or lesbian orientation. Therefore, I was a bit puzzled by your advice to the father to contact PFLAG. This is not to say that your advice was anything but well intentioned. I'm sure you have, as have I, known many people for whom desires, lifestyles, etc., defy easy categorization, living as we do in an era of fragmented identities and cultural diaspora. (I liked the way you addressed this later in the piece: "Core gender identity, gender roles and sexual orientation are often confused by parents.") I particularly liked your take on the current state of masculine/feminine traits assigned to girls and boys and the different weight given to each gender. This is certainly a subject worth further discussion and, I would hope, one that you would consider addressing in future columns.

— Thomas Mournian

### Dr. Ponton Replies:

In the best of all possible worlds, transgendered teenagers would have their own unique organization (actually, in the best world, teens wouldn't require support groups because everyone would be so supportive of each other's differences). Though founded to help gay and lesbian members, the organizations I referred to in my column, PFLAG <<http://www.pflag.org/>> and LYRIC, <<http://www.lyric.org/>> also offer help to transgendered teens and adults. Both organizations include the term "transgender" in their mission statements, and LYRIC has on staff a Transgender Youth Wellness Coordinator. Gender <<http://www.gender.org/>> is an organization focused solely on the needs, issues and concerns of gender-variant people in human society. Since I didn't want to be too simplistic, I may not have spelled out the distinction between "transgender" and "homosexual" clearly enough. I didn't mean to imply that the son in this week's letter was gay.

Gender roles don't predict sexual orientation. People who live with the body they are born with — male or female — but adopt the gender identity of the opposite sex are known as "transgendered" (an umbrella term that includes both transsexuality and transvestitism). Sexual orientation concerns which sex people are attracted to. A biological girl who identifies as a boy may be attracted to boys or girls — or both.

I broadened my column to include teens struggling with gender roles as well as sexual orientation because I that feel the problems of self-doubt, ostracism and harassment are similar for all teens courageous (yes, courageous!) enough to express a sexuality not quickly embraced by mainstream teen culture.

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## Loss Of Jobs, Friends And Family, Sometimes Face Violence

### TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY ENDURES PAINFUL JOURNEY

By Michele R. Marcucci

Even as she describes the years of pain, the fear of coming out, the laser treatments that feel like bee stings, Dana Lynne Johnson smiles. It wasn't easy becoming a woman. But she knew it was right. "I didn't know what was wrong. I felt something wasn't connecting, but I didn't know what," said Johnson of the years when she was better known as Rick.

But as Johnson became a woman, the pain she felt for years faded. "The more time I had to be a girl, the more I wanted. The more I was at peace," said Johnson, 39, of Lafayette, who has gone through therapy and hormones and is saving money for gender reassignment surgery. Transgendered people interviewed last week described years of pain, confusion, shame and denial about their identities. Often, the full realization of who they are comes later in life, when they have much to lose.

The term, which can include anyone from cross-dressers to a post-operative transsexual, applies to as many as 3 percent of Americans, by one estimate. Besides the potential loss of jobs, friends and family, transgendered people face the threat of violence, the alleged murder of Eddie "Gwen" Araujo Jr. earlier this month at a Newark party serving as a horrible reminder. Araujo, who dressed and lived as a girl, was allegedly killed after a guest at the party discovered Araujo had male genitalia.

"It would be a lot easier, for a lot of transgendered people, if we could just live our lives," said Gwen Smith, the Antioch-based founder and coordinator of the national Day of Remembrance for transgendered people murdered worldwide. "Unfortunately, we do live in a society that still has a lot of growing to do."

#### Hints Came Early

Johnson said she started to get hints that something wasn't right when she was 4 years old, when, as a boy, she started to be socialized away from girls.

Back then, when Johnson's mother called for her girls, Johnson answered. She wore her sisters' dresses in private, and wasn't much interested in dating girls. But at age 21, while visiting a girlfriend who worked at a preschool, Johnson realized she wanted to bear children.

Still, it took Johnson another 13 years to fully realize her womanhood, even as she donned nail polish and dresses, even as her depression deepened. One day, her wife found the nail polish in her backpack. A few times she slipped, wearing it to work. And the world didn't come to an end. Johnson said it's common for transgendered people to long ignore the message that they're not the person they appeared to be at birth. But eventually, she said, "you get to a point where you'll be out or end your life." Rachel Hill took a similar path. The 39-year-old Bay Area woman, who was born male, made a point of doing "masculine" things to mask her feelings as she grew up, becoming a cowboy and building cars. She ran high-performance auto shops for five years.

But the feelings were there, from an early age. Hill, who is also vice president of Transgender San Francisco, recalls her father finding a pair of girl's boots in one of her drawers when she was 10 years old, and the talk that followed. "What he said was, 'Don't ever do this again,' and they were thrown out," Hill said. "What I learned was, never get caught."

