

The Crystal Chronicle

September / October 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.

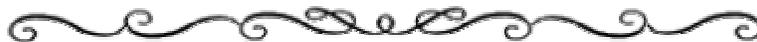
Complementary copies of the Chronicle may be obtained by contacting a club officer or any club member. News items for the Chronicle should be mailed to the Club before the end of each month. The e-mail address is: ccnl@tgender.net

Notes from the Girls:

Hello Girls, or should I say Helloween yep that's right it's that time again for our Halloween party. The party date has been changed to October 30 instead of the 23. That just gives some of us girls another night out. We hope to see a lot of you this year for a night of fun and friends. Who will be a hippie, school teacher, of something scary? Come October 30 and find out, hope to see you there

Your sister, Barbie

P.S. get your reservations in early for the Christmas party. We need to know how much food to bring.



Calling all Crystal club members

It's hard to believe another year is almost over. Membership renewal time and club elections are just around the corner. This is *your* club and *your* vote and input are important for the existence and growth of the Crystal Club. We need to know what you would like to do in 2005 and when. Next year we need to plan ahead. This year we had a lot of interest in a picnic but only a few people attended the picnic. The Crystal club rented the shelter house at a cost of \$60 plus food and drink expenses; about 8 people attended at \$5 a head plus the food dish. The club does not expect to make a profit from these outings only to come close to braking even on the expenses. The ones that were there had a great time maybe you weren't able to participate because we had it on a Sunday evening. If we plan ahead we can reserve the dates you want. Now is the time to start thinking about when and that you would like to do. Is there a speaker or subject for discussion that you would like to have at a meeting? Last year there was a small participation for the Halloween meeting. Halloween is the night of nights that a person can wear anything that they wish in public. This year we have changed the meeting date to October 30 to be more in tune with Halloween. We are trying to plan a Christmas dinner for December 4. We need to know if you will be attending this dinner.

Would you like to be the president, vice President, secretary, or would you like to be a newsletter editor. Make a difference in your club, become an active participant.





President – Responsible for the overall operation of the Crystal Club. Handles most of the contacts with other groups and organizations.

Vice-President – Assumes president's duties when she/he is unavailable, and duties of other positions when they are unavailable.

Screening Officer – Interviews potential members; responds to correspondence and answers the club telephone line.

Treasurer – Handles the club finances and keeps records of who are currently paid as members and their renewal date.

Secretary – Records minutes of board meeting and any information deemed important at general meeting.

Meeting Coordinator – Assists the Event Coordinator, and ensures the meeting site is open, food and beverages are present, decorations if needed, any other "nuts & bolts" necessary for the meeting to take place.

Librarian – Keeps newsletters, magazines, books, tapes, etc that the club has establishes a policy on lending out these items.



We have an elephant in our house:

I hope this may help you and yours in your journey. I have had the opportunity to live almost 50 years. They say hindsight is 20/20 and with what I know now my life probably would be different now. I do not regret my past, I have learned from it. As a male child of the early 50's my brother and me were taught that boys suppose to be tuff. My childhood was filled with confusion and disappointments. I was always reminded that "men don't cry" and "to quit acting like a girl, get tough and act like a man". I didn't like the ruff and tumble life of being a boy. My brother always played too ruff and it seemed that I ended up getting hurt or crying about something. Throughout my childhood I always felt that something was wrong but I didn't know what. As a boy growing up in the 60's I learned that I needed to act one way around boys and men, another around girls and woman.

The most fun time that I had as a child was in the kitchen with my mom. I loved to help her cook meals, cakes and cookies. I would watch her sew clothes, shirts for me and my brother, dresses for my two sisters. I always liked the dress material; she used flowers, designs and color O my. Then she taught me how to sew. I took leftover scraps and made clothes for my bears. I finally felt that I was doing something 'normal' in my life. Sometimes my sisters would let me play dolls with them. I hated it when they wanted to quit playing. Sometimes they wanted to play house but they always wanted me to be the man of the house. I couldn't tell them that I would rather be the woman and ware the dress and high heel shoes. Many a night I would go to the bathroom and hope no-one else had the need to go. I locked the door and sorted through the clothes hamper in search of a dress to try on even for a minute or two. Even back then the clothes did not have any sexual attraction but they were the clothes that I felt that I should be wearing in public. I had a need to see how I would look in public. I have never liked the so called plumbing that I was born with.

