

The Crystal Chronicle

Columbus, OH

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

Vol. 14 No. 1&2 – Jan / Feb 2002

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President - Tina

Vice President - Valerie

Treasurer - Dianna Mills

Secretary - Jenifer

Newsletter Editor(s) - Nikki

Meeting Coordinator - Group

Screening Officer(s)

Internet - Rachel

Phone - Tina

Web Mistress - Mary Ann

Assistant - Nikki

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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

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

President's Corner

-Tina

Hello ladies, I just received my 4 in one: MFC-5100c. It is a Fax, Scanner, Printer, and Copier. It is harder to figure out than the plain old printer I use to have, I need to try to run a copy of the newsletter of something to see if I got it right. I certainly hope you all had a good start this year of 2002. I want to wish the best for you throughout this year.

This month is Nomination month for Officers. I hope you volunteer to do something for the benefit of the survival of this club. It could be that important for you to step up and take charge. Feb., is Election time, and we need to start making plans for what activities to have and what speakers to invite this year. I don't want to keep renewing the same thing over and over...we need some fresh ideas. GOT ANY???? If so contact me at my e mail address or at our club's phone, or contact any officer now.

Thanks and thanks for all the good work you have done so far. You are the best!!!

Tina

Meeting notes

Due to the holidays, there we did not have a December meeting.

Officer's Needed!!!

February is the month for officer elections. Please attend this important meeting. We really need some members to step up and take over some key positions. A very few members are handling the club business, and several officers are handling two (or more) positions. This does not represent the membership of the club appropriately, nor is the situation fair to the current board members.

To assume that "someone else" will take the load is dangerous – it threatens the well-being of the club and our ongoing ability to support the TG community. We are all busy these days – but only you can become involved – we need your hands to carry some of the load!

Valley Gems Meeting

This is a reminder to let you know that the Valley Gems meet on the first Saturday of each month. For more information on the club please call Holly at 937-236-0477.

Member Contri!

Last month we received our first member contribution for 2001. Let's have some more! I would like to see several "regulars" who run a column on a given subject – or perhaps just post a general discussion. So let's sharpen your pencils – it's YOUR newsletter!

Update on Electrolysis

As was reported in past months, Catherine Houck passed away on Thanksgiving Day. Initially, Catherine's family asked Pat Parmer to take care of Catherine's patients, and she was kind enough to support the family. However, Pat has decided NOT to take over the business for a number of personal factors. She will be available for electrolysis work in the Newark area.

Kristine Mandros is related to the Houck family and has agreed to take over the practice. She started working at Catherine's former office on January 21st. She seems to be very comfortable with our community, as well as being a competent electrologist.

Information on both individuals can be located on the Crystal Club web site.

New Support Group

There is a new TG support group in Columbus sponsored by Stonewall as part of their outreach program. The first meeting was January 5th at noon at the Stonewall office at 4th and High. There is no charge for attending. It is believed that it will be a monthly meeting on the first Saturday of each month.

On a related note, Stonewall has also announced that their outreach support group has moved to Wednesday's at 7:00 PM. Meral Crane is acting as the facilitator for these meetings. There is no charge to attend.

Finally, congratulations to Mary Ann, who was elected to the Board for Stonewall.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly... News from the TG front

Solving the bathroom issue

ST. LOUIS -- A public school in Minneapolis met its legal obligation by giving alternate restroom options to a teacher who did not want to use the same facilities as a male-to-female transgendered employee, the American Civil Liberties Union said in papers filed in federal appeals court today.

Southwest High School teacher Carla Cruzan complained that allowing transgendered library employee Debra Davis to use the women's bathroom violated Cruzan's religious freedom and created a hostile workplace based on sex. As a result, the school provided Cruzan with ready access to several other bathrooms, including single-person facilities and other women's restrooms.

"Carla Cruzan is the person who thinks there is a problem here, so the school was right to find some

other alternative for her," said Tamara Lange, an ACLU Lesbian & Gay Rights Project staff attorney.

Unsatisfied with the school's accommodation for her, Cruzan asked a federal court to block Davis from using the women's restrooms at the school. She lost and is appealing to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit, in St. Louis. A three-judge panel will hear the case later this year.

