



ROSEBUDS

December 2004

WE WISH YOU

The best of everything this holiday season from The Officers, Board of Directors and Committee Chairs extend greetings of the season to you and you family. Please remember that this can be a very lonely time for transgendered people who have been rejected by their families. Please make an effort to remember those who may not have families and offer to make them a part of your family if possible.

PARTY TIME

The TCNE in-house party is Tuesday December 14 sponsored by our canteen. We need volunteers to help out. Bring your apron and you can be June Cleaver for a while and still have a great time. Late word is that another sought after gift coming back for the Yankee Swap is the lamp in the shape of Jay Leno's head.

NO IT'S NOT CALLED 2ND EVENT

Things are taking shape with our First Event 2005 as our list of workshops and presenters grows by the day. Currently confirmed for our January 19-23, 2005 workshops include: Dr. Mark Zukowski, M.D., Dr. Pierre Brassard, M. D., Moonhawk Rover Stone, Dr. Christine Becker, L.I.S.C.W., Rebecca Shafir, Dr. Douglas Ousterhout, M.D., Ann Grogan, Vivienne Kramer and Dr. Diane Ellaborn, L.I.S.C.W. More are being added every day. And our annual banquet keynote speaker on January 22 is Veronica Vera. Please check our FIRST EVENT page on tcne.org for the latest information and to register. An important note from our registration team: If you need to send your registration by snail mail, please fill out your registration form on-line and then print it out and mail it. This helps avoid trying to read somebody's poor penmanship and the form will automatically calculate your seminar and social activity choices and give you the correct total of money you owe.

Mail-in registrations or payments must be postmarked by January 3rd. Any mail-in registrations postmarked after that date will not be processed and returned to the sender. Online registrations which include a credit card number will be accepted until January 14th. After these deadlines you must register in-person at First Event. The deadline for the 10% early registration discount is December 14th. Mail in payments MUST be postmarked by that date or you will be requested to pay the undiscounted balance when you arrive.

NOT THE PATS CHEERLEADERS

The Membership Drive Committee will be out representing TCNE this month at the New England Leather Association's semi annual Fetish Fair Flea Market being held December 18 and 19 at the Sheraton Boston Hotel. Our first visit in August helped us recruit several new and former TCNE Members. The committee will announce its 2005 schedule soon.

A TIME FOR US

Beginning the second week of December, a new support group will be forming that will meet on the second and fourth Thursday of each month at 7PM. This will be a meeting of all Transpeople to get together to share insight into our unique perspectives and to support each other in any way we can. You may come en femme, drab, butch or whatever way you are comfortable dressing. This group will be loosely based on the *You are Not Alone* group's format. We will also, from time to time, offer group therapy from Joseph Winn; a licensed therapist specializing in gender issues. If anyone would be interested in attending, please contact Bobbi Colbert at 617-547-4039. Thanks and I hope to see you soon!

THE MEMBERSHIP HAS SPOKEN

The Co-Chairs of the Annual Election Committee for Tiffany Debra Kelley and Stephanie Edwards report that there were a total of 4 nominations for 2 year terms for the Board of Directors and 1 nomination for the position of Vice President. Since this was the exact number of open seats, ballots were not required to be mailed to the Membership. All those elected will serve for a term of 2 years through the end of 2006. The list includes three people who are new to the Board. Club President Sarah Thompson expressed thanks to all who ran, especially the new people who came forward to help bring new ideas and fresh blood to the leadership of TCNE. The new Vice President of Tiffany is Cheryl Easton who will also sit on the Board of Directors. The four Board Members are:

Sue Bauer
Bobbi Colbert
Barbara Lyons
Michelle Morrison

The Board is still looking for volunteers to serve as Committee Chairs and people to staff the front desk on Tuesdays from time to time. Please contact any BOD Member to find out more.

WHAT GOES ON AROUND HERE?

12/2-You Are Not Alone-7:30PM
12/3-Couples, Friends and Family-7:30PM
12/7-Open Meeting-7:00-11:00PM
12/8-HAPPY CHANUKAH
12/9-A Time For Us-7:00PM (NEW GROUP)
12/14-ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY AT CLUB
12/16-You Are Not Alone-7:30PM
12/21-Open Meeting-7:00-11:00PM
12/23-A Time For Us-7:00PM
12/25-MERRY CHRISTMAS
12/28-Open Meeting-7:00-11:00
12/28-Board of Directors 7:30PM
1/1/05-HAPPY NEW YEAR

**We answer the phones every Tuesday from 7-11PM
At 781-891-9325 or 781-899-3230**

DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT HISTORY

The history of the Tiffany Club has been documented by Members Joan Hoff and Laura Granger. The project details the people and the struggles of those who founded this club. It took Joan and Laura a couple of years to put this together going through as many old issues of ROSEBUDS and TAPESTRY as they could find. They also talked to many of their sisters who lived through the times with them for what they remember about how this club came to be. This history should be REQUIRED READING for every member of this organization. Copies of the 16 page history are available at the club. You can also request a copy be snail mailed to you by contacting Cheryl Easton, Acting Editor of ROSEBUDS.

