



# Transgender Harmony

Transgendered Support Group

JUNE, 2005

Hi All!



By JJ

We now have group therapy year around. When Dr. Judy takes her summer sabbatical, Dr. Grubb and Mary Brasch will fill in for her. Many thanks to both Dr Grubb and Mary.

The newsletter editors really prefer material from transgender people in Arizona. When we don't get local stuff, we must look further to find articles.

One standard is that we try to find articles which might fit into everyone's gender (and sexual) situation. We don't always meet that standard, because the news out there just

doesn't allow us to. But we do try!

Some times the reader may have to insert "gender variant or transgender" where a particular minority mentioned. Even though the article may be speaking of a particular group, the TG population often fits the same category or situation discussed.

If you have a rebuttal or an article you want published send it to JJ at [j\\_thorne2000@yahoo.com](mailto:j_thorne2000@yahoo.com) or the news letter mistress.

We are going to try to go back to doing a newsletter a month now that Janet has taken over the reigns of newsletter editor. Once again thank you Janet.

We've had two meetings since the last newsletter. The April 23rd meeting (and the next 3 fourth Saturday [second meeting of the month]) was directed by Nicholas It sounds

as though the next five meetings will be very informative concerning the many peripheral medical situations (cancer, STD's, etc) that may arise in a transgendered life.

If you have any added information that might enhance the next five presentations please contact Nicholas directly at [leather-tran@msn.com](mailto:leather-tran@msn.com)

Don't forget to check out the "Calendar" (at right) to see what's coming next.

Remember, part of the Transgender Harmony agenda is dedicated to be a place of education, support, referrals, and social gatherings to ALL transgender people, their significant others, family members, and including those associated with the transgender community.

Hope to see you one day soon.

Ta Ta For Now — Jayne

## Ch-ch-ch-changes

One thing Transgendered folks know well is change. It's been said that the only constant in life is change.

So it is, too, for the newsletter. This is the second edition produced under the 'new

management' and we have yet to settle on the new style.

We hope you like the changes we made this month. Some you may notice, some you may not.

Either way, please let us know how we're

doing. Your comments will help us make this better for all.

Please remember that we are constantly searching for more local material. Please send it along. Janet.

### CALENDAR:

**June 11th:** Fear. Are you afraid, in your life as a transgendered person?

**JUNE 25th:** Health and Wellness, directed by Nicholas.

**July 9th:** The difference between men and women: With Jamey and Stephanie.

**July 23rd:** Health and Wellness, directed by Nicholas.

**Aug 13th:** Hormones and you.

**August 27th:** Health and Wellness, directed by Nicholas.

**Sept 10th:** Gender and Labels.

**Sept 24th:** Health and Wellness, directed by Nicholas.

**October 8th:** Intimacy, sexual expression, both or neither.

**October 22nd** Health and Wellness, directed by Nicholas, last in this series.

### WHAT'S INSIDE:

The G/L Channel	2
High School TG	3
Gay Marriage	3
TG Marriage	4
Humor	5
Opinion—DIY	6
Community Focus	7

## Adelphia to launch channel for gays, lesbians

THE CHANNEL WILL PRESENT GAY-AND LESBIAN-THEMED MOVIES, DOCUMENTARIES AND COMEDIES, AS WELL AS NEWS PROGRAMMING CO-PRODUCED WITH CBS NEWS.

By Mabel Zhang, Correspondent  
**Adelphia Communications**, the Southland's largest cable operator, will soon offer a new TV channel that targets the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities. LOGO will be launched June 30 through a partnership with **MTV Networks**, which produces LOGO's programming, according to a statement released Tuesday by Adelphia.

"It is a mandate in Southern California to serve the diversity of audiences," said Bob Gold of **Bob Gold & Associates**, a public relations firm that represents Adelphia. "It (LOGO) is just like our Hispanic and Asian channels that serve needs of different interest groups."

In a company statement, Adelphia said LOGO is a commercial digital network that will provide 'authentic, smart, inclusive and open-minded'

programming to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender audiences across Southern California. Locally, that includes West Covina, Covina, Diamond Bar, El Monte, La Puente and many other cities in the East San Gabriel Valley.