In a friend-of-the-court brief filed today, the ACLU said that Cruzan, not the school, was unreasonable when she demanded that the school allow her own personal beliefs to dictate Davis' use of school restrooms. The ACLU, filing on behalf of groups including the Minnesota chapter of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, also noted that students, teachers, staff and parents at Southwest High School roundly supported Davis and the school's handling of the situation.

"The Minneapolis Public Schools have shown a willingness to learn about and support the needs and concerns of LGBT students, parents and staff. From students who plastered the walls with signs supporting Debra to the Out4Good office in the Minneapolis district itself - this community is a model for every school in the country," said J.J. Kahle, Co-Chair of GLSEN-Minnesota. "Debra was supported so she could continue doing her good work in the library. While it's too bad that Carla Cruzan is intolerant, her concerns were addressed by finding other restrooms she can use."

Minnesota is one of just two states that explicitly prohibits discrimination based on gender identity - but that civil rights law is not at issue because this case is about whether Cruzan was discriminated against by the school's accommodation of a transgendered employee. The ACLU Lesbian & Gay Rights Project is currently litigating a New York City case claiming that a landlord violated existing sex discrimination laws by evicting a social services agency because its transgendered clients used restrooms consistent with their gender identities. More on that case is online at: <http://www.aclu.org/news/2001/n062601a.html>.

Winn-Dixie Admits Firing Man for Cross-Dressing Off-Duty

by 365Gay.com Newscenter Staff

(January 24, New Orleans) Southern grocery giant Winn-Dixie has conceded that its sole reason for firing an employee of two decades was that off-duty he sometimes cross-dressed as a woman. The American Civil Liberties Union asked a federal judge Wednesday for ruling without a trial in its sex discrimination lawsuit against the company.

"We don't need a trial, because there's no disagreement over what happened. The only disagreement is whether it's legal to fire someone for this," said Ken Choe, the ACLU Lesbian & Gay Rights staff attorney handling the case.

Peter Oiler was fired on January 5, 2000, after his supervisors and company executives learned that he occasionally cross-dresses as a woman away from work.

Oiler and his wife, Shirley, who will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary on February 4, lost their health insurance and nearly lost their home.

In October 2000, the ACLU filed a federal lawsuit on Oiler's behalf, claiming that Winn-Dixie engaged in sex stereotyping in violation of state and federal laws that bar sex discrimination.

Choe said that over the last few months the ACLU has deposed the men who fired Oiler and has determined that there is no dispute that would require a trial. "They are very clear that he wasn't fired for job performance -- in fact he received numerous raises and promotions," Choe said.

Wednesday's 'Motion for Summary Judgment' cites Winn-Dixie Louisiana President Michael Istre's sworn deposition saying that he made the decision to fire Oiler and that the sole reason was that Oiler didn't conform to the company's stereotyped notions of how a man should look, dress and act.

In a deposition, taken December 11, Istre said: "I was concerned about my business and what kind of impact and effect that this - this type of behaviour could have on my business and my customer base that if my customers saw him - and that's pretty much it. Why? The reason why was because of my business, what kind of effect it would have on my customer base."

The ACLU cited a sworn deposition from Oiler's supervisor, Gregory Miles, who said Oiler was fired because members of the public who saw Oiler cross-dressed away from work would somehow "put two and two together" and associate him with Winn-Dixie. This, he speculated, could cause people to think Winn-Dixie approved of Oiler's personal life, and might lead people to buy groceries elsewhere.

Winn-Dixie will have until February 22 to reply to today's motion. A hearing is set for April 10 in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

<http://www.365gay.com/newscontent/012402WinnDixie.htm>

PFLAG Puts the T in GLBT

by Robyn Walters

In 1972, a young gay man was beaten during a gay rights protest in New York while police stood by and did not interfere. Following this act of violence, a mother, Jeanne Manford, stood up and protested what had been done to her son. She later marched with him in New York's Pride Parade. Cheered by gay and lesbian youth in the crowd, she realized that one of the saddest parts of being 'queer' was not having the support of family members and friends. Soon thereafter, a local organization, Parents and Friends of Gays, was born. About 20 people attended the first formal meeting in a local church.

Today, the organization called Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, has over 80,000 members with close to 500 affiliate groups in the United States. PFLAG is not an organization of gay people, although some are members. Rather, it is an organization whose mission is to promote the health and well-being not only of those who are labeled 'queer' but, also, of their families and friends.

