



The Crystal Chronicle

Columbus, OH

<http://www.tgender.net/cc>

Vol. 12, No. 8 - August 2000

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The Crystal Chronicle is the official newsletter of the Crystal Club. The Chronicle is published and mailed a week prior to the regularly scheduled meeting. Complementary copies of the Chronicle may be obtained by contacting a club officer or any club member.

News items for the Chronicle should be mailed to Kelly Davidson before the end of each month. Her e-mail address is:

kelly@tgender.net

Please specify in the subject field that this is an article for the newsletter.

Crystal Valley Railroad Revisited by Kelly

July was a busy month for me. While I was working on a lot of end-of-the-year jobs at work, I was also actively preparing for a model train show that month. Stephanie had agreed to come the day of the show and help out, as well as bring the layout the club had given her last year. My son was really looking forward to seeing her layout again, for he had spent a lot of time doing the scenery work on it. And to tell you the truth, I was also excited about seeing trains run on her layout again.

Well, the day came when Stephanie was to show up. My kids had met Stephanie once before, and were looking forward to seeing her again. In fact, they kept asking me when she was going to be there so much, that I was about to go crazy. Fortunately, Stephanie arrived before this happened (some may disagree with me here <Grin>).

We headed over to where the show was, and unloaded The

Crystal Valley Railroad from her car. With great care, I placed the layout in the front window where everyone would see it before coming in. My son immediately abandoned what he was doing and starting placing the buildings and trains on the layout, to get it running. In a matter of minutes he had it all together.

The show itself wasn't bad. We had the room filled with trains, videos, and other things, but didn't get nearly the people I had hoped we would. We discussed why this was and made plans to do better next year. I did hear several nice comments about Stephanie's layout from those who showed up. Most of them were impressed by the fact that the layout was small and well scenic. Other than a problem with one of the Stephanie's engines, the layout ran flawlessly.

After the show, it was back to my house for a relaxing swim in my pool and - several dunkings for Kelly. It seems Stephanie had lured my kids into turning against me. In the end, I pay her back

for her sneak attacks on me.

We were all sorry to see Stephanie leave, when she headed back home. Being so far from Columbus, it was great to see someone from the club in my area, for a change. As for the model train layout, seeing it again brought back a lot of fond memories. So many people in the club helped out (out of love) to make it a reality. I know Stephanie really appreciated it. And the best part was, so did the people who saw it at the show. No one realized it was a transgender railroad - perhaps the kindest compliment of all.



JULY 2000 CC MEETING NOTES

Fashion show extravaganza! If you couldn't make it, you missed a good show. That is what I have been told; I missed most of it, being a part of it my self, (that was fun though). Hope to see you next month. For the second summer month in a row, we had a great turnout.

Present were 21 folks: Kelly, Tina & spouse, Angie, Anne, Julie Ann & Sherrie, Joyce, Rachel, Jamie Elizabeth, Sherry, Jannie, Valerie, Rachel (second one), Michelle, and new visitors: Heather, Katie, Jennifer, & Latoya (okay, you're not new, but we have missed you, dear). Also, Charlesie & Regina, from Charlesie's Apparel and Accessories, the sponsor's of the fashion show.

Julie Ann & Sherrie had the food ready by 8pm, so we had mealtime first. Afterwards, at 8:30pm, the fashion show began. We had lots of lovely models (5) with Charlesie describing the outfits, and accessories, some live entertainment, and Regina in the back room keeping the models in order. After a parade of about 20 outfits, mostly Charlesie's, a few ensembles of Rachel's own, we broke for a few minutes, before business was discussed.

Kelly mentioned that she, with hopefully a couple of others, will be looking into a couple other possible meeting sites, closer to downtown, on Aug 1st. She will let people know about the details.

Jannie brought a flyer for the Crystal Club Constitutional Convention, about looking at updating portions of the constitution & bylaws, as needed. Discussions will be held at the business meetings, on the second Friday of the month. If you would like to have any input, please plan on attending, or getting in touch with one of the Bylaw committee members, Jannie, Angie, Anne, or Dianna Mills. The issues in discussion are available from Jannie (jannie@tgender.net).

