

The Crystal Chronicle

January / February 2004

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

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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 the Club before the end of each month. The e-mail address is: cnl@tgender.net

Editors Notes:

Hi girls, there has been a lot of things happening around the world lately. I think the UK has finally worked most of the problems they had from their transgender, sex-change and same-sex marriage issues. Massachusetts same-sex union is still on going; however, now that it has to be called "same-sex marriage" all the holier than thou people are objecting to the law being passed. New York, Tompkins County just became the **Tenth county in the nation** passing a law to protect transgender people in its county. Congratulations to San Francisco's Mayor Gavin Newsom, a Democrat for taking a stand against the discrimination and for becoming first in issuing marriage licenses for same sex couples. If my memory serves me right, San Francisco used to be recognized as the Gay capital of the world. Murder and other crimes against transgender people are finally the courthouses across the nation. Transgender people having sex changes are in the news and people are starting to realize that we are out of the Closet and that we are just ordinary people. Some are doctors, lawyers, even a firefighter from a small town in Massachusetts. April 30 – May 2, 2004 Transgender people across the nation will merge on Washington D.C. I wonder if George Bush will notice all the voters visiting his town. I wish we could get George and some of his boys to attend a few of the workshops. This year workshops will explore race and gender, gender stereotypes in parenting, and how to end discrimination and violence caused by gender stereotypes in your community. I think that George and the boys could learn something. They could "cross-dress" and with a little makeup they could blend in. Ok a lot of makeup.

New Years Eve

Some of the girls from the Crystal Club, friends and myself enjoyed a night out at Slammers. The night consisted of tasty pizza, drinks, and warm conversation. Club 202 in the rear was being made ready for a drag show. We were invited to attend as guest of Slammers the night became one of illusion as the drag show left minds wondering where did "IT" go. After the show we retired back to Slammers. While I was talking to friends a woman came up to one of our girls and asks if she had a pad. Our girl asks me for my pad and ink pin, in which I gave it to her. The woman wrote on the paper "do you have a pad" I explained that I didn't however I would see if I could get her one. After everything settled down I told her that she had just graduated and that she passed as a lady. Now she enjoys going out and is not so self-conscious about being outed or not blending in. Now when we go out she is sometimes setting there when I arrive. www.slammersbar.com

Marriage Equality Week being observed nationwide

Friday Feb. 13 2004 Columbus, Ohio

To commemorate their love for each other six couples entered the courthouse and they were denied marriage licenses by the Franklin County Probate Court. This was a scene being played out across the country yesterday, the day before Valentine's Day. The problem for the court clerks was that the couples seeking licenses were of the same sex. Laws in Ohio and 37 other states prohibit same-sex marriages.

"Do the math. If you have 50 states and you take away 37 states how many states do you have left? === If you did your math correct you should have 13 states. Isn't that the number of states this country was founded on?" Sam Peppers, a Probate Court magistrate said "We can't stop anyone from filling out an application, but if it's obvious they are the same sex, the clerk will simply deny their application." The polite protest, continued with a demonstration in front of the Hall of Justice, was an effort to rally support against the so-called Defense of Marriage Act passed by the legislature this month and signed by Gov. Bob Taft.

The activists are claiming discrimination, especially since the Massachusetts Supreme Court ordered its state legislature last week to allow same-sex marriages. "We have to stand up for our rights and be able to be married," said Joshua J. Wiley, while holding hands with partner Christopher Hoffman. "Others have fought for equality, so what's so wrong with us getting married?"

One couple has been partners for 22 years are retired government employees, said their sexual orientation prohibited them from obtaining basic work benefits for years.

Will all the non-same-sex couples that have been married or together for 22 years. Please stand up.

"We think it's a civil-rights issue," said Joe Gentilini, a retired state worker who filled out an application with partner Leo Reed, a retired postal worker.

Just before the protest, Steve Allen and Barb Hildreth filed an application and received a \$40 license for a wedding they planned for today. They were unaware of the protest outside but were sympathetic when told about it. She said. "I have a son who is gay, and I would love for them to be married in a ceremony," "They should have the same rights I do."