I have been married twice had children in both marriages. During my first marriage my wife found out about my crossdressing and we talked about it and agreed to keep it secret. Because during the 1970's crossdressing was considered a perversion. I suppressed my feelings for a short time and the urge to let the feminine side out became stronger and stronger. Back to the closet and Halloween after awhile the marriage collapsed and ended. My second wife knew about my feelings to crossdress and that I would try to suppress the feelings and Halloween was my night to howl. I reserved my feminine feelings to when no one was home and Halloween. She had a boy from a previous marriage and soon we had a daughter. Both children knew as they grew that 'she' came out at Halloween but knew nothing of transgender issues. Now they know and love me as I am. Throughout my marriages and relationships anytime someone visited or we were out in public no-one was to we discuss me and the crossdressing. I felt like my problem was like a large white elephant that no one wanted to deal with, and wishing that "IT" would just go away. A part of me was fighting to come out but if it did I could lose everything. I tried to hide my

problem and even purging by throwing out my clothes; and I tried to repress my feelings to dress. However, the more that I purged and repressed my feelings the larger the elephant got. The elephant got so big that soon I couldn't hide it any longer. My wife said that she could not and would not deal with "it" any longer and so goes the marriage. Several years ago I told my mom, children, sisters and ex-wives that I am transgender and that I would be living my life as such. They now accept me as I am; now most of my neighbors know and are accepting of me. Presently I live by myself and my white elephant has shrunk to a little white mouse. There are some people I know that will never know of my lifestyle mainly because 'they do not need to know'.

The following is printed to help you or a loved one with your White Elephant.
(The article was entered as is and not edited)

What is a Transgendered person?

A Transgender person is someone whose gender display at least sometimes runs contrary to what other people in the same culture would normally expect. Transgender folks come in several flavors:

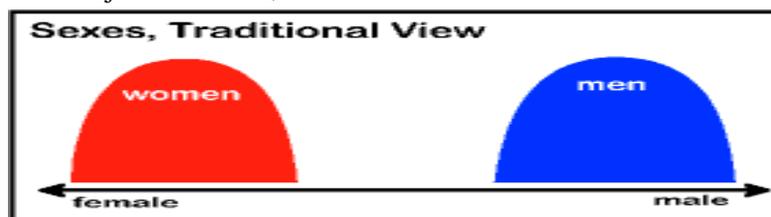
- **FTM** (female to male): born female but see themselves as partly to fully masculine.
- **MTF** (male to female): born male but see themselves as partly to fully feminine.
- **Intersexed**: born with a combination of male and female physiology [similar to hermaphrodite]. May accept as natural their mixed gender.

Gender variations are more common than most people suspect, because many people hide their true nature out of fear for their safety and security. Many people who explore transgender behavior do not identify themselves as transgender. Women wearing pants may not seem transgender today, but fifty years ago they were. Boys wearing "girl's clothes" might not call themselves "transgender", yet they enjoy playing in this way. Crossdressing is enjoyed by both males and females, but appears more pronounced in males because of an imbalance in norms of attire and attitude (we see less of a transgression when a woman wears a suit).

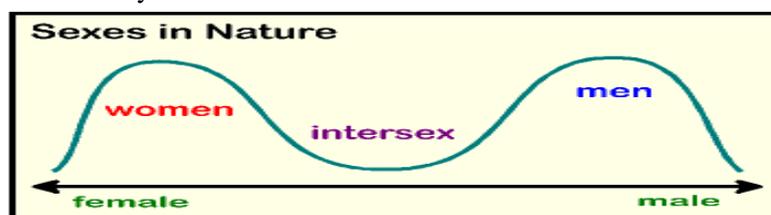
Sex, Gender, & Bipolarity

In order to understand the difference between someone who is gay, lesbian, or bisexual, and someone who is transgender, you need to know the difference between sex and gender. Simply put, sex is polarity of anatomy; gender is polarity of appearance and behavior. As one gains familiarity with transgenderism, these definitions quickly break down, but they serve as a good starting point.