Afterwards, we had social time. The meeting broke up by 10:30-11:00pm where most went to Diversity. A fun time had by all, so it seemed. Look forward to seeing you all next month. August event: a couple of guest speakers, former President Of Crystal Club, Stephanie, and Pastor Bran Scott, to talk about their transitions, and SRS. This will surely be an interesting evening; make sure you are there. The meeting starts at 8pm, and at 7pm, Rachel (2) will be offering people that have admired her make-up a chance to get some tips and hints while she "puts on" her face - how and what she does, to give the wonderful presentation of en femme that she has.

'Til next month, this is Secretary Angie, signing off.



"THANK YOU"

Angie

I would like to take a second to thank the beautiful models for the July fashion show: Anne, Rachel, Valerie, Katie, & Angie (can I thank myself? hmmm...) Anyway, thanks for your help in making the night a success. I had a lot of fun, and wouldn't mind doing that again, maybe with a couple more models. We'll see sometime next year, eh?

And thank you to the live entertainment: Michelle on the Guitar, Joyce on the Piano, Kelly with the Comedy. And, thanks to Anne for the runway music.

I would like to thank Charlesie, for her time, her openness to the community, supplying the outfits and accessories for the evening. And to Regina for helping her out, and making sure the modes looked good before going out to show off. I would encourage you to all to visit her shop on Karl road. The info below should help. She can get you set up with some lovely outfits, and help you to accessorize them, giving hints and tips as you need them.

Info:
Charlesie's Apparel & Accessories
"Dare to Be Different Shop"

Website: <http://charlesies.com/>
Phone: 614-268-8299
Fax: 614-268-3028

Address: 4290 Karl Rd. (2 Blocks South of Morse Rd. on the left hand side)

Hours: Tuesday through Saturday: 11am-7pm
Sunday & Monday by Appointment Only



"Hi, It's Me Again"
(or "Let me get my soapbox")
by: Angie Bolin

Where do I start? I have written a number of things over the last 18 plus months I have been with the Crystal Club. Everything that I wrote has come from the heart: my heart, my soul. I get compliments on my writing; people tell me how my writing moves them. Some do, anyway. I am not looking for praise, but it is nice. Everyone likes to hear nice things about themselves. I am no exception.

Since the first meeting, I have said that I want to be involved, that I want to make some difference for the group, for myself, and for you. That was talk, and talk means less and less as time goes on. I mean, it's nice to say that you want to be involved, but it's something totally different to actually get involved, as I have found out over the last few months; to actually step up and say I will do that, and then do that. There are a few people in the group that actually do this, and the time and effort they put into the group, many times, goes unrecognized. People like Kelly, Jannie, Anne, Dianna Mills, Judy, Tina, Mary Ann, Julie Ann & Cheri. Take a moment right this very instant to say "Thanks" to them.

Thank you, to each of you, for the work you do to keep the group going, the meetings interesting, the newsletter out, new members informed & screened, and the website going. Some of you have truly put your heart into your efforts. You are, of course, not the only ones. There have been people in the past, and in the future, there will be people to step up and take over for you. But for now, you are it, and I appreciate you for that.

Last year, I made about half the meetings. Missing many of the meetings was mostly due to family matters. Sometimes it was just that basic fear that many of us have about attending. More than once I ended up alone those nights, at the movies. I regretted it every time, but that did not make the next time any easier. Actually, it was harder, because I didn't want to confront the people I let down the prior month (if only in my mind).

This year has been different. I actually paid dues and became a member. While I have missed a couple of meetings, it has been due to mostly legitimate

reasons. I became secretary, I actually took responsibility. So far this year, I got to preside over two meetings, so to speak. Okay, I stammered through a couple of meetings; thank goodness I wasn't the main attraction. I can tell you from first hand experience now, that it's not easy. The only reason they came together at all was because there were other people supporting me, helping me get things done.

I admire the group leadership for the following reasons. First, they manage month to month to keep things running quiet smoothly (i.e.: roof over our heads for a meeting, newsletter, etc....). Second, for picking up the slack when no one else would (i.e.; finding meeting places, organizing the meeting functions, making it to the business meetings, etc...). Third, for putting up with the Nay Sayers, who criticize everything they do, from simple decisions, and beyond.

