



The Crystal Chronicle

Columbus, OH

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

Vol. 12, No. 9 - October 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 or Jannie Abeille before the end of each month. Their e-mail address are:

kelly@tgender.net
jannie@tgender.net

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

Change of Leadership

Because of personal commitments, Kelly has found it necessary to step down as club president. She will continue to participate in the club, and will continue as co-editor of our newsletter. On behalf of the membership, I would like to thank Kelly for her service to the club, both at the beginning, and recently. The role of president has never been an easy one.

Until next year's elections, Tina has agreed to take over as president. I am hoping that everyone welcomes and thanks her for her willingness to step into this position.

Transgenderism Discussion at OSU by Tina

On October 5th, the Ohio State University's Student Gender and Sexuality Services held a discussion group called "The Implications of being Transgender in our Community." The following people were present:

Willa Young, the Director of Student Gender and Sexuality Services; Attorney Dottie Painter, who has some transgender clients, and deals with these type of cases; Professor Jennifer Terry, who wrote a book entitled "American Obsession;" and Mr. Jeff Redfield of the Stonewall Union. There were also several Crystal Club members present: Me (Tina), Dawn, Carey, Jamie Elizabeth from Dayton, and in the audience was Rachael. About 25 or 30 students, all who were interested in the issues, also attended.

We all introduced ourselves and said something and then Willa opened the floor up for questions. I let Dawn and Carey answer most of the questions because they were directed their way with topics such as sexual reassignment surgery, and job issues with being transgendered.

The Professor told of an instance on campus where a transgendered person had her name changed. She therefore lost all Ohio resident privileges and thus her grant and scholarships for OSU. They could not let her

reinstate it back to help her schooling.

After many talks and discussions, the one person who summed it up best was Carey's friend, who said, "We need to stop labeling ourselves and putting ourselves into boxed categories. We need to think not of certain classes of people, or certain categories of people, but start supporting the Human Race." It was a great experience just to be there and see the support that we have in our community.

Did you know that lots of gay and lesbian people don't even know we exist? I've met Jeff Redfield in person, and introduced myself to him and thanked him for all the referrals he sends us. I've talked to him on the phone before, but this gave me the chance to meet him. I felt as relaxed there as I would if it was one of our own functions. I went out and bought a new outfit just for that night and I actually dressed down, not quite as feminine as I usually try to. Wish you all could have experienced it with me.

TINA



Fantastic Voyage

By Dawn Stansbery

I am sure all of you have either seen or heard of the movie "Fantastic Voyage." Perhaps you have had the opportunity to reflect on the miraculous process which enabled the characters to be miniaturized in order to perform a specialized surgery that could not have been done in the norm of the medical profession. In a sense, my journey has been a fantastic voyage. Because of that, I was asked to share with all of you that voyage in which you all were a very large part of why and how I was able to progress.

All of us in the transgendered world have had to deal with many problems related with our community, starting with the time in which we began to wonder why we were the way we were. Of course, for most of us, it was at a very young age. For some, we went on to pursue a more in-depth course of action which would allow us to become the opposite

gender from that with which we were born (GRS).

My struggles were many, from trying to cover up my femininity, with doing what was expected of me as a male, to marry, have a family, etc. This part of my life I will never regret because it is another part of me with a larger reward, in that I have a family that supports me and loves me for who I am and not what I look like. They know that society is wrong in their definition of those in the transgendered world, simply because society lacks the education of the many problems that the human body and mind are subjected to. What they need to be apprised of is that we are just now learning more and more about what we are and how and why we are who we are. A case example is the book of life, the study of the genetic map.

But what I have been allowed to do is due largely in part with the Crystal Club and the many friends that I have been able to acquire. These friends have supported me for who I am. I also have a wonderful therapist in Meral Crane, which, without her guidance, I would not have been able to proceed to this point in my life. I have struggles in which I have had to deal with since I started living my new life. For example, employment struggles, prejudice, just to mention a couple. And it is people like Meral that have made it possible for me to go on. Because of that, I have been able to endure. I am gainfully employed in a house cleaning business of my own, sharing that business with my life partner. I am in my junior year at Ohio State University, majoring in psychology. And, of course, I finally have a community in which I live that has finally accepted me for the person I am, and that is something that I cannot take for granted.

In closing, I want to offer a heartfelt thank you to all of you for your friendship. I will remember you always, particularly when I complete my fantastic voyage on March 20 in Montreal. God Bless you all.