The channel will present gay-and lesbian-themed movies, documentaries and comedies, as well as news programming co-produced with **CBS News**.

"We are excited," said Jim Key, a spokesman for the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center. "LOGO's diverse programs would be a tremendous interest to our diverse community. The accurate portrait of the life of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people will help society understand our community."

There are about 203,771 gay and lesbian people living in Los Angeles County, according to an estimate by the Los Angeles Almanac.

LOGO's programming is raising concerns among some educators and religious practitioners, who don't necessarily want children exposed to it.

"I would probably block that channel in my church school," said Mason Okubo, the pastor of **Immanuel First Lutheran Church** in West Covina. Gold said it is the parents' responsibility to control what children watch.

"We've provided a control system on our digital-based cable service, which allows parents to log out the programs that they think are inappropriate for kids to watch," he said. "Unfortunately, not many people are using it."

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## Gender Issues in High School

A few days before classes started last fall, Caleb Ryen walked into the main office of his high school on a mission. He told a surprised administrator that though they had known him for the past three years as a girl, he identified as a boy, and he had a new name.

A growing number of young people are openly questioning their gender in high school and even middle school, and as they do, educators are increasingly facing questions about rudimentary but sensitive matters such as bathroom usage and name changes. Transgender advocates say that all too often, administrators are either grudgingly making accommodations or alto-

gether failing youth who say their internal sense of gender and their biological gender don't match.

In the universe of high school, where tolerance for being different can run thin, transgender youth are often vulnerable to harassment or physical violence. In extreme cases – such as that of Gwen Araujo, a transgender teenager from Newark who was beaten and strangled at a party in 2002 – the outcome can be fatal.

But at several schools, particularly in the Bay Area, educators are readily adapting to the presence of transgender teenagers. They're calling experts, organizing trainings, supporting student activists and enforcing

guidelines that call for honoring students' chosen gender identity.

"As people become more exposed and educated about transgender issues, people are able to come out ... at a much younger age. I've been working with transgender people for 10 years, and it's not until the last two that I've started to see more adolescents," said Lori Kohler, a UCSF clinical professor and director of the family practice clinic at San Francisco General Hospital.

"Fortunately for the young people I've worked with who are transgender, their schools have been incredibly cooperative."

Though other students were occasionally hostile, Caleb

said he never felt unsafe. His friends rallied around him. They told him he had always seemed more like a boy and placed him on a list of nominees for homecoming king.

The death of Gwen helped bring transgender issues onto students' radar screens, Caleb said. Gwen had briefly attended American High, but daily harassment forced her to drop out, according to her mother.

"Now when you talk about transgender issues, people go – 'Oh, Gwen,'" Caleb said. "It's unfortunate that that had to happen to her, and that's what made, at least my school, more tolerant."

## Gay Marriage in Massachusetts – One Year Later

The May 23, 2005 edition of *Newsweek* cited the following statistics:

Number of gay marriages in Massachusetts between 5/17/04 and 2/28/05 was 6142.

There were 2170 marriages between gay males and 39972 between lesbian females.

The number of heterosexual marriages during that period was 30872.

Last year, support for same sex marriage in Massachusetts was 36%. This year the support has risen to 56%.

Currently national support for a constitutional

amendment defining marriage is 53%.

Currently there are 14 states banning gay marriage.

Currently, 84% of Massachusetts voters feel positively towards gay marriage or feel that gay marriage has had "no impact".

### Tri-Ess Chapter – Alpha Zeta Phoenix AZ

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E-Mail: [info@alpha-zeta.org](mailto:info@alpha-zeta.org).

### SAGA: Southern Arizona Gender Alliance

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For More Information about SAGA:

**24-Hour Message Line: 520-867-0083**

or

<http://sagatucson.org/>

## Transsexual Marriage a Legal Catch-22

By Erik Stetson The Associated Press

CONCORD, N.H. -- Judi Howden went into her marriage knowing full well that one day her husband might become her wife.