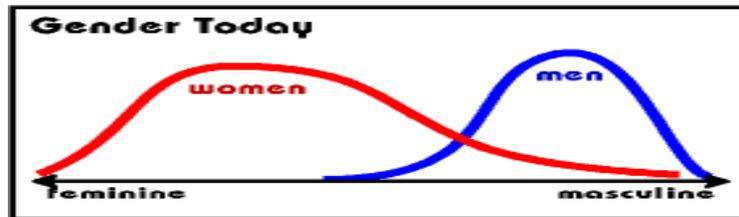
Most people think there are just two sexes, male and female.



Such is not the case. People who are intersexed and people who are transsexual constitute sexes which are neither exactly male nor exactly female.



Likewise, gender is not a simple case of "either/or". Gender is exhibited by countless signals, from articles of clothing to cosmetics, hairstyles, conversational styles, body language and much more.



Notice how, in this "Gender Today" graph, women's range of gender extends through man's range, but man's range does not include women's. Our gender "norms" are not symmetric. Women have won for themselves the right to a wide range of gender expression. Men have not made a corresponding effort. Most men live within a much narrower range of "acceptable" gender.

Though our culture tends to group characteristics into "masculine" and "feminine", many people find some amount of gender transgression exciting, so there is some crossover between the two categories. Ultimately, gender is a "mix and match" mode of self-expression, and people within our culture are ever finding new ways to express their gender, with exciting subtleties and intriguing implications.

In general, it works best to think of all effects - sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual identity, and any others - as varying along a continuous spectrum of self-expression, rather than in just one of two or three ways.

Sexual Orientation vs. Gender Identity vs. Sexual Identity

Sexual orientation, gender identity, and sexual identity are independent of each other. A person may express any variation of each of these in any combination. To discourage the free expression of identity and orientation by an individual is to impose a damaging burden of conformity.

Sexual Orientation is which sex you find erotically attractive: opposite (hetero), same (homo), or both (bi).

Sexual Identity is how you see yourself physically: male, female, or in between. If someone is born female, but wishes to see their body as male in all respects, their sexual identity is male. It is generally rude to speak of such a person as female, since it denies their right to inhabit the social and physical role of their choosing. We call such a person a transsexual, whether or not they have had any surgery. Many FTM transsexuals do not undergo genital surgery, often because of disappointing results or extreme cost. As surgical technique improves, this may change. Since it is healthier for these people to live in accord with their wishes and heartfelt need, we call them men, though they may have a vagina where one would expect to find a penis.

The situation for MTF transsexuals is equivalent, except that the surgery produces a much more satisfying result, both cosmetically and functionally. Nonetheless, many MTF transsexuals elect to not have the surgery, most often because of risk, pain, or cost. Those who retain male sexual functioning may refer to themselves as *transgenderists*, since it is only their gender which is changed. Those that disown all male sexual function (surgery or no) tend to identify as transsexuals, since they change their sexual function, and therefore their sexual identity.

Gender Identity is how you see yourself socially: man, woman, or a combination of both. One may have a penis but prefer to relate socially as a woman, or one may have a vagina but prefer to relate as a man. One might prefer to be fluid, relating sometimes as a man and sometimes as a woman. Or one might not identify as either one, relating androgynously.

Definitions/Terms

People tend to categorize themselves. This identification can be helpful in finding like-minded others with whom to make friends, but it can be hurtful if imposed on an individual by others, well-intentioned or not. In relating to transgender folk, it is best to avoid pushing an individual to choose a category for themselves. Some folks prefer to explore the fringes of category, and such push for identification works against personal exploration and fulfillment.

Transgender folk have self-identified as:

Drag Queen: Female-emulating male, usually campy, often (not always) gay.

Butch: Masculine-appearing person.

Femme: Feminine-appearing person.