FINDING MYSELF IN OTHERS

After years of fear and self-doubt I've recently taken it upon myself to live life as I feel I was meant to live it: As a woman. Needless to say, this was no small decision to come to. Even so, I am not writing to share with you the idiosyncrasies or other details that brought me here but rather share with you briefly how I came to know myself, both past and present, through other's reactions of me expressing myself. This understanding developed over several weeks of living full-time and not until this past Saturday night (11/20/04), did I appreciate its full meaning. I attended a Transgender Remembrance at Arlington Street Church in Boston with my Fiancé Michelle whereupon all were invited to step to the podium and add our thoughts and feelings to the service. Without really thinking about it, I got in line with the others.

While waiting my turn, I listened to the numerous, thought-provoking, inspiring and sometimes deeply sad words each speaker shared. I had become so engrossed with their words that I had not thought of what I would say besides "Good evening, my name is..." Yet, in that moment I found some clarity. Though what you read next is not word-for-word verbatim, it does portray the message I gave that evening.

Good evening, my name is Bobbi and for as long back as I can remember, I have been transgendered. (Nervous smile) Surprise, surprise. Over the last several weeks I felt no choice other than live my life as a woman. You see, for years I have been living in self-loathing and hatred for who I truly am. Between societies' norm and religious teachings I had come to the belief that I was the very worst because of my deep felt feelings. So, being full of doubt, self-hatred and denial, I projected these feelings on the public at large and held great contempt for many, though rarely outwardly showing these feelings of ill will. To be perfectly honest, before I began transitioning, I knew not what would greet me out there in the public eye. Even though some people have been gracious, most of my days are filled with odd looks, snide tones and negative comments said behind my back. Still, as each day has passed, my confidence has grown along with an inner peace and greater sense of self. It appears to me that everyone to one degree or another are filled with those negative feelings towards themselves as I once held and is merely projecting it upon others exactly as I had done. This realization has opened up in me a compassion for those who deride me in all manner of negative fashion. I now empathize and sympathize with them, for they are suffering as I have. It is in this spirit of understanding that we can bring positive change to each other all over the world. I am made hopeful seeing so many here sharing in that. Thank you for listening and goodnight.

That's about it. It was a very profound moment I didn't know was coming. I just felt it was worth sharing with my brothers and sisters. Thanks for taking the time out for listening.

Bobbi Colbert

Editor's note: Bobbi Colbert is a New Member of Tiffany and will be sharing articles on many topics. We welcome her contributions to our pages. Bobbi also contributed the art for the Holiday party that you've seen around the club.

TRANS NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Documentaries about people undergoing sex-reassignment are extremely common these days. But this one is quite extraordinary. It follows Samantha, a wealthy 44 year old property developer who was born a man (and as Sam was married for ten years and had two children), but who seven years ago had a sex-change operation. Now and here's the twist, Samantha wants to become Charles and is on the brink of having another sex-change operation to turn her back into a male again. "I was robbed of my manhood for so many years" explains Sam/Samantha/Charles, ignoring the fact that it was his/her decision to undergo surgery...Mianne Bagger, a 37-year-old Dane, became the first transsexual golfer to qualify for the Ladies European Tour. In March, at the women's Australian Open, Bagger became the first transsexual to play in a pro golf tournament. The Ladies European Tour changed its rules this year to eliminate the "female at birth" in its membership policy. The rule change put the golf tour in line with International Olympic Committee regulations. The Aetna Insurance Company has become the first health insurance company to cover transsexual surgery in it's coverage it offers to client companies. The company is offered the choice of not offering the coverage to it's employees for the surgery, but it is a step forward for transsexuals seeking surgery...This just in at press time Cheryl Jacques, executive director of the gay rights group Human Rights Campaign, has left her job less than one year after she was hired for the nation's most prominent gay rights post. Her official resignation was confirmed by HRC on November 30th. Media reports said that the style in which Jacques handled key issues led to friction between board members and Jacques, a former Massachusetts State Senator. Jacques and HRC have been resistant to include Transgendered people in anti-hate crime legislation being presented before congress.

SELF ESTEEM

“Find your self esteem and be forever free to dream”

Shania Twain

The phrase “find your self esteem and be forever free to dream” comes from Shania Twain’s song Black Eyes, Blue Tears. This phrase is to me at least very poignant and full of meaning. The further I traveled the rocky road (no, not ice cream) of transition the more important this phrase became to me. Six months into my RLT (real life test) I realized that life as a TS woman was filled with the same challenges and frustrations, joys and happiness as any other woman that I met. I soon came to fully understand what this country singer, another woman was saying to all of her sisters that self esteem, finding your own inner sense of worth is a large part of what life as a woman is about.

