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# TRANSgenderist

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Monthly Magazine of the Transgender Independence Club

August, 1998

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## Midsummer Night's Dream

I dreamed that we lived in a world of perfect understanding, a world where transgendered people were accepted for what they were, and where people who were perceived as "different" were all celebrated for the spice that they gave to life. Then I woke up, and realized that the fight for our basic rights must go on.

This edition is a collection of "neat stuff," but I would be remiss in not mentioning the neatest stuff of all. Time magazine, in its July 20th issue, had an article on "Trans Across America," which was actually a very sensitive treatment of the transgender movement, and of our struggle for basic rights in this country. For those of you who did not get that magazine, a copy of that article will be posted in the clubhouse. I've also posted another article there called "The Train From Hate," which looks at the bigger problem we face, hatred of minorities of all kinds in this country.

What do we have for neat stuff here, though? We start out with Tina's description of "TGIC, what is a meeting like?" If you are a first-timer, we hope it will give you courage to come out and be a part of real life as yourself. There is a very interesting poem by Melodie [redacted] called "Baah, Humbug for the Millennium." An extended commentary by Evan Lawrence on the bathroom issue follows. Then we close with Vanessa's review of the new club Androgyny in New York City, which certainly sounds interesting! What is amazing is that these people are all a part of our club life; we are blessed to have them, and I would add Callan to that list as she keeps my in-box full of e-mail besides.

I hope that your summer is going extremely well, and that you will take a few minutes out to review the Fall events.

*-Vicky*

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## Personal Notice

"Will the Chuck from down the Hudson please return the wig? It is my best one, and I do need it. Thanks. Joe Norton"

<http://members.aol.com/ksicks/index2.html>. It's a drag barber shop quartet, the Kinsey Sicks. Two, two, two horrors in one. . . .

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## IFGE Founder Suffers Stroke

IFGE Founder Merissa Sherrill Lynn suffered a stroke in early July, which left her right side partially paralyzed. At this time she is resting well in Emerson Hospital, Concord, MA. To date, she has recovered partial use of her right hand, but remains without the full use of her right leg. She is able to get around with a little help from her friends. Fortunately, her speech and strong will are unimpaired. We all wish her a full and speedy recovery.

Merissa would love to hear from friends, and welcomes visitors, especially if they bring SmartFood Popcorn. She can be reached at P.O. Box 367, Wayland, MA 01778, telephone 508-358-5919.

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## Pride Celebration

The Pride Celebration needs people like you to join the gang making a big party. It's a really great way to expand your circle of friends and feel proud of the work you can do. Call the Center at 462-3110 for information

"Possessing a penis places unique requirements upon men before God in how they are to worship Him," Robert Hicks wrote in "The Masculine Journey." "We are called to worship God as phallic kinds of guys, not some sort of androgynous, neutered non-males, or the feminized males so popular in many feminist-enlightened churches." [No Comment]

## TG Wins Congressional Primary

Transgendered Democrat Bobbie Kerns has won the Democratic primary nomination for Indiana's 6th congressional district. She will face off with incumbent Dan Burton, a prominent Republican social conservative, in the November general election. Kerns' win was made even sweeter because she survived a legal challenge to the nomination by the Democrats. Dawn Wilson, a Kentucky transgender activist, was enthusiastic. "Until we begin to run for office and use the political system fully, we will always be taken lightly," she commented.

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## TGIC Halloween Party?

— TheCallan

With the coming of the pumpkins to "Dollar Tree" stores all over the area (Rotterdam, Latham, Clifton Park, Queensbury, Cobleskill) who have their Halloween merchandise out already, it's time to think about Halloween 98 and TGIC. Do people want a TGIC Halloween party this year?