Hill used to get up early, before her wife and children, to dress in women's clothes and makeup for the drive to work at the Bank of America, where she works as a vice president, changing into male clothes before arriving. That relieved some of the tension she felt. But ultimately, it wasn't enough. Things came to a head about three years ago, when Hill lived through a month where she couldn't stop crying, her wife anxious to know why. Finally, one night in November 1999, unable to live any longer with the deceit, she told her. Hill says her wife just sat there, and listened. "There was no yelling. There was no, 'Get out of my life.' She was clearly trying to understand my pain," Hill said.

#### Costs Can Be High

Hill and others interviewed said they understand the impact their actions can have on their families. They stressed that their decisions were not made lightly, because the costs can be high. Johnson said her wife was not bothered by her exploration of her gender identity, until Johnson started to pursue hormone therapy, and to move toward being public with a female identity.

"The three to four weeks between that and Christmas nearly destroyed us," Johnson said. "I didn't rock her boat. I capsized it. She married a man." Hill's family has had a mixed reaction to her transformation. She

said her sister accepts her, her parents are struggling, and her brother is chosen to keep his family away from her.

Jaron Kanegson of Berkeley has considered going through hormone therapy. But Kanegson, who was born female but identifies largely as male, is reserving the option for the future. Kanegson, 31, who heads Youth Gender Project in Berkeley and San Francisco, feared losing friendships and a romantic relationship, and hopes to bear a child someday.

"Were I to transition, I fear that I would lose the ability to take part in the dyke community," said Kanegson, who feels comfortable in both the lesbian and female-to-male transgender communities. Both Hill and Johnson said they were afraid to come out in public, to let people know who they really were. Hill sat in her car for half an hour before gathering the courage to attend a support group meeting. Johnson feared going out in public dressed as a woman, despite the fact that she is used to being stared at because she is legally blind. "It's a powerful thing," Hill said. "The fear of ridicule, the self-loathing that goes on during the early stages of understanding, which is incredible."

Both Hill and Johnson said they've been fortunate: Both remain close to their immediate families (Johnson is still with her wife; Hill and her wife are separating, but will live close by and raise their children together) and most of their friends. And both are working in places where bosses and co-workers have accepted the changes they're going through. But they concede their situations are not the norm.

They still deal with people who are unwilling to accept their transformations, who insist on calling them "sir." Transgendered people strongly emphasize the importance of using the proper words, particularly pronouns. For instance, they said Araujo should be referred to as "she" instead of "he" because that's the role Araujo chose to take.

#### Process Not Easy

Transsexuals must go through months of therapy before taking hormones to start physical changes. They must live full time for a year in a gender that belies their anatomy, learning a new set of gender rules. If they desire, they can also undergo surgery, which can cost more than \$20,000. Johnson has grown her wispy black hair past her shoulders, is learning to adopt a woman's mannerisms and is training her voice to be more feminine. A year ago, she cleared all the male clothes out of her closet and went on a three-day shopping spree, before becoming a woman full time. "Some people reject the stereotype of being female. I embrace some of it," Johnson said.

The hormones changed Hill's outlook. She cries at movies, something she could never do before. Where she once appraised people based on what they could do for her, she now values friendships more highly. Both have said they have largely lost interest in sex, and both stressed that they, like most transgendered people, are not gay.

#### Even Flirtations Can Be Dangerous.

Johnson said two men flirted with her on a BART train one night as she was heading home. When they figured out she was a transsexual, she said one of the men got hostile. Fortunately, another woman on the train told the men to leave her alone, she said. "You have to be vigilant about the tells, things that can give you away. You almost have to avoid moves toward intimacy," she said. Others, like Araujo, are not so lucky.

At this year's Day of Remembrance, on Nov. 20, participants will mourn 27 transgendered people who were murdered over the last 11 months. Many are killed after a moment of revelation, when the gender they identify with doesn't square with what another person sees, said Smith, the event organizer.

But Smith isn't so sure this was the case in Araujo's killing. "The fact that Gwen was transgendered wasn't necessarily the biggest secret in the world," Smith said. "Did her assailants know? This will be discovered in court, I would assume. But it really could go either way."

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## HRC Says Much More Education Is Needed

### PUBLIC IS BROADLY AWARE OF TRANSGENDER AMERICANS

#### HRC Releases Ground-Breaking Public Opinion Research On Transgender Issues

The Human Rights Campaign announced today the findings of a landmark HRC-commissioned poll conducted by the firm Lake Snell Perry & Associates Inc., that focuses on public perception of transgender issues. The poll shows that while most people accept that a person can be transgender, more education is needed to help people better understand the lives of transgender Americans, says HRC.