Without an appropriate at least minimum level of self esteem you will never be free to dreams. If you can not dream for something better, or a more fulfilling life experience then you will never get what you really deserve. Life won’t change for you. We, especially T-people suffer from a serious lack of self esteem and this holds us back not only as individuals but as a group as well.

Ladies and Gentlemen I am here to tell you that the time has come for all of the Transgendered people to find their self esteem and to begin to dream of a better life for all of us. A life in which we can walk down busy city streets and not get snide remarks, or strange looks. A world that does not discriminate based on gender or gender expression. Once we become proud of our Trans heritage then we as a group can begin to dream, once we begin to dream of what can be, we can begin to make our dreams come true. So I ask each and every one of you to help every Trans person you meet to “find their self esteem so that they can be free to dream”.

THE DOCTOR MAKES HOUSE CALLS AT TIFFANY

Dr. Christine Becker is the moderator of TCNE's COUPLES/FRIENDS AND FAMILIES support group. The meeting is held the first Friday night of every month at the Tiffany Club building in Waltham. The cost has been reduced to \$40.00 per person or couple and most insurance will be accepted. If someone is unable to pay, arrangements can be made with Christine. Nobody will be turned away for not being able to pay. Meeting time is 7:30-9:00PM. We wanted to have people get to know Christine and our Acting Editor Cherl Easton, spoke with the doctor about her background and her work with the Trans community. It's very strange to turn the table on someone you've known for many years and they usually ask you the questions. Christine was most gracious and very upfront in her answers. She's been in private practice for over 20 years in Lexington, Massachusetts and graduated from Boston University and received her Masters degree from Boston College. I asked Christine why she has specialized in treating Transgendered people and she replied that, "being Transgendered is a very difficult and challenging condition, in some ways even more difficult than being gay or lesbian and I've always wanted to be an advocate for the Transgendered". Her educational focus in college was to work with sexual dysfunctions and she moved into working with Transgendered from there. Her experience is, "in relationships of all kinds, not just GLBT patients and in addition to adults I'm a strong advocate and work extensively with Transgendered youths and their families". In her private practice, Christine has several support groups for our community including Couples, Female to Male and Male to Female patients. She has been a featured speaker at Every TCNE First Event, is a Board Certified Diploma it, a Member of the American Academy of Social Workers and a Member of the Harry Benjamin Society which sets standards for the treatment of Transgendered patients. She has also served as a court appointed Guardian ad litem for younger transgendered people. The thing that Christine opened up to me on that really answers the question of why she is so caring and loving to our communities is the fact that a number of years ago, she lost her Brother to AIDS. "The last year of his life, he and his partner lived in my home and I was the caretaker for my Brother. During his life, he taught me so much about the GLBT communities and about life itself". "The lessons that he taught have lived on not only in me but my entire family as well and my love for the community is shaped in part by his lessons and his love".

WHO'S THE HEAD CHEESE AROUND HERE?

Sarah Anne Thompson-Club President (Term expires 05)
Randi Elise "Britt" Brittaen-Vice President (expires 04)
Cherl Easton-Chair of Board (expires 04)
Stephanie Edwards-Vice Chair (expires 05)
Debra Kelly-Secretary (expires 05)
Denise LeClair-Treasurer (expires 04)
Barbara Lyons-Board Member (expires 04)

www.tcne.org

Is our web address

ROSEBUDS

Is the monthly newsletter of the Tiffany Club of New England.

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AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR SPONSORS

Tiffany Club Thanks you for your continued support

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Kathleen's Skin Care & Electrolysis
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FROM THE ACTING EDITOR

As we bring this issue of Rosebuds to a close, I want to take the chance to thank everybody who has taken time to contribute something to these pages. Our goal is to make this newsletter an informative one about Tiffany Club and the Transgender community. As we get closer to 2005, there will be some decisions about this newsletter and the way we bring it to you. For the past 2 months, we've put Rosebuds up on-line for everybody to see. We want prospective Members to see what we do at TCNE and that we're an organization looking to grow and be a positive force in helping the Trans community in the Greater Boston and New England area. A large national Transgender magazine recently stopped offering itself as a paid publication and is now available for free on the web. Tiffany spends a lot of money each year printing and mailing Rosebuds to our Members. Maybe a lot of our Members could read 'Buds on the web and save us a lot of money that could be used to help us in other areas. Now I'm just thinking out loud about this. What do you think about getting Rosebuds on-line and not in the mail? Please feel free to send me an e-mail if you have a comment on this or any other subject concerning ROSEBUDS. The e-mail address is: cherleaston@hotmail.com. Please put in the subject line ROSEBUDS. If you don't, it may wind up in junk mail hell. Happy Holidays and see you in 2005.

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