Last year we had the party the Saturday before Halloween to "kick off the holiday season" -- and also to allow people who only had weekends free to attend, let people go to other parties on Halloween, and not have to fight for a venue. This year, Halloween is on the fifth Saturday of October. The options this year include fourth Saturday (Oct 24), third Saturday to coincide with SSS (Oct 17), or Thursday before to coincide with TGIC (Oct 29). What's good for you?

The next question is venue. Star Studio is gone but another party place (rather than just a bar) would be nice. Karen [REDACTED] has offered to do the legwork if people will help with local knowledge, as she doesn't really know the area. Karen organized last year's party and did a great job!

It may seem early to be discussing this, but it's only about twelve weeks until Halloween. It would be nice to have the date set by August 15 so that it can be in September CDGLCC Community and TGIC Newsletter, and it may be crucial to have a venue chosen by then so as not

to get into booking conflicts.

In any case, everything must be set in six weeks by September 15 so that people can be notified.

Are you ready for Halloween? It's time to start now! If you want to get in touch with Karen, she's at TGIC or on TGIC online.

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## More BS (Bumper Stickers)

By popular demand...

The gene pool could use a little chlorine. Time is what keeps things from happening all at once. Women who seek to be equal to men lack ambition. Your kid may be an honor student, but you're still an idiot. I don't suffer from insanity, I enjoy every minute of it. It's lonely at the top, but you eat better. Love: two vowels, two consonants, two fools. According to my calculations, the problem doesn't exist. Some people are alive only because it is illegal to kill them. Forget world peace; visualize using your turn signal. Give me ambiguity or give me something else. We have enough youth; how about a fountain of smart? Make it idiot proof and someone will make a better idiot.

Always remember: you're unique, just like everyone else. Very funny, Scotty; now bean down my clothes. Puritanism: the haunting fear that someone, somewhere may be happy. Consciousness: that annoying time between naps. There are three kinds of people: those who can count and those who can't.

Why is "abbreviation" such a long word? Ever stop to think and forget to start again? I like you but I wouldn't want to see you working with sub-atomic particles. Lead me not into temptation, I can find it myself. [And my fave of this batch:]

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"AUNTIE EM: HATE YOU, HATE KANSAS, TAKING THE DOG." - DOROTHY

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■ The current issue of *Maxim* magazine profiles Las Vegas gambler Brian Zembic, 37, who in October earned \$100,000 on a dare from a colleague by having breast-implant surgery and leaving the implants in a full year. According to the article, he has not taken them out yet. Said Zembic, "Having breasts gives you insight into what life is like for women. You start to see what pigs men are."

## TGIC, what is a meeting like?

From your new vice president

Jina [REDACTED]

This article is targeted to those people who have never been to a meeting or don't quite get what it's about having been there once or twice. The rest of you can still read along. The meetings at TGIC amount to the following: A group of quite diverse people in various levels of commitment from cross-dressing part time to full life commitment, transgender or transsexual including change of identity. Profession? Pick a letter: engineer, computer sales, diesel mechanic, pilot, farmer, self employed, retired, prison guard, career transitioning (That's me and at least one other person), 20's to 70's, diverse life styles, backgrounds, income levels, world views, traveling distances, some of us regular for the past six years, some now and then over that same time or more (I joined six years ago), some once-in-a-blue-moon occasional to one time only and everything in-between. Everything from three people to twenty-some per meeting.

Meetings are unstructured, driven only by the personalities present per meeting. Attempts at more structure than this have met with total failure. Don't argue with success. Why do I say that? Because the meetings have gone on week after week, year after year, consistently (except Thursday holidays or an occasional blizzard), structured only by personalities present thereby giving each participant autonomy to be his/her self in a friendly extra non-judgmental atmosphere. Rules? No drugs, no alcohol (except wine at a party), no orgies. Everybody acts civilly with respect for self and others. People who need to act out their instability in a semi-public place will be uncomfortable here. Some have come one time only. Others promise to come and never do for any number of reasons: instability, paranoia, not responsive to their fetish-fantasy expectation, can't "break the ice" with new people, who knows? This is the place where

dysfunctional issues are discussed and addressed, but not patronized or encouraged. This includes the old bugaboo, Guilt and shame, and anything else. You have the opportunity to get comfortable with yourself and lose that stuff, not wallow in it.