Just because you don't agree with what they decided on, doesn't make it a bad thing. Trust them, they have the best interest of the group in their hearts; they do. They need support as much as you do. They need understanding, and patience, just like any other person in the group. They may be a founding member, or a new member filling in because no one else would. That doesn't mean they are in any more or less need of support from the group as a whole.

I challenge you to embrace your leadership, find out what you can do to help. Don't just come along for the ride, be active. Fill in an officer's position, write an article, get with Julie Ann & Cheri, and bring some food, reach out to the new members. Become "Pro-Active" within your group, within your community. I am not asking you to become political. There will be people that can do that. If you find that calling, then more power to you. I applaud you for that ability and strength.

What I am saying is become "Pro-Active" in the area of support. We have plenty of members that have the opportunity do some sort of outreach, for those that need it. Take the opportunity to reach out and support those who aren't so sure of themselves, who are still scared to death of the idea of coming to a

meeting. These are the people that need the support, the support that you sought out when you first arrived. Write letter, chat on-line, take telephone calls, help Tina & Judy, who are normally a new member's first contact, give them more than one person to become familiar with. This will also take a bit of pressure off of the screening officers, who do a lot of work that goes unnoticed.

I hope that what I said made sense, that you took what I said for what it was, a call for those of you that are lingering on the fence. Perhaps you're trying to decide whether or not to get involved. Perhaps you know in your heart that you not only want to, but that you also have something positive to bring to those around you. Come down off the fence, we can use your help, your input, your ideas, and your support. The Crystal Club is a "support" group, do your part to continue the tradition of this wonderful group of more than 11 years.

Thanks for listening to me yammer. Hugs to each of you.

Love & Joy, Angie



Ladies Night Out

No Attitudes will be closing for renovation until Sept. 1st, and have promised some exciting changes.

So for the next month , we are moving our Thursday "Ladies Night Out" to Kelly's Eclectic Bistro (if you need directions, please ask Judy or another officer).

Hugs, Judy



Crossdressing with Tractors

Athens News (Aug. 3, 2000)
News of the weird

Eight farmers in the town of Nemaha, Iowa (population 112), have taught themselves to perform various square-dancing routines (do-si-dos, promenades, etc.) while seated on, and precisely maneuvering, their tractors, according to a June San Francisco Chronicle dispatch from the heartland. However, an apparent problem for the farmers is that all are male, while square dancing is a couple's activity. Thus, four of the dancers operate their tractors while in calico skirts, under the apparent belief that cross-dressing is more acceptable than having an overtly same-sex partner.



Puerto Rico Supreme Court Sides with Transsexual

advocate.com Headlines News
Tuesday, July 18, 2000

The Supreme Court of Puerto Rico last week permitted a male-to-female transsexual to officially change the gender shown on her birth certificate, the Orlando Sentinel reported. The decision marks the first time the U.S. territory has allowed such a change. We have to respond to the times and to the social realities of the day, said Ada Conde, president of a local gay rights group. Andres Torres Andino had sex-reassignment surgery in 1976. In 1995, she went to the court to have her name and sex changed on her birth certificate, but the court allowed her to change only her name. Last week's decision comes after six years of appeals.



Transvestite Feared Breasts would Explode

A transvestite performer was so afraid his breast implants would explode at altitude he would only fly to the Edinburgh Festival once they were insured for 500,000 US dollars (around £300,000).

The promoter of Ladyboys of Bangkok received a frantic telephone call from Thailand as the stars of the show were preparing to check-in for their flight to the Scottish capital.

Phillip Gandey, 44, said the star of the group, a 24-year-old transvestite called Poh, had been told her breast implants would explode as the aircraft gained height.

"I got a telephone call on Sunday afternoon from Bangkok airport from the manager of the show to say that one of the girls - one that I would say was the star of the show - was not going to fly," he said.

"Whether it was a wind up from a friend or he had read it in the newspapers, I don't now. Although the company is all boys, many have breast implants

and I've read stories about them rupturing before but never on airplanes.

"I called the insurance company we deal with and got the cover for 500,000 dollars should anything happen to the implants. They are a show business and theatrical company and are used to dealing with last-minute requests.

"I telephoned the guy I deal with up and said 'exploding breasts' and he said 'not at the moment'. Then I told him the story and he said 'OK'. As long as he got my fax, we were covered."