Drag King: Male-emulating woman.

Intersex: Person born with mixed sexual physiology. Often 'assigned' at birth, such practice is coming under well-founded attack as a hurtful violation of a person's well-being.

Transvestite: Person who enjoys wearing clothes identified with the opposite gender, often but not always straight.

Crossdresser: Polite term for transvestite.

Transgenderist: Person who lives as gender opposite to anatomical sex, i.e. person with penis living as woman. Sexual orientation varies.

Androgyne: Person appearing and identifying as neither man nor woman, presenting a gender either mixed or neutral.

Transsexual: Person whose sexual identity is opposite to their assignment at birth. Not all TS folk undergo 'sex reassignment surgery' (SRS), for various reasons, including personal preference. Sexual orientation varies.

Transgender Community: A loose association of people who transgress gender norms in a wide variety of ways. Celebrating a recently born self-awareness, this community is growing fast across all lines, including social, economic, political, and philosophical divisions. The central ethic of this community is unconditional acceptance of individual exercise of freedoms including gender and sexual, identity and orientation.

Unfortunately, the transgender community suffers from severe victimization. Society often reacts to gender transgression by trying to discourage the behavior, punishing the individual. Transgender folk are much more likely than others to commit suicide, to be murdered, to be fired from their job, to be beaten up, and to be hurt in many more ways, some as blatant as open ridicule, some as insidious as non-hiring. Some people, simply because their gender expression differs from the norm, are subjected to the emotional trauma and physical suffering of barbaric "therapeutic" practices such as imprisonment and shock "therapy". While these are justified as "for the welfare of the individual", they are too often intended to comfort the individual's family, with little regard for the suffering of the individual. The level of trauma suffered by transgender folk is much higher than the norm, and is reflected in more difficult lives and greater incidence of depression and despair.

All of this is beginning to change, as people learn that there is no harm visited on either the individuals, their families, or their workplace by gender transgression. In fact, there are and have always been cultures where gender transgression is accepted as a natural part of the life of the culture.

The only harm visited by transgenderism is the same harm that is still too often visited on some folks by racism. In the case of transgender folk, the words for the feelings that cause people to hurt us are *fear of difference* and *transphobia*. The words for the feelings that bring about an end to the suffering and a healing of this aspect of our society are *compassion* and *tolerance*.

Nancy Nangeroni is a former Executive Director as well as member of the Board of Directors of [IFGE](#). She is also the creator and co-host of [GenderTalk Radio](#), the leading radio program covering issues of transgenderism. She is a graduate of MIT and supports her gender activism by consulting as a [telecom/computer design engineer](#). For more information about the author, kindly visit her [bio page](#).

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Ohio bill to ban gay marriage debated

Issue 1 called vague, open to challenges

By JAMES DREW
BLADE COLUMBUS BUREAU CHIEF

COLUMBUS - The first sentence of the Ohio constitutional amendment on the Nov. 2 ballot is clear, supporters and opponents of Issue 1 agree.

"Only a union between one man and one woman may be a marriage valid in or recognized by this state and its political subdivisions."

But the two sides disagree bitterly over the second sentence.

"This state and its political subdivisions shall not create or recognize a legal status for relationships of unmarried individuals that intends to approximate the design, qualities, significance, or effect of marriage."

Kent Markus, an associate law professor at Capital University in Columbus, said the second sentence is so "poorly written and vague" that it's impossible to determine how courts would interpret Issue 1 if voters add it to the Ohio Constitution.

Mr. Markus focuses on the last half of that sentence.

"We could have all kinds of conversations about what the 'effect' of marriage means," said Mr. Markus, a former counselor to U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno. "This is almost the poster child of vague and broad language that lends itself to an extraordinary range of conceivable interpretations."

But David Langdon, a Cincinnati lawyer who helped draft the proposed constitutional amendment, said the wording is "thorough." He said he and others spent "weeks, if not months" on the language with a precise goal in mind, but he didn't disclose who helped him draft it, saying that was "irrelevant."