With all my love,
Dawn



Hair today, gone tomorrow?

By Rachel Andrews

Well, this is my first submission to the newsletter. Please excuse the lack of poetic prose, I am used to writing in a more technical style. I have been doing a little research that some people might find interesting. It started when I finally decided to change my hairstyle after several years. While examining the results in the mirror I got out a hand mirror to look at the top and back and noticed that the top of the head had a little more scalp showing through it than I remembered. I figured it must be the light or something, but I finally admitted those dreaded male hormones must have been doing their thing up top.

The first thing to do was hit the Internet to get as much background data as possible on the subject. The number of hair loss related sites are huge. And every one of them has just the perfect product they are willing to sell you (for only \$19.95 plus shipping and handling). After weeding out the miracle cures, I concentrated on the ones that appeared to have actual scientific evidence to back up their claims. The two treatments that actually seem to do something are the ones you see advertised all the time, Minoxidil and Propecia. At this point, if you think you need these products, you probably already know more about these than I do. What I attempted to do was verify any claims and look for some possible alternatives to the treatments that require a prescription.

The first, Minoxidil, is now available over the counter in 2 percent and 5 percent concentrations. It also comes in a less expensive generic form, but only at the 2 percent option. By the way, research shows that the 5 percent solution of Minoxidil acts much more effectively than the 2 percent solution. If you were going to take the time and effort to use it anyway, I would recommend the stronger product. Another study showed that long term use of the product could increase facial and body hair growth, owing to some of the medication being absorbed systemically throughout the body. This may be a concern to someone considering electrolysis or other hair removal. I have not used the product yet, as I did not want to confuse the results with the other

treatment options I wanted to try.

The second treatment, Propecia, is still available only by prescription. I looked into the active ingredient of Propecia - Finasteride. It acts on restoring hair growth by blocking the conversion of testosterone to Dihydrotestosterone (DHT), that normally occurs through the action of the enzyme 5-alpha-reductase. It is the DHT that causes the susceptible hair follicles on the top of the head to slow down and eventually stop growing. I found that in addition to Finasteride, there has been research into a number of other naturally occurring compounds that also block the conversion of testosterone into DHT. These have mainly been used in the area of cures for prostate enlargement, as DHT is also responsible for the growth of prostate gland tissue. I came up with a list of potentially useful substances that have been reported to inhibit DHT production and possibly promote hair growth. These are based on plant extracts and do not require a prescription. The ones for which I could find actual research papers are as follows:

- 1) Extract of the Saw Palmetto berry. This is well known and has been used in a number of products for the treatment of enlarged prostates for years. It is the fatty acid component Sitosterol that is the active ingredient that blocks DHT conversion. Saw Palmetto is sold in two variations, the unprocessed berries and the extract. The berries contain fairly low levels of the active compound and show little effect on DHT levels. If you are thinking of using the product, make sure to get the type that has been standardized to show 80 to 90 percent fatty acids.

- 2) Gamma Linoleic Acid (GLA). This has been shown in several studies to be a potent alpha reductase inhibitor. This compound is found in several plant extracts. The most concentrated form is found in Borage Seed Oil. This contains up to 20 percent GLA. Another source is Evening Primrose Oil. However, this contains only about 10 percent GLA.

- 3) Green Tea Extract. The active ingredient found in this product is a number of related chemicals known as catechins, the most potent reductase

inhibitor of these is known as Epigallocatechin Gallate (EGCG). Once again, the extract, instead of the raw herb, contains a much higher level of the active ingredient. Look for the extract that says it is high in polyphenols.

4) Cimetidine. This is not a herb, but the antacid medicine sold under the brand name Tagamet. Cimetidine does not block the production of DHT, but rather acts as a weak anti-androgen. It blocks the binding of DHT to the receptor sites in the hair (and any other cell in the body). It has been used for years as a drug to treat androgen-related baldness in women, but is not prescribed for men due to 'unwanted feminizing effects.' The normal treatment is usually about 1200 to 1500 milligrams per day to show any positive effect. The drug should be taken in smaller doses spread out at morning, mid-day and evening to maintain therapeutic levels, since it is rapidly broken down by the body over a few hours.