Mr. Gandey said he then telephoned the show's manager at Bangkok Airport and he reassured Poh, who is now in Edinburgh preparing for a three-week run at the theatre festival.

He added: "It was more for re-assurance. The guys are ladyboys - that's what they do for a living so if something like that happened that would be the end of their livelihood."

Mr. Gandey was confident there would be no mishaps resulting in a claim and added: "I've insured dwarves to stand on a bed of nails before, but never exploding breasts."

opposite sex for at least three weeks to explore gender differences. The three one-hour programs, titled *Boy Meets Girl*, are likely to be shown early next year.

With echoes of the *Big Brother* screening process, a 10 men and women on a shortlist are being given department training and are spending time with gender psychologists. They include an escort, a motivational speaker and a male nurse. The final four will be chosen according to how well they can pass themselves off as the opposite sex and whether they will be able to cope.

The series is being made by London-based Optomen Television. Simon Andreae, managing director, said: "The series has an educational purpose but I hope there will be fun on the way. It's an opportunity to get ordinary people to have some experience of both sides of the gender divide."

A spokeswoman for C4 insisted the program was not about sex, transvestism or cross-dressing. "It is about the social issues, about how people treat you in the work place. It is not people wanting a sex change," she said. "I doubt very much we are going to encourage people to go down the route of a sexual relationship. I think what you are more likely to find is the situation of going to a pub or a bar and the whole chat-up scenario."



Spycam TV's New Group to Swap Sex Roles

First Channel 4 commissioned *Big Brother* - a "social experiment" to see what happened when 10 men and women shared a house under constant scrutiny.

Now it is planning an "educational docu-soap", to see what happens when men and women switch roles. Two men and two women will dress and live as the

Rising levels of sex and bad language on television have brought a big increase in complaints from the public according to a recent Broadcasting Standards Commission report. The report said viewers were disenchanted with the use of sex to boost ratings.



DEFINING GENDER IN STRAIT JACKETS

Gender variance in a pink or blue world.

By Scott Hirschfeld

from Intercom, a publication of GLSEN, the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Educational Network

It was the first day of a new school year. The bulletin boards repapered and the blocks neatly stacked, things went smoothly until it came time to take the children to the bathroom to wash up for snack time. Like most kindergarten teachers, Sue Jenkins instructed her students to form two lines, one for boys and the other for girls. When one young girl stood amongst the boys, the teacher gently directed her to join the other line. The child protested, saying she belonged in the boys' line. Refusing to budge, the child invited taunts from the other children and Ms. Jenkins faced a predicament she felt unprepared to address.

The teacher later learned that the child in question was, in fact, anatomically a boy and self-identified as such. It turned out that his grandmother, in accordance with her religion, had promised the Saints that she would present her grandson as a female to the outside world until the age of six. The teacher subsequently let the child stand in the boys' line and allowed him to use the bathroom of his choice. Several months later, hair newly cropped and happily donned in "boy's" clothing, the child entered school on his sixth birthday, finally able to express his gender in a fashion consistent with his self-

perception.

Most would consider this state of affairs an oddity, not to mention unkind. After all, what kind of caretaker would force a loved one to assume an identity than runs contrary to his or her true self, triggering inner conflict and shame? Because the young child in question was forced to abandon a gender role considered to be his rightful one not only by mainstream society but by the boy himself, the grandmother's behavior is understood by many as abusive.

The truth be told, tens of thousands of similar abuses are perpetrated against young people each day, however unknowingly, by educators, peers, family members and society at large. Thousands of youth are aware by the time they reach school that their own inner sense of gender runs counter to the ways in which they are expected to express their gender to the outside world. For most of these youth there is no teacher who allows them to use the bathroom or line that is most consistent with who they are; there is no sixth birthday looming to rescue them to a life of 'normalcy.'

According to Moonhawk River Stone, a female to male (FTM) transsexual man and psychotherapist, gender-variant youth reach a realization of their difference somewhere between the ages of 3 and 5, though they often don't have language or concepts through which to express and understand it. Even at that young age, Stone says, children have been so inculcated by biologically determined gender expectations that they begin to incorporate shame and secrecy. "By the time the child gets to junior or senior high school, the extreme isolation, confusion, and hopelessness these children often feel is immense because it has been going on for ten years or longer."