Outside the courthouse, protesters clutched their partners and signs.

One of the signs read, "DOMA = DOBA Defense of Bigotry Act." Another proclaimed: "Never be ashamed of love. Be ashamed of Ohio."

Only one of the couples had a marriage license: Her partner was born a man but underwent a sex-change operation soon after their marriage in July 2002. "We're here because all our sisters and brothers should have the same rights we do," Katherine Kereluik said.

To read more about this story use the link below.

<http://www.dispatch.com/news-story.php?story=dispatch/2004/02/14/20040214-C1-04.html>

Texas

16 gay couples who applied for marriage licenses Friday at the Harris County clerk's office were turned away because the state does not allow same-sex marriages. About 50 supporters waited outside while the couples went inside to request licenses. "We said we have birth certificates and money and identification and we'd like to apply for a marriage license," said Lynne Shepherd. "I knew they were going to say no, but it hurt." She and her partner, Kathy Meyer, will celebrate their 11th anniversary together in May.

David Beirne, spokesman for the clerk's office, said its personnel knew the demonstration was planned and were prepared. "The staff understands the law," he said, "and it was very courteously explained."

Five same-sex couples requested licenses in Austin and were turned away at the Travis County clerk's office.

Brad Parks and Michael McClain arrived well aware of the outcome. "They just want to be together like everybody else," said McClain's mother, Betty, who tagged along. "Everybody deserves to be happy."

Shirley Holmes, who carried a sign reading "Honor Gay Marriage," said she was there to support her son.

"Our gay children deserve equal rights," Holmes said.

A few feet away, about seven men and women protested the demonstration, with some shouting insults.

"I've got two dogs that want to get married," yelled one man. "Can you get a marriage license for dogs?"

"Gay? Got AIDS Yet?" read a sign carried by a man who would not give his name. "Freedom of speech doesn't require identification," he said.

A man identifying himself as "Captain Bijou" explained why several of the anti-gay demonstrators were wearing protective masks: "We're in an AIDS zone." He said he was there because of his religious beliefs and his desire to "save our country from all that's happening ... all the indecencies our country is accepting." Aubrey Vaughan, pastor of Grace Baptist Church, carried a sign that said "Sodomites Destroy the Family" and was passing out several pages titled "What Does the Bible Teach about Homosexuality?"

Marilyn Meeker-Williams, pastor of Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, told the gay couples, "God's blessing is with you."

Cindy Scott and Stephanie Welch said they had a ceremony in another church about five years ago but recently experienced a problem because their union is not legally recognized. About a month ago, Scott said, she went to the Cy-Fair Hospital emergency room with symptoms of a heart attack, and Welch was told she could not make any decisions regarding Scott's treatment. Welch said she called Scott's two grown sons in nearby towns and asked them to come. Hospital officials recognized them as "real family members," Welch said.

Demonstrators also said gays can lose their homes when partners die and can't qualify for the tax benefits heterosexual couples get.

Got genes: T.C. Sinhaputri said that when she applied for a marriage license, with a friend serving as proxy for her partner Venya Sinhaputri, who is in Singapore. She did not get a definite refusal. She said her partner was born intersexed with an XXY chromosome pattern and was "reassigned without a choice as a child." Sinhaputri said she asked the clerk, "If a person has an XY chromosome, can we get married, or will it hinge on a person's physical appearance?" She said she was told that if she documented the XY chromosome, they could be issued a marriage license. However, clerk spokesman Beirne explained that if it was determined later in the courts that two people were of the same gender, their marriage would be invalidated and they "would be guilty of filing a false document." Many of the couples presented large artificial sunflowers to the clerk, who denied their requests. "We chose sunflowers because they follow the light throughout the day," said Lynne Shepherd. "We hope people will see the light."

Despite the lack of legal licenses, a same-sex marriage ceremony was planned for Friday night at Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church.