I decided to try out a combination of the above to see what effect it would have on hair growth. I went with a regimen of 2 tablets each of the above listed items in the morning and another 2 in the evening, using the concentrated extracts as opposed to the raw herbs. After a few months, I went to 3 of each twice per day. The results? Well, it is a little hard to say, as it is a totally subjective measurement, comparing what you see now versus what you remember the top of your head looking like several months ago. I would recommend taking a before and after picture to be more accurate about it. When I started out I did not have any actual bare spots but rather the hair at the crown appearing finer in texture. After about 6 months of usage I am pretty sure that at least I am no worse off than I was, and possibly have shown some actual thickening up of the hair at the crown of the head.

Another thing worth mentioning is the 'side effects' I have noticed from this experiment. The most noticeable is the effect it has had on body hair. I have noticed that the hair on my arms and legs has become considerably lighter in color and finer in texture. The rate of body hair growth has also appeared to slow down somewhat, as well. As for the facial hair, it is still there (darn it) but at the times when I am using

the anti-DHT combination it looks like it may grow slightly slower. A few times, due to travel or other reasons, I had to stop the treatment for a week or two. At those times, the beard did seem to grow a little faster. The most surprising thing to me that came out the whole process was the effect the DHT blockers had on my general emotional state. I am normally fairly quick tempered and have a tendency to blow small problems out of proportion. While using the treatment, I have noticed I am much more 'mellow' about the problems that come up on a daily basis and the overall 'male aggressiveness' part of my personality is much reduced. The final conclusion: for those persons unable or unwilling to get a prescription to deal with hair loss, there might be other alternatives available. Plus, the 'side effects' of the androgen blockers may be useful for those people who want to control the level of maleness both physically and emotionally in their lives. (Note: I am not a doctor. This is just an experiment and the results are still hazy at best. Your mileage may vary).

What now? Since I saw some potential benefits from the do-it-yourself treatment, I have recently gone to my doctor and gotten a prescription for Propecia. The costs involved don't appear to be too much different from what I am spending now, and I want to see what the 'real' product is like. I will be trying this out for a few months along with the use of the topical Minoxidil treatments. I will let you all know in a few months how things compare.

P.S. While I've got your attention in the self-help area, when researching the hair care sites on the Internet, I found many of them had tips for nail care as well. I again tried to go with only those that had actual case studies behind them. The one that looked most interesting was one that tested a biotin supplement at 2 to 3 milligrams per day to enhance nail growth. They reported a 25 percent increase in fingernail strength and thickness at the end of their 5 month study. I have been taking the supplement at 3 milligrams per day for about 4 months and I have one thing to say. It works! My nails have always been very weak and prone to breaking. Since starting on the biotin, I can definitely tell my nails are much stiffer, thicker, and stronger than they were before. Now, this is not an

overnight effect. Since only the new nail growth is affected, and the nail grows at about 1 millimeter per week, it will take about 3 months on average for the stronger growth to go from the base to the tip of the nail. Also, biotin is one of the B vitamin complexes that can be toxic in extreme doses. Limit daily intake to no more than the suggested 3 milligrams.

Well, thanks for letting me ramble on. Until next time, this is Dr. Andrews (Nurse Andrews?) bidding you a fond farewell.



New Opening In Stonewall Columbus Board

Stonewall Columbus is looking for a member of the TG community to fill a new opening on their board. There may be multiple positions in the future.

In 1999, the term "transgendered" was added to the group's mission statement. Now, the group hopes a transgendered seat on its board will help to better serve the community of transgendered people.

"These issues are similar to gay and lesbian issues," explained Stonewall Director Jeff Redfield. While most existing transgendered groups are political in nature, Redfield sees Stonewall as a source for social support services and referrals. Redfield said feedback to the organization indicated it should offer more transgendered support groups and grief support groups for the GLBT community.

This is a very nice solution for anyone who does not identify as 100% male or 100% female, as many of us do not. It also ensures that at least one seat is reserved for us, and it avoids any possible disagreement in case someone applies for a seat reserved for a gender that others perceive him or her as not belonging to.

If anyone wishes to be considered for this position, or simply has a comment, they may contact them at:

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Out and Accomplished: TG people provide positive role models

By Li Anne W. Taft
received from GAIN

"I didn't know you were trans, I couldn't tell" must have been a frequent response heard by Dr. Christine McGinn, a NASA physician, after she revealed to her colleagues that she is a transgender woman and a lesbian. Dr. McGinn, 31, a former Navy pilot and NASA medical emergency crewmember, 'outed' herself in her hometown of Philadelphia because she 'felt a responsibility to come forward' as a good representation of the TG community. Like many of us who have come out, she probably has many days when she regrets her decision to go public.