As painful as this inner turmoil can be, it is often the threat of external danger that imperils the lives of transgender youth. The story of Brandon Teena, depicted in the recent film *Boys Don't Cry*, is a case in point. Brandon, a pre-operative FTM transsexual who integrated himself as a male into his local Nebraska community, was brutally raped, beaten, and eventually murdered by two male friends who discovered his anatomical sex.

Unfortunately, this isn't an isolated experience: according to news reports, at least five transgender individuals were murdered in the six months following the fatal beating of Matthew Shepard. A 1998 report released by the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Projects found that transgender people represent a growing percentage of the total number of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people reporting victimization. Additionally, transgender individuals report regular harassment or discrimination at the hands of police, health professionals, civil servants, and the legal system. Most of our schools fail to provide safe, discrimination-free havens as well.

In September of 1999, the Antelope, California school board voted 3-2 to dismiss a male to female transsexual teacher - despite her stellar teaching record - after she informed her colleagues that she would be transitioning to a female role. The board claimed to take issue with the explicitness with which Ms. Rivers shared details of her experience with students, and its potential impact on their young minds. "But the real reason they are upset is that I am gender-different," asserts Ms. Rivers, who received widespread support from her community. "I don't fit into their concept of what a good teacher is. No matter what I did or didn't do last spring, [the board] would still not want me teaching."

"And what message have we sent to those students in conflict?" asks dissenting Antelope school board member Nancy Anderson in the wake of the controversy. "What are we doing to help those students now? In essence, we're telling them that they'll be sent away, that they're a huge shame to the district." What happened in California is not new. Though erased from the majority of historical accounts, gender-variant people have always existed, and their identities have always been called into question. As far back as 1629, Virginia court records tell the story of Thomas/ina Hall, an indentured servant born female, self-identified as male, and donning the clothing of both. Confused by Hall, fellow villagers brought the matter to court. When anatomical inspections proved inconclusive, the court, in its infinite wisdom, pronounced that Hall was both

male and female, ordering him to wear female headgear and an apron over his male attire to mark his dual status. Despite making a public spectacle of Hall and depriving him of his individual freedom, the court's decision reflects a rather remarkable precedent: the legal assignment of a person to a special gender category that had not previously existed. It is unfortunate that today's legal scholars fail to demonstrate the insights of their predecessors.

Actual statutes against cross-dressing and cross-gendered behavior exist in modern law, while few protections can be found. According to Patricia A. Cain, Professor of Law at the University of Iowa and author of *Stories From the Gender Garden: Transsexuals and Anti-Discrimination Law*, "Title VII protects employees against discrimination on account of sex. Numerous state statutes protect persons from sex discrimination in employment, housing, credit, and education. At least ten states and the District of Columbia have statutes that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. And Congress is considering once again the ENDA, which would make employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation illegal in all states. With two exceptions none of these statutory protections offer any protection to transsexual or transgender individuals."

This statement begs the question of where one begins to search for a solution. Certainly part of the answer lies within legal reform. If laws exist protecting individuals from sex discrimination, then they must be applied equally to all regardless of whether they are male, female, both, or neither. Legal reform alone, however, will not bring about change in the hearts and minds of ordinary citizens.

As GLSEN members know, this kind of change comes through education. And just as we know administrators and educators have a responsibility to create safe and respectful schools for all, so, too, do we have a responsibility to educate about the limitations of a society constructed upon narrow gender definitions.

Imagine that the human population was forced to exist exclusively on one of the earth's poles, south or

north, no in-between. There would be no occasion to witness the majestic peak of Everest or the grandeur of the Grand Canyon, no opportunity to experience the dark shadows of the Amazon Jungle or the radiance of a Tahitian sunrise. Lost would be most variations in climate and topography. Over time the people might forget the wonders of the earth between the extremities, and even come to understand their polarized world as normal and natural. And so it is with conceptions of gender.

We have naturalized the binary understanding of humanity that presents male/female and masculine/feminine dichotomies as normal to such a degree that we have negated and demonized all those who deviate from the poles. Instead of conceiving gender as biologically determined, we must move toward an awareness of gender as a socially imposed set of expectations and roles.