The couple stayed together -- even as Howden's husband, Michael, underwent a sex-change operation that transformed him into Mikayla. That surgery also landed them in a murky area where gender and law collide.

Their marriage -- once between a man and a woman -- is now between a woman and a woman, despite a ban on such unions in 40 states, including New Hampshire.

Their experience highlights a legal Catch-22. While states can either recognize or refuse to recognize someone's new gender following a sex change, either decision inescapably permits some form of same-sex marriage.

If the gender change is recognized, then existing, heterosexual marriages such as the Howdens' become same-sex. If recognition is denied, a de facto same-sex marriage emerges since the spouses' genders differ only on paper, not visibly.

"I have no answer to it," said state Rep. Dan Itse, a Republican who supports the state's same-sex marriage ban. "We have ventured where angels fear to tread."

The federal government must decide if Mikayla Howden, a U.S. citizen born overseas, can update her birth certificate. It hasn't yet ruled, and Shannon Minter, of the National Center for Lesbian Rights in California, said the Bush administration has not

been as accommodating as earlier administrations.

According to the center, four states don't permit gender updates: Tennessee, Ohio, Kansas and Texas.

About half of the remaining states do. A firm policy hasn't been legally well established in the remaining states, including New Hampshire, said Minter, the center's legal director.

"Whether or not society will acknowledge our marriage, I think, is my biggest fear," Judi Howden said. "That someday, someone may pass legislation that says, 'Because you are now two females, you are no longer married.' For anyone to say that they have the right to break up a family, I don't think is right."

The Howdens' marriage clearly was legal when it began, and same-sex marriage bans cannot automatically invalidate it, Minter said, just as states don't automatically annul marriages for adultery or abuse.

But at least one conservative group would like to change that. The Rev. Louis Sheldon, founder and chairman of the Traditional Values Coalition in Washington, D.C., said marriages such as the Howdens' should be dissolved.

"Absolutely," he said. "We don't want the roof to leak in any place. We must make sure that marriage is protected."

Sheldon's coalition, a lobby claiming more than 43,000 member churches, is crafting an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to ban same-sex marriages and civil unions. The Howdens,

THE HOWDENS' MARRIAGE CLEARLY WAS LEGAL WHEN IT BEGAN, AND SAME-SEX MARRIAGE BANS CANNOT AUTOMATICALLY INVALIDATE IT... JUST AS STATES DON'T AUTOMATICALLY ANNUL MARRIAGES FOR ADULTERY OR ABUSE.

he said, have slipped through a "legal loophole."

Judi Howden may be in a legal loophole, but she said she's happy. Her household is like many across America. There are prayers at meal times and children's toys in every room.

Her wedding to Michael Howden nearly four years ago -- her second marriage -- has produced love and another child. She said she struggled with Mikayla's emergence, but struggled even more with the idea of separating. "There was so strong of a connection for Mikayla and I," she said. "I never knew that there was such a relationship out there in the world."

Social conservatives often portray same-sex marriage as a moral issue. But Mikayla Howden called changing her gender a life-and-death decision, not a lifestyle choice. Living as a man was fundamentally wrong, she said, and nearly led her to suicide.

"What are you going to pick? You certainly hope for the point of wanting to pick life," said Mikayla Howden, who changed her name in 2003 and underwent a sex change in September. "So many of us, because of society, choose death."

Transsexuals are not the only people who have sex-change operations. Surgery

also is used to treat "intersex" conditions such as improperly formed genitalia.

Updating birth certificates isn't the only legal challenge facing transsexuals. State gay-marriage bans complicate such core activities as buying and inheriting property together or collecting insurance.

In 1999, a Texas appeals court upheld a ruling against a transsexual who became a woman and married a man. The court ruled the marriage an invalid union of two men, denying the transsexual money from a wrongful death settlement after her husband died.

Cases in Florida and Illinois are addressing whether transsexuals who have become men are legally fathers of children who were born through artificial insemination or adopted into their families while they were married.

And in California, a transsexual who became a woman is challenging a ruling that denied her husband citizenship because she was born male, Minter said.