To come out or not to come out is a question that tears at most TG men and women. The results can be rewarding yet devastating. Dana Rivers, a California teacher, was soon fired after she came out during her transition. Now, she's an activist fighting to get her job back and encouraging others to come out of their 'closets'. Very 'out' about her gender change and outspoken about the biased treatment she's received, Dana has made a network of new friends, gained support from all over the US and is helping to build a community of Trans-folks who are standing up against discrimination.

In a recent article she wrote, Rivers stated that "it is especially important that trans-people, who have made their transitions successfully, (to) be out and visible and put an end to hiding and living 'stealth' ". Ms. Rivers believes that TG people are an oppressed group that would find unity and strength by being

'out', that we would have safer and more collective in "our collective energy".

Phyllis Frye, a well-known TG lawyer respected nationally for her work with TG rights and social justice, wrote recently that "discrimination (from others) starts with full-time transition". She further stated in a recent commentary posted on the Internet that harm and loss of rights of TG people comes from others as soon as we identify ourselves as changing or having changed our gender. Hearing that is probably enough to keep most TG people in the closet.

Yet in the eye of this 'storm', many TG people continue to 'out' themselves to help stop the harassment, the open discrimination and to return dignity to their lives and others. Lauren Manzano, a international championship woman cyclist, announced at the age of 36 that she had sex change surgery as a teen and now hopes to provide encouragement to young people struggling with TG issues. NYPD office Janet Ailleo and St. Petersburg county sheriff Tonye Barreto-Neto provide another amazing example of 'self-outing' and successful gender transitions. They both are now very visible members of TOPS (Transgender Officers Protect and Serve) a national advocacy group for TG military, police, paramedics, firefighters and others in public service.

Though accomplished and proud, many transgendered men and women in Hawai'i shy away from coming out. Those who find full integration in our society, one that is not always so accepting of differences, try to just fit in. A good friend of mine, a successful leader with a [ADD-human] service agency, advised me while I was searching for willing participants for this story. In her opinion, there are many TS people in the islands who, several years after transition, blend well into society and now don't want any exposure. She pointed out that such people who have worked very hard to achieve a good, average life are not very willing to go public and put everything they have at risk. However, they still may quietly mentor other people, one on one, who are struggling with gender issues and not necessarily be known to the larger population.

Her last remark struck at the heart of the issue when she said that political, judicial, business, professional and artistic communities have all known and accepted TG people for generations. Personally I know of a college lecturer, a therapist, a PhD student, a halfway house director and a bank officer, all of who are transgendered and have found full integration in our island society.

Personal accomplishments and pride aside, to be out or not is a very personal choice for those who have changed gender. And whatever their choice, they deserve respect and privacy from both TG and non-TG folks alike. I encourage the more secure TG folks that they 'come out' and demonstrate the wonderful diversity in human existence that we exhibit. It is good when TG folks can show that many of us are successful, functional, loving people - real human beings just like the rest of the world!

My hope is that TG people who are in situations and places that present little or no threat to their lives, family and livelihood would come out to be positive role models. Their collective presence would certainly encourage others to accept gender variances more readily. Perhaps then our society could truly begin to appreciate the inner strength and deep human spirit of transgendered people and not focus on nor fear our unique differences.



Politician backs rights of four million eunuchs

A politician has insisted the four million eunuchs in Bangladesh must be given voting rights and access to education.

"I don't understand why eunuchs should not enjoy social and human rights," said Mohammad Shahjahan, an MP from the ruling Awami League party.

They are barred from voting because their sex

cannot be determined and many do not go to school because they fear being teased or ostracized.

Most of the eunuchs, known as Hijras in the predominantly Muslim country, are transsexuals and hermaphrodites who wanted to become women. Hijras traditionally were entertainers who performed songs and dances at social gatherings.

Shahjahan urged the authorities to treat eunuchs as physically challenged human beings in need of medical treatment.

"Modern medical science has found ways to transform eunuchs into full human beings," he said in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh. Mozammel Hossain, junior government minister for social welfare, said the government would consider his suggestions.



Upcoming Events

Speaker/Program schedule subject to change

October 2000

28 - Crystal Club regular meeting
Halloween Party

November 2000

10 - Crystal Club business meeting

Note: Because of the holidays, there will be no regular meeting in November or December. A holiday party is planned for early December. More details will be available with the next issue of the newsletter.

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
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Screening Officers:

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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.