San Francisco

Phyllis Lyon, 83, and Del Martin, 79, were married shortly after 11 a.m. PST. The longtime lesbian activists have been a couple for 51 years, and are veterans of decades of gay-rights struggles. Two women marched down the aisle into history Thursday, becoming the first of at least 15 same-sex couple to be married in a government-sanctioned civil ceremony in the United States. Meanwhile, anti-gay groups lined up to challenge the city's landmark new policy in court. Mayor Gavin Newsom, a Democrat, made good on a promise to act quickly to erase language in marriage-license documents that discriminates against gays and lesbians. His stand was seen as an act of civil disobedience, because California law defines marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman. However, some legal experts said that this definition is at odds with the California Constitution's equal rights protections, and state law prohibiting discrimination against gays and lesbians based on gender.

Geoffrey Kors, the executive director of Equality California, a gay rights advocacy group, said. "Yesterday, same-sex couples couldn't get married. Today, they can."

"This is an unforgettable day," said Kate Kendall, executive director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights. "For the first time in this country, lesbian and gay couples in loving, committed relationships were able to exercise the same right to protect their families that other married couples take for granted." Groups that oppose marriage for gays and lesbians promised a court fight. The Marriage Law Project and the Alliance Defense Fund announced plans to seek an injunction to block San Francisco from issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples. "It's sad to see organizations pouring so much money and causing so much division, just to keep couples from taking on the commitment of marriage to protect their families," said Evan Wolfson, executive director of Freedom to Marry, an organization working to win marriage equality nationwide. Wolfson told the Gay.com/PlanetOut.com network that GLBT couples have been denied the freedom to marry for too long, and the struggle will not stop until marriage equality is achieved. At this date several court hearings have determined that overturning same-sex marriage would be against California's anti-discrimination laws.

Also Thursday, California State Assembly member Mark Leno, D-San Francisco, introduced the Marriage License Nondiscrimination Act. The bill would end discrimination in the issuance of marriage licenses statewide, allowing same-sex couples to obtain marriage licenses anywhere in California. While civil marriages performed for lesbian and gay couples in San Francisco may still have to pass legal muster, such unions are inevitable in Massachusetts. Last week, that state's highest court ruled that same-sex couples were entitled to marriage. The ruling goes into effect May 17.

http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=101&ncid=101&e=1&u=/po/20040213/co_po/lesbiancouplewedsfissuesmarriageLICENSEstogays

Sen. John Edwards, running second to Sen. John Kerry in the race for the Democratic presidential nomination, said on February 13 that he would not oppose same-sex marriage. Edwards told *Tonight Show* host Jay Leno that he opposed the Federal Marriage Amendment currently before Congress, and said that he favors allowing individual states to decide the issue for themselves.

Sen. John Kerry, the Democratic front-runner in the race for president, opposes same-sex marriages and supports civil unions. Two years ago Kerry signed a letter with fellow Massachusetts members of Congress urging the legislature to drop a proposed state marriage ban amendment. Kerry's official position now is that he prefers civil unions and rejects any state or federal legislation that could be used to eliminate equal protections for gays or other forms of recognition like civil unions. But Kerry leaves open the possibility he could support a Massachusetts ban on gay marriage if it recognized civil unions and other protections as an alternative. In 2002, he joined congressional colleagues in opposing the state's previous effort to outlaw gay marriage, saying it was overly broad. The letter, organized by Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., was sent on congressional stationery on July 12, 2002 as the Massachusetts legislature first considered a constitutional amendment that limited marriage to "only the union of one man and one woman." Lawmakers failed to pass a constitutional amendment in 2002, but the issued was revived this year after the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled gays were entitled to the same marriage as heterosexuals. State lawmakers have recessed this year's constitutional convention until March 11 after failing to pass three separate amendments to ban same-sex marriage.

New York State: Transgender protection

Ithaca and Tompkins County have long been known for the open-mindedness of their citizens. When Tompkins County first passed a law protecting the civil rights of homosexuals in 1991, it was a model for the rest of the state. Now, after a Tuesday night meeting its 1991 law will include all transgender people. Tompkins County became only the **tenth county in the nation** to pass a law protecting its transgender citizens.