In February, Gov. Bob Taft signed into law an anti-gay marriage bill that backers called the "Defense of Marriage Act." The statute did not prohibit Ohio governments from providing domestic partner benefits such as health insurance to employees who are in heterosexual or homosexual relationships, setting up domestic partner registries that could be used to gain rights similar to marriage, or using another word or phrase to try to mimic the benefits of marriage.

Issue 1 would do so, Mr. Langdon said.

"The wording of the statutory Defense of Marriage was not precise enough to address all of the different issues that can arise in the context of homosexual domestic relations.

"When a state like Vermont enacts a civil union's bill, it is certainly not marriage. But it is intending to approximate marriage. It is not mimicking marriage. It is intending to mimic marriage. We decided to use 'approximate' instead of 'mimic,'" Mr. Langdon said.

Since Mr. Taft signed the "Defense of Marriage Act" into law, the city of Columbus decided to provide domestic partner benefits to unmarried employees in homosexual or heterosexual relationships, along with Ohio State University, Miami University, Cleveland State University, and Ohio University.

Mr. Langdon said criticism of the second sentence of Issue 1 is "part of the campaign rhetoric."

Nearly three weeks from election day, polling has shown Issue 1 with a wide lead - more than two-to-one in surveys published by The Plain Dealer of Cleveland on Sept. 20 and the Columbus Dispatch on Oct. 4. But gay-rights activists and their allies in Ohio believe they can reverse those figures.

"It's being masked as protecting the state from gay marriage," said Alan Melamed, campaign manager for the anti-Issue 1 group. "The second sentence will take away all kinds of rights and benefits for any government employees and will take away rights granted by private companies."

About 60 employers provide domestic-partner benefits to employees who have same-sex or opposite-sex partners.

If voters approve Issue 1, there will be legal challenges, Mr. Melamed said. But because the state Constitution would be amended, those lawsuits likely would be filed in federal court, which he said is a "long and tedious process."

Ohio Auditor Betty Montgomery supports Issue 1 and her political consultant said it should not be surprising that constitutional amendments face legal challenges.

"Two hundred years later, courts are still interpreting the First Amendment," said Mark Weaver, who is expected to run her campaign for the GOP nomination for governor in 2006.

Mr. Markus said the intent behind Issue 1 is a "vigorous defense of marriage as a governmentally protected and supported institution." As a result, courts will have to apply the second sentence of Issue 1 in a "hostile" way to any arrangement between two people that is not a marriage between a man and a woman, Mr. Markus said.

That could threaten a will that an unmarried couple - heterosexual or homosexual - would use to distribute property or a domestic-violence restraining order that a woman gets against her boyfriend, he said.

"It means that a decent lawyer who has an interest in knocking down something that involves some kind of legal relationship between two unmarried individuals is going to be able to make an argument. Whether it's sustained, I don't know," he said.

But Mr. Langdon said Issue 1 critics are wrong.

"It would have no effect on what private companies can do. It would have no effect on two individuals who would have a contract to purchase property and leave someone certain things in a will, or have an agreement to come see someone in the hospital. The opponents are saying these things because they have an incredibly difficult task to defeat this," he said.

He also said the ban on government benefits for unmarried couples is not retroactive.

"It would prohibit future agreements," he said.

Mr. Langdon said if voters approve Issue 1, gay-rights activists and their allies will "change their tune" as they head to court.

"Their argument in court will be, 'Oh no, it does not prohibit this. This does not apply to us. It doesn't apply to municipalities.' The song-and-dance will be an entirely different one," he said.

Contact James Drew at: jdrew@theblade.com or 614-221-0496.



--Where ever you are in your journey be comfortable with who you are.

--If you do not except yourself as you are, don't expect anyone to.

--Masculinity or femininity doesn't come from clothes; it comes from something inside you. If you do not feel it in side, your going to have a hard time passing in public.

--A true friend will tell you what they think, not always what you want to hear, but maybe it's what you need to hear.

Upcoming Meetings: * **October 30, 2004 Halloween Party * 7:00pm**

* **December 4, 2004 Christmas Party * RSVP call or email the Crystal club for reservations.**

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.