

Enchante' News

A Transgender Newsletter



Vol. 2003-01

<http://florida.enchante.tripod.com>

January 2003

The Group

We had a new guest in December, Phyllis, we wish to welcome you to Enchante'. The year 2002 has seen some up's and down's within the group. We now meet in a new location. The previous one kept bouncing us from one room to another or worse. We've been meeting in a night-club for a while now, but with new ownership we may have to move again.

If anyone has any suggestions they are welcome. If nothing else we may have the meetings out of the home again as it was years ago. But for those in the southern Tampa Bay area that may mean a longer drive.

Enchante' is primarily for transexuals. Any CD/TV's who are seriously contemplating transitioning are welcome to learn more about what to expect. Transition is very serious and permanent and should not be jumped into without lots of thought and foreknowledge.

In The News

The murder of Eddie "Gwen" Araujo, Jr. A TS who was brutally murdered just for being a TS. More information can be found at <http://www.temenos.net>

Transgendered woman raped in Sacramento jail files claim. Kelly McAllister was jailed and placed in a cell with males and was brutally raped. Hospital reports witnessed by deputies confirm the rape. Sheriff's Dept. has charged no one. More information can be found at <http://www.ntac.org>

Nation's transgenders watch New York state's Human Rights vote. The vote is in and transgenders are once again excluded from protections. More information can be found at <http://www.ntac.org>

If you have any noteworthy information please forward it on to the editor.
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A letter from the Editor

I'm going to try including bits of relevant news concerning new legislation, TS's in the news, etc. I am signed on to a number of mailing lists and newsletters and run across some interesting info from time to time.

I would also like to include a short bio, with or without a picture, and comments from members in the newsletter. It could help show those who are battling with these thoughts that there are others like them and they are not alone.

For Immediate Release: Dated December 20, 2002
From: The National Transgender Advocacy Coalition (NTAC)

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NTAC APPLAUDS NEW YORK SENATOR'S HEROISM, BLASTS EXPE- DIENT CRITICS

As the final touches were applied and New York's Sexual Orientation Non Discrimination Act (SONDA) was enacted this week, transgender activists were regrouping and also singing the praises of Senator Thomas Duane (D-Manhattan). The National Transgender Advocacy Coalition (NTAC) called his effort to push forth a last-minute transgender-inclusive bill "heroic."

Duane, New York's only openly gay senator, took a great deal of heat for standing his ground on his amended version of the recently enacted SONDA bill. Senate Speaker Joseph Bruno (R-Saratoga Springs) repeatedly made it clear he had no intention of amending the GOP-sponsored bill, calling it "unnecessary."

"[Duane] was vilified in an intense Email campaign, slammed in the press, and shut out by the state's gay and lesbian rights organization, ESPA [Empire State Pride Agenda]," said NTAC chair, Vanessa Edwards Foster. "Yet he stood his ground - and even battled his own community for the transgenders. That's nothing short of heroic."

After painting a grim picture of the extent

of discrimination of transgenders for their nonconforming appearances, Duane introduced an amendment to extend SONDA to cover "gender expression." Though he fought doggedly "for inclusive language," it failed, 19-40, with only Democrats voting in favor.

"I feel like I have to get up tomorrow and fight again because not everyone got covered," said Duane after seeing his bill fall short, and the Republican bill win on the Senate floor.

"Senator Duane spoke with great eloquence in support of transgender civil rights," said Donna Cartwright, a transgender activist and New Jersey resident who works in Manhattan. "I am not ashamed to say that I wept as I listened to his speech."

"I think our community owes a large debt of gratitude to Senator Duane, and to Housing Works, which campaigned incessantly for transgender inclusion," added Cartwright, who worked on the passage of New York City's ordinance earlier this year. "All honor to them, to our friends in the Assembly like Richard Gottfried, and to non-transgender people of conscience who spoke up for us."

"It's my mission to include language that protects people of transgender experience," Duane said. "The issue is not whether I am trying to stop SONDA, but whether we're going to pass a bill with inclusive language." Along with Duane, Sen. Eric Schneiderman and outgoing Sen. Daniel Hevesi gave impassioned speeches for the inclusive bill.

