

The Crystal Chronicle

Columbus, OH

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

Vol. 15 No. 3 - March 2003

Current Officers

President - Nikki

Vice President - Rachel

Treasurer - Dianna Mills

Secretary - Jenifer

Newsletter Editor(s) - Gwen

Meeting Coordinator - Barbie

Screening Officer(s)

Internet - Rachel

Phone - Tina

Web Mistress - Mary Ann

Assistant - Nikki

Librarian - Valerie

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

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

President's Corner

- Nikki

Welcome to a new year! It's hard to believe that a year has passed. I would like to thank everyone for supporting me through my "rookie" year. The learning curve was quite interesting as we became acquainted with the community, the membership, and Board. Hopefully, the lessons learned, along with the support of our membership, will enable the Club to move forward through the course of the year.

Speaking of the Board – Our slate of officers for the 2003-2004 Board are:

Vice-President	Rachel
Treasurer	Tina
Meeting Coordinator	Barbie
Newsletter Editor (& Asst)	Gwen & Stephanie
Internet Screener	Rachel
Phone Screener	Tina
Secretary	Jennifer
Librarian (& Asst)	Jennifer & Valerie
Internet & Email (& Asst)	Mary Ann & Nikki

The Board is currently working hard on several projects:

- 1) Sending newsletter's by email instead of hard copy. This saves postage, envelopes, etc., enabling us to save the club money. The system is in place and is being tested. Unless some unknown bugs start arising, we will be able to starting using this method with the April newsletter. If you are interested in receiving your newsletter by email, please send us your email address at
- 2) Schedule of events – We are attempting to finalize a schedule of events throughout the year. The list will include monthly speakers, as well as community events at large (Other Prom, Pride, etc.) This

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should be posted on the website within the month of March. We will mail out hard copies in April newsletter if everything continues to proceed to plan.

3) Updating the Pink List – Some of

you may note that many of the listings on the Pink List has been largely removed. We have become increasingly concerned

that the establishments on the site were out of date. In order to assure the safety of our membership, the board is actively attempting to verify that the establishments listed on the Pink List remain friendly to our community. Please check the lists regularly for updates over the next few weeks as we restore the many fine businesses and individuals who so graciously support our membership, the Board is actively attempting to verify that the establishments listed on the Pink List remain friendly to our community. Please check the list regularly for updates over the next few weeks as we restore the many fine businesses and individuals who so graciously support our membership.

One final item – virtually all of our club finances originate from our membership dues. The last two meetings have been very light in attendance, primarily due to the weather. We need these funds to reserve sites for the picnic, Christmas party, and provide social club snacks. **Please bring your annual dues to the March social club** – we need to understand our operating budget for this year and cannot complete this activity until your dues are in the treasury.

National Center for Lesbian Rights NCLR and Equality Florida Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 21, 2003

Tampa, FL

CONTACT: Karen Doering, NCLR Staff Attorney
and Consultant to Equality Florida, 727/642-658

Shannon Minter, NCLR Legal Director,
415/794-669 Collin Vause, Esq., 727/799-7529

Nadine Smith, Equality Florida

813/781-6093 Florida Court Issues Historic Marriage
and Custody Decision for Transgender Dad

The National Center for Lesbian Rights and local attorney Collin Vause represented Michael Kantaras in a divorce and custody case in which Michael's wife asked the court to declare him a legal stranger to the couples two children.

TAMPA, FL -- *In a groundbreaking decision, Florida Circuit Court Judge*

Gerard O'Brien ruled today that Michael Kantaras, a transgender man, is legally male and was legally married to his former wife Linda Kantaras, stating that "the Court has carefully reviewed all the pleadings, record evidence, expert medical testimony, lay witness testimony and the Appropriate statutory authority for marriage in Florida and concludes the overwhelming weight of evidence favors declaring the marriage valid." Final Judgment at pp. 806-07. The court also awarded Michael primary custody of the two children he and Linda raised together during their marriage.

Judge O'Brien's opinion is one of a handful of decisions addressing marriages involving transsexual spouses, and one of the first in the United States to hold that such marriages are valid.

The only states with similarly favorable decisions are New Jersey and California; in contrast, Texas and Kansas courts have held that marriages involving transsexual individuals are void. *Internationally*, courts in a number of countries have affirmed the validity of such marriages, including a very recent decision by the *Family Court of Australia* upholding a marriage between Kevin J., a female-to-male transsexual, and Jennifer, his wife.

After completing sex-reassignment, Michael Kantaras met and married his wife, Linda in 1989. Linda was fully aware of Michael's transgender status prior to the marriage and permitted Michael to adopt her then three month old son. The couple later had a daughter through alternative insemination. The Kantaras children are now ages 14 and 11.

When the couple divorced in 1999, the focus soon shifted away from the best interests of the children and onto Michael's transgender status. Linda argued that Michael should be considered legally female, their marriage deemed void, and his parental rights stripped away. The *three week hearing*, which included extensive testimony from medical experts, was covered live by *Court TV* last January and February.

"I'm so relieved," said an exhausted Michael

Kantaros. "Now my kids and I can get on with our lives in peace."