"The human consequences are really painful," Minter said.

For the Howdens, the responsibilities of home and raising a family -- a child of their own and two from Judi Howden's previous marriage -- have helped them through tough emotional times. So has open, honest communication.

"It isn't always easy, but it's the most important, even when it comes to your fears," Judi Howden said. "Because when you hold those fears inside, it doubles them."

## Featured Artist

This month we are proud to feature the work of David Craig Simpson. He produces two web comics, 'I Drew This', a biting political comic, and 'Ozy and Millie', a charming, engaging and thought provoking comic about a couple of precocious kids. His web bio says, "I was born in the mid-to-late 1970s. I am a graduate of The Evergreen State College, was once a reporter for a weekly newspaper,

did a stint for a year as a graduate student in communication at Washington State University, and have since rededicated myself to drawing pictures and trying to make money off them. I am five feet eleven.

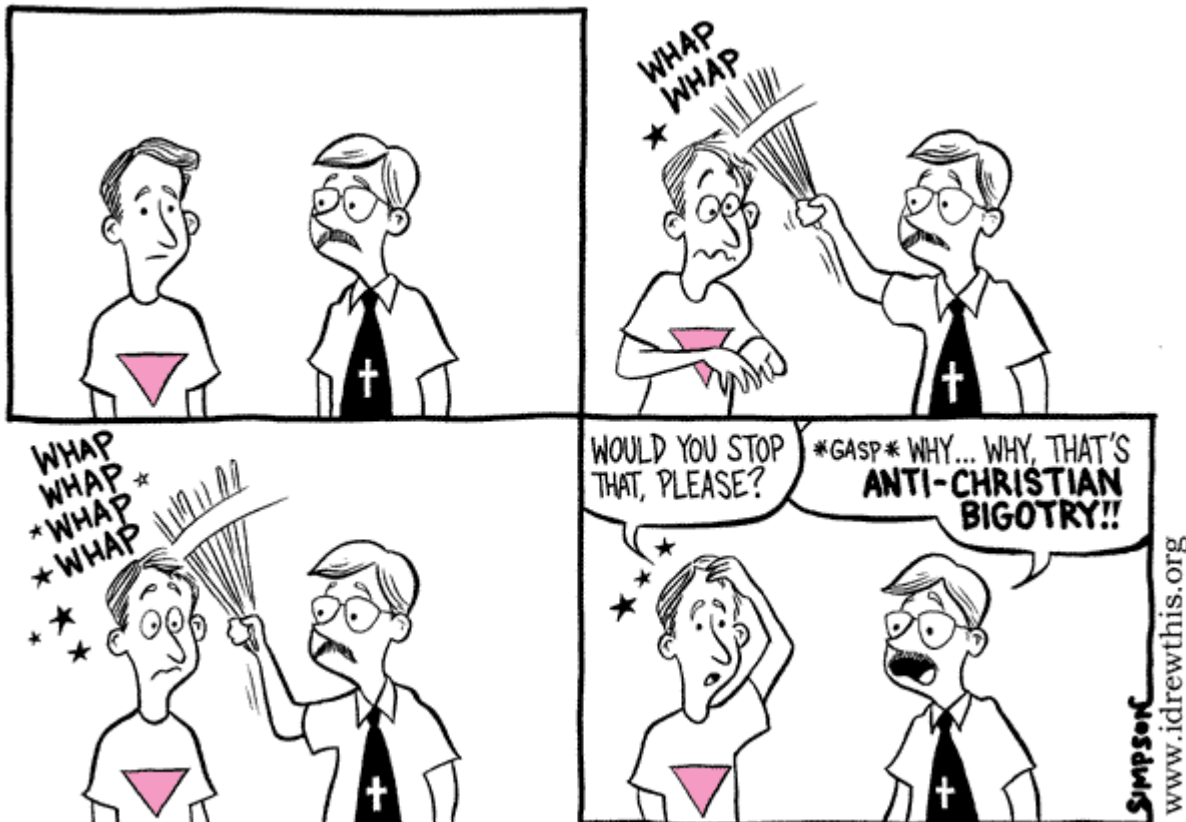
"I really love drawing comics.