Courtney Sharp is a transsexual. She is also an engineer who was terminated by her employer following her refusal to resign due to her transition. As a result, she became a transgender activist. She has worked to promote understanding of transgender people and issues in New Orleans and the Gulf Region. She has gained national attention in such causes as seeking redress for the firing of a Winn-Dixie employee for crossdressing on his own time.

What do Courtney Sharp, transgendered activist, and PFLAG have in common? Ms. Sharp was

appointed to the national board of directors of PFLAG in October 2001 following years of work in advocating the inclusion of transgendered people under the PFLAG umbrella. She is the first transgendered person to serve on this national body, although there are many others who serve in local and regional positions. Another member of the national board, Mary Boenke, is the mother of a transsexual. Ms. Boenke was also instrumental in raising the awareness of PFLAG to the need to provide transgendered people and their families and friends the same measure of support as for the gay community. Mary is Chairman of PFLAG's Transgender Network.

Although PFLAG has not continued to add words to its name or letters to the acronym, its mission has been expanded in recent years to include parents, families and friends of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered persons. PFLAG outreach and education efforts are inclusive and explain that the transgender experience exposes people to the same issues, concerns, risks, and dangers as those to which members of the gay community are exposed.

Courtney Sharp has suffered losses from being true to her own identity. She lost her job and much of her family when she began her transition to female. Many, if not most, transsexuals suffer similar losses when they choose between continuing to live a lie and becoming who they really are. Other members of the transgender community, such as the more prevalent crossdressers, also face discrimination and disgrace should their secret be revealed. Outside of the military and certain youth and religious organizations, the gay community has begun to overcome such discrimination, but on the individual level all need the support and understanding of family and friends.

Some members of the sometimes-fractious transgender community feel that the gay/lesbian/bisexual communities do not take transgender issues to heart, that certain organizations are willing to sacrifice the transgendered in order to further their own agendas. Not so with PFLAG. Although not all of the letters are spelled out in the name, PFLAG is truly an organization working to support the entire GLBT community. The PFLAG vision makes this clear:

We, the parents, families and friends of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered persons, celebrate diversity and envision a society that embraces everyone, including those of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. Only with respect, dignity and equality for all will we reach our full potential as human beings, individually and collectively.

Courtney Sharp's experience as a member, secretary, vice-chairman, and chairman of the New Orleans Mayor's Advisory Committee on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Issues will be valuable to PFLAG at the national level, as will her continuing experience as a member of the her local PFLAG chapter and the Gulf Gender Alliance and board member of the Louisiana Lesbian & Gay Political Action Caucus.

Courtney considers that there is much work yet to be done within PFLAG. "The transgender work is not separate from the other work PFLAG is doing," she says. "Providing resources and support to chapters is important. Ensuring that the needs of gender-variant and transgender students are addressed in the Safe Schools Programs is extremely important. Outreach into diverse communities, and providing support for GLBT families in these communities is important. Reaching out to Communities of Faith is important."

As this energetic leader and activist works to build understanding within the greater GLBT community, she looks forward to a time when, "no gay and lesbian political organization will misuse its power to oppress any other minority under the guise that its actions are somehow unobjectionable or justified. When they fall into this trap, they too impose their own moral code upon others. If we only allow others to live their lives in ways which all others find unobjectionable, there would be no such thing as liberty, much less justice, for all."

PFLAG has not fallen into that trap and is to be congratulated for its efforts to make the world a better place for all who do not meet the expectations of narrow minded elements of our society.

Upcoming Meetings

January 2002

11 – Business Meeting

25 – Club meeting – Nomination of officers

February 2002

8 – Business Meeting

22 – Club meeting – Election of officers

March 2002

8 – Business Meeting

22 – Club meeting

Beauty Secrets

By Vicki P.

Have a beauty secret? A tip for the rest of the group? Something that speeds up the transformation? A good place to go for clothes or services? E-Mail the news editor at ccnl@tgender.net to have your tip included in next month's newsletter.

The Crystal Chronicle
Information Page

Our Purpose

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

What to Expect at a Meeting

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

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

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

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

Membership Dues

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

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

Contact Information

Postal Mail:

The Crystal Club
PO Box 287
Reynoldsburg OH 43068-0287

Screening Officers:

(614) 806-7288 (with voice mail)

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.