"The data shows that most people want to treat transgender Americans fairly and protect them from workplace discrimination and hate crimes," said HRC Communications Director and Senior Strategist David M. Smith. "Still, the majority of Americans report being uncomfortable about transgender issues, especially when confronted with the challenges that transgender people face."

Seventy percent of Americans have heard the word transgender and a majority have, on some level, contemplated the issue. "The concept of transgender is something that the public is aware of, if not focused on," said Celinda Lake, of the polling firm Lake Snell Perry & Associates Inc. "Most people accept that it is possible for a person to be 'born as one sex but inside feel like the other sex.' However, many are confused about what transgender means, and which people would be considered transgender."

All voters overwhelmingly favor transgender students attending public schools, according to the poll results. Additionally, despite differences between sympathizers and opponents, there is a strong general consensus that no one should be subjected to violence and discrimination because of who they are. There are, however, differences between the two points of view on how to address these issues.

The poll found that sympathizers who believe in transgender equality favor transgender-specific laws and opponents prefer using what they erroneously believe to be existing laws to protect transgender people. However, the fact remains that there are very few jurisdictions in this nation that prohibit discrimination against transgender Americans, says HRC. Additionally, the poll found a very critical correlation between whether the public sees being transgender as a moral issue and whether they think people have a choice about being transgender.

"Three-quarters of those who say being transgender is a choice, also see it as a moral issue," said Lake, "while two-thirds who do not see it as a moral issue say people are born transgender."

Despite some negative segments of the population, much of the public expresses interest and concern for transgender people. The majority of respondents disagree with statements that say, "I do not care about transgender people," "I don't want to hear about transgender people," "There is no reason to worry about such a small minority," or "Transgender people get what they deserve." Conversely, the majority favors laws to protect transgender people's rights. Transgender individuals also face the same problem as gay and lesbian Americans, in that a great number of people believe that the law already protects these groups.

"The data clearly suggests that a strategic, step-by-step educational campaign that focuses on broadly supported issues - such as hate crimes and discrimination protection - are the best place to start on the road toward equality," said HRC's Smith.

Among other findings:

- 61 percent believe the country needs laws to protect transgender people from discrimination.
- 57 percent incorrectly believe that it is not legal to fire a person just because they are transgender.
- 67 percent agree that it is possible for a person to be born as one sex, but inside feel like another sex.
- 53 percent believe it is "all right" for a person to be transgender, while 37 percent believe that it is wrong.
- 77 percent of people believe that transgender students should be allowed to attend public schools.
- 48 percent of Americans would have "no problem" working with a transgender person, while only 8 percent claim they "would not" be willing to.

The Human Rights Campaign is the largest national lesbian and gay political organization, with members throughout the country. It effectively lobbies Congress, provides campaign support and educates the public to ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.

## GROUP URGES ACCEPTANCE

By Renee Koury, Mercury News

Still shaken by the slaying last month of a Newark teenager who was born male but lived as a girl, a San Francisco task force Monday unveiled a long-awaited study urging an aggressive program to encourage acceptance of people who change their sex.

The report presented to the board of supervisors by the city's Transgender Civil Rights Implementation Task Force came just two weeks after the funeral of the Newark 17-year-old who was born Eddie Araujo, but lived as a girl named Gwen. Transgender activists from around the region held vigils in Newark and San Francisco to mourn the slaying.

Araujo was killed at a party — allegedly by three men after they discovered the teenager was anatomically male. The men, now facing charges of murder with a hate-crime enhancement, allegedly drove 150 miles away and buried Araujo's body in a shallow grave.

"Nothing in this report will put life back into the lifeless body that I saw at the memorial two weeks ago," Rachael Janelle Light of Sunnyvale told the supervisors Monday, holding up a picture of Araujo. Light, president of the grass-roots group TransGender San Francisco, joined other activists in urging the board to aggressively fight discrimination against those changing their sexual identities.

The 32-member task force, made up of social workers, doctors, activists and transgender people, praised the city for the steps it has already taken to help those struggling with acceptance. San Francisco last year became the first in the nation to provide city employees with insurance coverage for sex-change operations. And earlier it enacted a law guaranteeing civil rights protections for transgender people.

"Your leadership has been extremely important," said Theresa Sparks, who serves on the city's Human Rights Commission. She said similar civil rights measures are pending in Chicago and New York City.