"As an undergrad, I was a finalist for the 1998 Scripps-Howard Foundation Charles M. Schulz College Cartoonist

Award, and won the 1999 College Media Advisers award for Best Strip Cartoon."

His work may be seen on the web at <http://www.idrewthis.org/> and <http://www.ozyandmillie.org/>.

## I Drew This



DIY

We've all done it. We do it a lot. We wonder why we keep on doing it. Yet, we never seem to change. How often have you said to yourself something like what George McFly says in "Back to the Future"? Remember, "I don't know if I could take that kind of rejection."

The other day I saw a web comic that put this in a new light for me. Those of you who are MegaTokyo fans saw it ([www.megatokyo.com](http://www.megatokyo.com) #702 - 'Rejection Beliefs'). One of the main characters, Piro, was working up the nerve to call a girl he was fond of. Later, a friend noticed that Piro was looking very depressed and attempted to comfort him under the misunderstanding that the girl had rejected him. He admitted that he never completed the call, the girl had not rejected him, he had instead, rejected himself.

Why is it that we tend to reject ourselves? Do we feel that our own rejection is somehow easier to take than the rejection of others? Rationally, it is unfair both to others and to ourselves; they are never given a chance to say, 'yes.'

Recently we had a meeting which dealt with discrimination and prejudice. It seems to me that in some cases we decide for others without really getting their opinion. We prejudge how others are going to react or behave on the subject we want to broach.

So, how to change that? It seems to me that self rejection stems from low self esteem and lack of self confidence. The really nasty part of it is that it tends to feed itself. To get out of that loop, it needs to be broken. I really don't know any other way than to actually work up the courage to take the risk. Scary? Big time.

The good news is that it gets easier over time.

The difference between the self-rejecters and others is that the others have had enough practice in taking risks that they can deal with the fear the risk represents. Note that I don't say that they are fearless. I would be very worried about someone who went into a risky situation without any fear or concern about the outcome. The difference is that the risk and fear have been put into perspective relative to the desired outcome.

So, next time don't reject yourself. You'll be better for it.

[Note: It's ironic to point out that about a day after I wrote this piece I suffered a personal setback and fell into the very trap I described here. Guess it shows that none of us are perfect.]

—Janet

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## Community Focus — Therapeutic Massage

Our spotlight this month is on a newcomer to the group, *Integrated Therapies*, operated by Leigh Parsons. Your aspiring Brenda Starr spent some time talking to Leigh about massage and aroma therapies. Here's what I learned.

There are basically two types of massage, basic massage (sometimes known as Swedish massage) for relaxation and deep tissue massage for relief of pain.

Swedish massage uses long stoke and light pressure to relax the client. This is good for relief of general stress and to provide true relaxation. Leigh referred to it as, "putting the world on hold."

Deep tissue massage targets a specific area of pain or tension. The area of concern is worked. Slowly going deeper into the tissues until the target is relieved. It is interesting to note that the point of pain is not necessarily the point where the problem lies.

The key to either method is to approach the body and muscles with respect. The depth and amount of strength used is tuned to the client's needs and comfort.

Another of Leigh's specialties (and greatest

loves) is *aroma therapy*. *Aroma therapy* is the use of essential oils diffused into the air and/or applied to the body. Essential oils are derived from plant material (flower, rind, sap, etc.) by various methods including pressing, crushing, and distilling. These oils are amazingly aromatic. When inhaled, they very quickly go to the brain through the olfactory nerves.

Leigh gave me some examples to try and it was amazing how quickly I responded.

Essential oils can be used alone or mixed with salts or made into compresses, depending on the need. The oils used are tailored to the individual client's needs and tastes.

To train for this work, Leigh took a 500 hour course at the SW Institute of the Healing Arts in Tempe and has both state and national certification. Topics included in the course were anatomy, physiology, massage modalities, business principles, and ethics. Also while training she worked in the student clinic at the institute.

From there she spent two and a half years working at a day spa. She opened her own private practice in November of 2004.