"The court recognized that the two children in this case have a devoted, loving father and need to maintain a relationship with both their parents," said NCLR Staff Attorney Karen Doering, co-counsel in the case.

"This court recognized that Michael's transgender status has nothing to do with his ability to be a good parent. Michael is a loving, responsible father who also happens to be transgender."

According to NCLR Legal Director Shannon Minter, "To our knowledge, this is the first transgender marriage case in the U.S. in which extensive medical evidence was presented, including testimony from three of the foremost experts on transsexualism in the country. As the Court has recognized, the medical evidence overwhelmingly favors recognizing that the law should accommodate transgender people so they can be productive,

functioning members of society. This includes permitting transgender people to marry and raise children."

"This is not only a victory for the transgender community, it's a victory for the Kantaras children who deserve to have their loving father remain a part of their life," said Equality Florida Executive Director Nadine Smith. "We all benefit when gender stereotypes and bigotry are defeated."

The National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) is a national law firm dedicated to advocating for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals and their families. NCLR is working in partnership with Equality Florida's Legal Advocacy Project to protect the rights of Florida's LGBT community by seeking fairness and equal justice under the law.

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About NCLR

Founded in 1977 and headquartered in San Francisco, The National Center for Lesbian Rights is a national law firm dedicated to advocating for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals and their

families.

Each year NCLR serves more than 3000 clients in all fifty states. NCLR is working in partnership with Equality Florida's Legal Advocacy Project to protect the rights of Florida's LGBT community by seeking fairness and equal justice under the law.

About Equality Florida

Founded in the mid 1990's and based in Tampa Florida, Equality Florida is a statewide education and advocacy organization committed to ending discrimination based on sexual orientation, race, class and gender. Equality Florida informs and educates hundreds of thousands of people across the state about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender concerns through its news magazine Equality News, voter guides and its Online Advocacy Center at eqfl.org.

Gwendilynne's Editorial

Congratulations Michael on winning your case. The few times I have spoken to you on the phone you have seemed very dedicated to your children, I would say they are lucky to have you for a dad. Keep up the good work. This community needs more role models like you.

Stonewall Hosts Support Group

Meral Crane is the facilitator of the group, she welcomes all interested people to attend.

Stonewall's Free Support Group meets at 7:00pm on the First Wednesday of the month.

This is an opportunity for members of the TG Community to come together in a Safe & Secure atmosphere to air their concerns, make new friends, as well as, have a place where they can feel free to be themselves.

Valley Gems Meeting

The Valley Gems meet on the first Saturday of each month. For more information on the club please

call Holly at 937-236-0477.

Are Transmen required to Register for Selective Service?

From: "Monica F. Helms"
<transaction1@prodigy.net>

I was asked a very interesting question, which was, "Do FtMs have to register with the Selective Service?" I never thought of it, but it is a great question. I called the Selective Service at (847) 688-6888 and found out that Female to Male transsexuals are exempt from registering with the Selective Service, but they need the Selective Service to give them a letter stating so. This question has come up before, and the Selective Service will type up this letter saying plainly that you are exempt from registering, but will not say why. This letter is important if an FtM applies for educational loans and a few other things where that question is asked, "Did you register for the draft?" They have to have that letter, or face the possibility of getting into serious trouble.

Since there are a lot of FtM's who are between the ages of 18 and 26, then this is important information for them to have, whether there is a draft or not. This has to get out to all the young men in our community. Spread the word. The Selective Service is prepared for this, so call them if you have any questions. Each young FtM must have this letter in their files.

Monica

Married Couple Swaps Sexes, Causes Riot

: <http://iafrica.com/loveandsex/news/176337.htm>]

A Hungarian couple have given new meaning to the idea of wife-swapping with a pair of

controversial sex-change operations that changed their sex - and started a hospital riot. Both partners in the unnamed couple underwent successful sex reassignment surgery, with him becoming a her and her becoming a him at a clinic in the southern city of Szeged. But patients in the women's ward rioted after finding out about their new comrade, who had to be moved to the men's quarters, tabloid daily Blikk said. A doctor at the clinic told AFP he was horrified that details of the case had leaked out. A former patient who also had a sex-change was attacked by skinheads after his name was revealed in the press. The couple become the country's first pair to swap sexes.

Editorial Note:

I called (847) 688-6888 in an attempt to verify or deny the information in reference to selective service. I was given a different number to call ((703) 605-4100) because the people at the (847) number said they couldn't give legal advice.

The folks at the (703) number said that they base registering on what sex you were legally at birth..

So FtM's are exempt as the article states, however, MtF's are not exempt .

Further, I contacted one military contact (who didn't want there name used) who said that the Marine Corps would disqualify you for military service because they would wish to avoid any possible problems due to others opposing viewpoints.

However, it should be noted that each service may have a different policy.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

April 2003

11 Business Meeting

26 Club Meeting / Speaker:

Meral Crane.

May 2003

09 Business Meeting
24 Club Meeting / Speaker:
To Be Announced

June 2003

13 Business Meeting
28 Club Meeting / Speaker:
To Be Announced

July 2003

11 Business Meeting
26 Club Meeting / Speaker:
To Be Announced

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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)

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!

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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.