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## TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

By Elizabeth Birch  
Human Rights Commission

On this, the fourth annual Transgender Day of Remembrance, we remember and honor the transgender victims lost to senseless and often brutal violence during the last year. Only a month ago, Gwen Araujo, a transgender 17-year-old in Newark, Calif., was brutally murdered by her own peers after she attended a party wearing a dress. In August, Stephanie Thomas, 19, and Ukea Davis, 18 - best friends whose openness and generosity taught so much to those who knew them - were gunned down in Washington, D.C., while sitting in their car. And last April, Hector "Arlene" Diaz, a 28-year-old transgender woman in El Paso, Texas, was shot twice and found dead.

These are only four of the more than 27 reported cases of transgender lives lost to violence in one year. These deaths remind us that anti-transgender hate crimes are pervasive and often especially violent. They rob us of some of our youngest and bravest, who are merely trying to live their lives comfortably in a sometimes hostile world. While words cannot express the great sadness we feel upon the loss of our transgender brothers and sisters, the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community will continue to use our collective voice to speak out against the harassment, discrimination and violence that happen far too often as the result of fear and ignorance.

But we must also look at the profound progress that's been made in recent years. This year alone, 10 cities extended discrimination laws to cover their transgender citizens, including Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, New York and Dallas. More than 56 jurisdictions now have such laws, compared to only 13 in 1995. According to a recent poll commissioned by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, 61 percent of Americans believe that the country needs laws to protect transgender people from discrimination, and 68 percent believe that we need laws to protect against anti-transgender hate crimes. But 57 percent also incorrectly believe that transgender people can't be fired legally because of their gender identity and expression.

While the American public may reply with strong support when asked, we must continue our work to educate all Americans about transgender issues - in workplaces, statehouses, schools, homes and in the U.S. Congress. The pure honesty, determination and courage of transgender people have given millions a better understanding of the challenges they face in their everyday lives. While we cannot bring back those we've lost, we can honor their memory by continuing this critical work. We must inform not only our straight counterparts, but also our own gay, lesbian and bisexual peers - for the fabric of this diverse community is woven with a common thread, a thread of hope. Across the lines of race, religion, gender and sexual orientation, we all dream of equality. Working together, that vision will become a reality.

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## Shirley Faire...

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they followed a variety of models; among them: the ideas of John Locke; the constitution of the Iroquois five nations; and, yes, the bible, but not as a religious document. Not wishing to repeat the god fights that had wrecked Europe for two hundred years, they instituted freedom of religion.

This legacy has been in conflict, not cooperation, with fundamentalism ever since. There are always those who wish to draw us back to what humanity has struggled to escape: the tyranny and ruthlessness of monotheistic religion. If this country is constitutionally dedicated to any kind of religion, it is polytheism, in this sense: "You worship your god, or gods. I'll worship mine. I'll leave you alone. You leave me alone." This is antithetical to the fundamentalist spirit of monotheism which breeds and fuels intolerance because it cannot accept contradictory witness.

Above and beneath us, whatever our belief, hovers the mystery of existence, which monotheism tries to sweep away by assigning that mystery a name and the attributes of a single human personality. Inevitably, because each named one god of all is really reflective of a human face and habits, different people will come to their own conclusion about what that god looks like. "God looks and acts like me, not you." And the fight is on.

This little, rambling essay is, among other purposes, my personal Declaration of Independence from monotheism. Hail to the mystery of life! From now on I will invoke Madge, Goddess of Tires, to help me make the right selection when I buy tires; Fred, God of Pancakes, to assure that I don't burn them. Mac, of course, is my one true God of Computers. Sometimes, anyway, when the universe and I are in a playful mood.

When I pray, I pray to a power with no attributes except that he, she or they are bigger, wiser, more powerful, merciful and loving than I; without a name that I know; with a purpose or purposes, or no purpose, as unrevealed to me as mine are to an insect; and who may just look like the little boy playing in the yard down the street; or my cat purring asleep in the sun; or you.

## Group Urges Acceptance...

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But the task force said the city must work harder to implement other recommendations made in 1994 aimed at protecting rights for transgender people. And it called on the city to provide a \$50,000 grant to the newly created Transgender Law Center, and to hire a full-time staff person to oversee problems experienced by people changing their sex. The group also wants to increase "sensitivity training" for medical staff, social workers and law enforcement officers.

And the task force wants the city to create a non-profit agency to develop job training and development for transgender people who, members said, still find it hard to land jobs.

It was a coincidence that the report came out in the wake of Araujo's killing. Activists said the death was tragic, but they hope it will spur greater action and more sympathy from the public. "Gwen's murder definitely raises the level of recognition of the issues in the public eye, so I hope it will help us there," said Simon Aronoff of Oakland.

Araujo's slaying, he said, points to the largest problem faced by people changing their sex: how to tell others. "The men who discovered she had a male body were protecting their masculinity by killing her," he said. "Maybe if we really implement the suggestions in this report, and people accept us, it could be a lot safer for the Gwens of the world to come out."