Prior to taking training as a massage therapist, Leigh was 'sucked in' to the corporate world. After twelve years of that she saw how miserable her co-workers were.

While taking a class in herbs, she met and talked to a massage therapist and decided this was a way to help people and make a difference. The rest, as they say...

Leigh has a very open philosophy. She has a genuine interest in people regardless of their circumstances or condition. She has an unquenchable thirst for knowledge and a truly open mind. As she said, "You can not help someone unless you're open to who and what they are."

Her facility at 1855 E Southern, Suite 213, in Mesa is modest but wonderfully appointed. The entire environment is designed for maximum comfort and relaxation.

Hours are Monday – Friday 8 am to 5 pm and alternate Saturdays 10 to 5, by appointment only. Leigh accepts MasterCard, Visa, and, of course, cash. She does not accept checks. She may be reached at (480) 668-2062.

THERE ARE BASICALLY TWO TYPES OF MASSAGE, BASIC MASSAGE (SOMETIMES KNOWN AS SWEDISH MASSAGE) FOR RELAXATION AND DEEP TISSUE MASSAGE FOR RELIEF OF PAIN.



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*The mission of Transgendered Harmony is to provide resources and opportunities for the support of ALL transgendered persons in the pursuit of health and happiness in their lives. We believe this will be accomplished through education, personal interaction developing a fuller understanding and acceptance of self, raising the understanding and acceptance by the general public, professional counseling and pro-*

*Serving  
the  
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## Getting The Last Word... In Memorium



BY JANET

Just yesterday, I learned that a former co-worker and friend had lost her life in a motorcycle accident.

After shedding significant tears over the loss of someone near and dear, I started to think about why we set aside time to remember those who have given themselves for causes they believe in.

My friend wasn't just out on a lark, she was traveling with her husband as part of The Wall Gang, a group whose mission is "to show honor and respect for all fallen American soldiers and all of our living American veterans from all wars and conflicts... [and] are also committed to demand-

ing an accounting of all POW and MIA'S..."

As active participants of the group my friends were on their way home from Sacramento as a rehearsal for a Coast to coast trip to Washington DC.

Recently, I had a chat with a local friend about our

'own' Remembrance Day in November, a day when we remember those trans people who have lost their lives for simply trying to be themselves.

I believe that we have these memorials for two reasons. The one most obvious is to honor those who have given their all in support of something greater than themselves. And, while most honorees would say that they weren't hero(in)es, they were there, putting themselves in the action; taking a stand for something they believed in.

Were they afraid? Yep. Standing up for what one

believes is a risky, scary thing. Courage is being afraid and moving forward anyway.

THEY HAVE LEFT  
US A CHAL-  
LENGE, TO  
FORGE AHEAD  
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ENEMIES OF  
FREEDOM

The other reason? I believe that it's to rededicate ourselves to our own cause(s). To gather our courage to face the fights we have ahead of us.

Those who went before have given us a better opportunity to live our lives and express ourselves. In addition to that legacy, they have left us a challenge, to forge ahead and fight the enemies of freedom, where ever they may be, on every front.

This isn't about flag waving, but dedication to the cause of freedom, including freedom of expression. So, as we remember those dear to us, let's also dedicate ourselves to furthering the cause.

We owe it to ourselves and to out futures.

[www.thewallgang.com](http://www.thewallgang.com).

Goodbye, Kathy, you'll be missed.

## Community Resources

ARIZONA LASER, ELECTROLYSIS & SKIN CARE – SEE PAGE 6

HEALING WATERS MINISTRIES – SEE PAGE 8

DR. CHRISTINE PETRUS GRUBB – SEE PAGE 2

INTEGRATED THERAPIES – SEE ARTICLE ON PAGE 7

DR. JUDY O'DONAGHUE – SEE PAGE 2

SAGA/TGNET – SEE PAGE 3

TRI-ESS CHAPTER – ALPHA ZETA, PHOENIX, AZ – SEE PAGE 3

DR. THANES VANIG-SPECTRUM MEDICAL GROUP – SEE PAGE 2

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