Immediately following the vote, transgender reactions ranged from tempered congratulations for the gay and lesbian community, to sadness and disappointment, to an undercurrent of rage. "I was sad," said Melissa Sklarz of the New York TransGender Coalition (NYTG) immediately following SONDA's passage. "The ESPA people were all celebrating. All I felt was just emptiness."

Matt Foreman, executive director of ESPA said he didn't want a SONDA victory without transgender inclusion to be viewed as "defeat for the transgender community." Although Assemblyman Richard Gottfried (D-Chelsea) had said they would return "in a second" if an inclusive senate version was voted through, Foreman termed that "playing with fire," adding "If SONDA goes down, that would set our statewide movement back years."

Claims of opportunistically negative press, of both Duane and transgenders, also overshadowed the SONDA campaign.

Jonathan Capehart, a gay columnist with the New York Daily News inferred that Sen. Duane doesn't support gay rights if he's not willing to abandon transgendered people to get SONDA passed. "He should know better," Capehart wrote. "Duane is openly gay. He's even a sponsor of the bill. So what's his deal?"

Even the private rhetoric was intense. Another editor for a publication in Long Island - allegedly a Democrat - stated flatly to NTAC that "there would be hell to pay" if the Democrats didn't stay the course and vote through the GOP version

of SONDA.

After the vote, Foreman of ESPA said, "This lays the foundation for winning full equality under the law in areas such as taxation, protections for gay youth and transgender people and recognition of our families."

"I am at a loss for words for Matt Foreman's quote," said Denise Ives, a lesbian who supported Sen. Duane's bill. "Mr. Foreman needs to rectify the injustice shown towards transgenders."

"Those who criticized Tom Duane need to take a good hard look in the mirror," said NTAC chair, Foster. "All those Republicans who decry 'special rights', all the gay and lesbian pundits who pushed for SONDA at the expense of others - in the cold, hard light of day, this was a totally unattractive display."

"We can look at this milestone from an emotional standpoint," added Jeanine Presa. "Emotionally we fought together to unite us and stop discrimination. However, SONDA in its current language is not yet complete," said Presa, who was fired after her employers, ABP Investments, discovered she was a lesbian.

"How can we state as a nation 'United We Stand' and proceed forward if we are still discriminating?"

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Founded in 1999, NTAC - the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition - is a §501(c)(4) civil rights organization working to establish and maintain the right of all transgendered, intersexed, and gender-variant people to live and work without fear of violence or discrimination.

Our Local Story

For lack of information this month I will post some information about myself.

I moved to Port Richey, FL a little over 4 years ago to begin my transition. I began seeing a GG and became very close friends with her. A few months after meeting I explained my situation with wanting to transition. She accepted this and even seemed excited by it. She's extremely supportive.

I had to change employment once due to my transition and a discriminating Gen. Mgr. This was for the best, I got a better job which helped me save money for the surgeries even faster.

Within the last two years I've gone through an Orchiectomy, breast implants, a nose job, tattoos removed, a tracheal shave and SRS. Yes, I am now post-op. The major transitional phase is over, even though life itself is a long transition.

The week prior to SRS I married my best friend and lover (a GG), it was our last opportunity to do so while still legally male. There's a story behind that, we had to go through some hoops to accomplish it. Now we are a legally married female/female couple. Even my electrologist says that those who do not know me my life sounds strange, but to those who do it all fits. I'm a complicated person....

Helpful Websites, Mail Lists, Email Addresses, and Clubs

<http://www.ntac.org>
National Transgender Advocacy Coalition

<http://www.temenos.net>
Temenos LGBT Community

<http://florida.enchante.tripod.com>
Enchante' - A support group for transexuals in the Tampa Bay and surrounding area.

<http://www.gpac.org/>
GenderPAC - Gender Public Advocacy Coalition

<http://www.megalaw.com>
General Law Info

Egroups:
ConcerningSRS@egroups.com
transgender-couples@egroups.com

Yahoo Groups:
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