Judith Butler reminds us that gender is a “doing,” a set of “illusions that are the product of specific circumstances in space and time.” In the more colloquial words of Laisha Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Gates, a character in Craig Hickman’s new novel *SisterGirl*, “Gender is a performance, darling. Anybody that can’t see that got they weave in too tight.” Once we understand that gender is enacted, not inherent, it becomes evident that transgender people have not actually crossed or transgressed any lines, but have rather suffered at the hands of those who would try to squeeze them into small boxes that they were never meant to fit. The only crossing over that enters the equation is the transgression of mind that must take place within society so that children are raised and educated in social contexts that allow them to develop freely as human beings regardless of their anatomies.

Upcoming Events

Speaker/Program schedule subject to change

August 2000

26 - Crystal Club regular meeting
Guest speakers will be Stephanie and Bran talking about transitioning

September 2000

8 - Crystal Club business meeting
23 - Crystal Club regular meeting
Picnic

October 2000

13 - Crystal Club business meeting
28 - Crystal Club regular meeting
Halloween Party

Speaker/Program schedule subject to change



The Crystal Chronicle Information Page

Our Purpose

The Crystal Club is a non-profit social and support group for transvestites, cross dressers, transsexuals, and other transgendered individuals. Spouses and significant others are welcome and encouraged to participate. Both male-to-female and female-to-male individuals are welcome. Also, members from related organizations, helpful professionals and approved guests are welcome when cleared through a Crystal Club officer.

What to Expect at a Meeting

Except for being transgendered, participants in the club are just like other people. We dress pretty much like average people, and meet only to socialize and participate in club functions. We range in age from our 20's to our 60's, and come from a wide range of professions. Most of us are cross dressers, although several of us are transsexuals. Most of us are married and have kids, and often our spouses attend the meetings, too. Nothing of a sexual nature is permitted at any of the meetings.

You will not be criticized for how well you dress or pass. The club isn't a beauty contest. We range from hardly convincing to completely passing. Some of us dress up, some dress down. Come however you are comfortable. Our regular meetings will have a private changing room, so you may bring a change of clothing with you.

We do insist, however, that you dress either completely male or completely female. Gender-blending attire is normally not an option. We also insist that everyone behaves as ladies and gentlemen (which is more polite than simply "women and men"). Overtly sexual or obnoxious behavior is unwelcome; we don't need to exasperate the feelings of people who are already nervous!

You will not be required to reveal your legal name, or any other personal information. You can be as open or anonymous as you wish. We ALL have been newcomers and have had similar feelings. We can (and will) sympathize completely!

Membership Dues

One year membership, includes newsletter	\$42
Newsletter subscription only	\$18
Meeting Fees: First Timer	Free
Member (of any T group)	\$10
Member and Partner	\$15
Non-Member	\$20

Your membership renewal date is shown after your name on the mailing label. Membership fees paid on months other than January are prorated to January.

Contact Information

Postal Mail:

The Crystal Club
PO Box 287
Reynoldsburg OH 43068-0287

Screening Officers:

(614) 806-7288 (with voice mail)
LadyJB4u@aol.com

Electronic Mail:

cc@tgender.net

World Wide Web Page:

<http://www.tgender.net/cc>

Contact Policy

All calls are kept strictly confidential. We do not use caller ID and will return your call only at your request. If you are still concerned about caller ID, you can block this function by pressing *67 (or dialing 1167 for rotary/pulse) before the phone number. All written inquiries are kept confidential. The newsletter is mailed in a plain, white envelope, bearing only the return PO box and no markings pertaining to the Crystal Club. The meeting location is never published, and is only disclosed after a prospective attendee has been interviewed by the screening officer.

Meeting Dates and Times

Regular meetings are held the fourth Saturday of the month, except for November and December. The doors open at about 6:30 p.m. (for those wishing to change). The meeting begins at 8:00 p.m. Refreshments are normally provided, and activities usually center around a presenter or selected topic. Several members may go to an accepting dance club or restaurant after the meeting (of course, this is optional).

A business meeting is held on the second Friday of the month. The doors open at 7:30 p.m. After the club's business is addressed, this meeting is more of a relaxed and personal discussion time than the regular meeting - a great time to get support for "real world" issues!

During the month of December, and at various other times, we will hold special activities (such as a holiday party). These will be announced in the newsletter.