The county lawmakers changed the law on February 17th making it illegal to discriminate based upon a person's "gender identity and expression," which the new law defines as "a person's actual or perceived gender identity, including gender-related self image, appearance, and behavioral or physical characteristics." This includes transsexuals, cross-dressers, and intersexed citizens, the new law will protect transgendered individuals from alleged discrimination in employment, education, credit, public accommodations, and housing. The county Human Rights Commission is given the subpoena power to pursue investigations against those discriminating against cross-dressers, transvestites, transsexuals, and she-males (individuals who maintain both male and female sexual characteristics.) The new law now makes it a crime to refuse to hire a person because he or she is wearing opposite sex clothing or may actually be a she-male whose demands include use of ether or both male and female restrooms. An objection to this law was what businessman wants to hire a man who thinks he's a woman and wears women's clothing to work? Under this new law, the businessman will be considered a criminal if he refuses employment to such a sexually confused individual. From among the audience, Richard Baer Jr. told the Legislature that he had concerns about the law's effect on schools, as the new language would make it illegal to not hire someone based on appearance. Baer further said, "You are giving special rights to a group, but we do not afford those rights to other groups," also "This would approve a **lifestyle** which many of us cannot do. This law seems to be a questionable project and will further split this community apart."

Proponents of the change say the law would impact many citizens. People with perfectly standard gender identities do not necessarily act like "traditional men" or "traditional women" all the time and the passing of this law is making sure that all of us have a broader range of expression and can be male, can be female; whatever, in the way that's most comfortable us.

"If you're a woman and you're being discriminated against, is that important? If you're an African American being discriminated against, is that important? Obviously, this is the class of people who's being discriminated against and we want to make sure that they're not," said Tompkins County Legislator Michael Koplinka-Loehr.

New York City and Chicago recently passed similar anti-discrimination laws. Only four states - Minnesota, Rhode Island, California, and New Mexico - have gender identity protection laws.

11 Democrats on the Legislature supported the law, while the four Republicans voted against it.

Editor's Comment: To the Richard Baer Jrs' of this world. "I do not need your approval for my lifestyle" and you will find another way not to hire someone because you do not like the way they look. There are people killed or hurt everyday just because someone did not like their lifestyle or the way that they look.

They walk funny, talk a little gay; He didn't drool at the girl in the dress so he must be homosexual. This anti-discrimination law and others like it will not stop the discrimination; however, it may help in the prosecution of the individuals and companies that trample on the rights of anyone pursuing their constitutional right to Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

I was recently interviewed for a warehouse/delivery job for a heating and cooling company. The person giving the interview told me if I cut my hair and agreed to let my earring holes heal over, the company would be interested in hiring me. This company has a woman working in the warehouse with shoulder length hair and 2" long earrings. His explanation for this was "she is a woman and the Company Policy did not apply to her."

Another job interview was shredding documents. The woman interviewer explained to me that "her Men do not wear any external jewelry and always have their hair neatly cut." "However she does have a Woman driver that has longer hair than mine and wears earrings."

I politely told him that I could not justly work for a company that discriminates against its employees. Also that changing my personal life was not part of their job description.

Maybe Ohio or Columbus will have an anti-discrimination law in the book one of these days. I can dream can't I?

Book Review: The Gender Frontier

by Gwendolyn Ann Smith

Having grown up as the child of a professional photographer, I feel a certain connection to the photographic image. Through the lens of a camera, we can capture moments and memories that would otherwise be lost to time. This can be especially true for the transgendered community. While things are evolving, decades have passed with few taking notice of our triumphs and tragedies, and our history runs a day-to-day risk of vanishing into the wind.

It's with this in mind that I look at a book like Mariette Pathy Allen's latest book, *The Gender Frontier* (Kehler Verlag, 2003).

I purchased her first book, *Transformations: Crossdressers and Those Who Love Them* (E.P. Dutton), way back in 1993 or so, while I was still self-identifying as a crossdresser. At a time when most of the published texts on transgender experience were in the medical community, and where few trans-folks were really willing to be shown visually, her book managed to capture voices and images of so many strong people. *The Gender Frontier* is not so much a follow-up to *Transformations* as it is a book that shows how much the community had shifted in the last decade. For example, rather than focusing solely on crossdressing, many of those in the new book display a great diversity in transgender presentation, including a sizable number of female to male individuals. Another big difference from Allen's first book is the shift from portraits taken in seemingly safe environments to photographs captured at Trans-rights demonstrations and such. This parallels how the transgender community has shifted in the decade-plus since Ms. Allen's first work. We've started to show a more transgressive, more visible face, and she is there to capture this shift.

Those pictured represent the more politically active and strong voices of the transgender community over the last decade. The James Greens and Nancy Nangeroni's of the nascent transgender movement. Allen's photos are as compelling as some of those seem in her first book, yet show a maturity in her art. I also find myself glad that *The Gender Frontier* does not have near as much text as the previous book: the photos really can speak for themselves. While so many of the images in *Transformations* were static portraits and interesting in their own

right -- The Gender Frontier's photos tend to tell a complete, complex story in each frame. There is an East Coast bias to the book, and I note a few missing folks from the overall mix. No Kate Bornstein, no Loren Cameron, and so on. A focus on Southern Comfort conference shots and a good smattering of D.C. and right coast politics, but a dearth of things elsewhere tends to make it seem as if "transgender" is an East Coast phenomenon.

I know that Ms. Allen can only be in so many places at a time, and the book is not so much a "comprehensive" view as it is a personal chronicle. Nevertheless, I still wish there were shots -- for example -- of San Francisco City Hall when the transgender health benefit package was passed. This is a small complaint about the book, and one that doesn't truly mar the work as a whole. The book deserves a spot in any list of valued transgender-themed books, and will be one I will gladly recommend for some time to come. I also will have to make sure to share it with my own father, knowing that while he may be uncomfortable with the theme, I am assured he'll appreciate the photography.

Gwen Smith is a transgendered writer, activist, lecturer and designer, though not necessarily in that order. You can find her on the Web at www.gwensmith.com

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Final comment, President George W. Bush announced on national TV that the United States of America needed a constitutional amendment to keep same-sex people from becoming married. He continued to say that if same-sex marriage were allowed that our children would suffer. According to Bush only a male female marriage is good for rearing children. Bush has the idea if children are raised by gay couples the children will become gay; but only if they have a "marriage license". Mr. Bush needs to open his eyes children suffer all the time from marriages mainly when they become **Divorce**. Gay couples have been raising children for years. Their children have become some of the most accepting and caring people in society, as for whether they are gay, that is a personal choice. Gay is not taught by any couple gay or straight, marriage license or no license.

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Mailing List and Yearly Dues January is membership renewal month.

We are trying to update the information list. Have you moved, changed your phone number or e-mail? Changed your name? Included in this is: How would you like to receive the newsletter and information concerning special events or meetings too late to include in the newsletter. The contact options are (E-mail, phone, or cctalk) sorry we cannot mail this information as most is short notice. **DO NOT** e-mail your contact information on cctalk. If you cannot come to a regular meeting, Please call 614-806-7288 or you can e-mail ccnl@tgender.net this link only comes to the newsletter editor. If you have news or wish to share a story with everyone feel free to send it to the [ccnl](#) link

Upcoming Meetings

February 28 2004 Election night “your vote matters”

The Crystal Chronicle Information Page

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Postal Mail: The Crystal Club att: newsletter editor PO Box 287 Reynoldsburg OH 43068-0287

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) **Electronic Mail:** cc@tgender.net

World Wide Web Page: <http://www.tgender.net/cc> **Newsletter editor e-mail:** ccnl@tgender.net

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 6:30p.m. (For those wishing to change). The meeting begins at 8:00 p.m. Refreshments are normally provided, and activities usually centers on a presenter or selected topic. Several members may go to an accepting dance club or restaurant after the meeting (of course, this is optional).

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.