We know the professional specialists for therapy, medical care, legal issues, and support groups elsewhere.

From what I understand, and this was before I joined in 1992, TGIC was a live wire with lots of club sponsored activities. Today it is a social club with outside activities conducted by members and alumnae independent of TGIC. The face of transgender is changing, and much of the country is on a learning curve, and so are we who are transgendered. We have been accomplishing our goal of educating the public, and guess what? It makes life different for us! Some of the "Safe portable closet" of group activities is giving way to the more open agenda of transgendered people just doing things. Public acceptance is changing. And it's changing us.

Comments, agreements, disagreements are welcome.



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■ A June *New York Times* article described the new occupation of "social worker turned actress" Alice Saltzman, 36, and colleagues, who have populated medical school faculties as "GTAs" — genital teaching associates, who demonstrate breast, pelvic and genital-urinary examination techniques to medical students and doctors at around \$75 an hour. GTA programs exist in 83 of the nation's 126 medical schools.

## Baaah, Humbug for the Millennium

Little Bo Peep had lost all her sheep,  
And didn't know where to find them.  
If she left them alone, they'd never come home,  
Wagging their tails behind them,

So she sent out some parties, a couple of smartys,  
To bring in the strays to the fold.  
But try as they might, the girls were too slight,  
So they all ended up getting rolled.

They had looked in at Yours, and then at JD's,  
And then met the muggers enroute,  
But they carried no heat, so were swept off their feet,  
While trying to look "Oh so cute."

Then one of our number decided 'twas time  
To give it the best that we've got.  
She reapplied lipstick and brandished her dipstick,  
And gave it her best TG shot. [SAYING:]

"We don't care who you are, we are who we are!  
We won't take any more gender bash.  
If you stalk us again, we will use whip and chain.  
For we've had quite enough of your trash!

"We are the annointed, we're not double jointed,  
And we are the best of the best.  
And if you do not cease, you will never have peace,  
Because we are the ones who are blessed.

"We don't have to submit to you or to quit.  
We are well on our way to success.  
And we know that someday, everyone will then say:  
'That girl looks just fine in that dress.'

"So if you take us on, the idea will soon dawn,  
That we take no prisoners here.  
We are the girls, all of us girls,  
Who are proud to be best of the queer!"

--MELODIE [REDACTED]  
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### Lady Di's

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Dear Vicky,

I enjoyed the first installment of the story of your transition. I hope your parents are proud of you. Since I'm mostly self-employed and expect to remain so, I'll probably never have such a dramatic transition story.

I was struck that the one issue your supervisors immediately brought up, and apparently wouldn't let go of, was, as Kate Bornstein drily puts it, "Which bathroom is it going to use?" Of all the issues confronting a TS (can I keep my job, will my family reject me, will my friends and lover desert me, can I get appropriate medical care), this one seems to demand a disproportionate share of attention and energy.

Like most T\*s, I've had my share of bathroom bad moments, to the point where I think twice about which restroom door I'll walk through. (Thank God/Goddess for those handicapped-accessible lavatories with the sign for both men and women. Isn't it odd that the only people in this society who are excused from declaring a gender before they relieve themselves are the handicapped? Even babies are stuffed into his and her Huggies.) Why is this such a cultural hang-up? Everyone's

gotta go sometime, several times a day. Why is the fact that some people do it standing up, and some people do it sitting down, so unmentionable that those who prefer one position must never, ever be confronted with the reality that some people do it another way?

Something very primitive seems to be at work here, even beyond what I suppose is women's disinclination to let men see them fiddling with their clothes, re-applying make-up, or dealing with the mess of That Time of the Month. Remember the Equal Rights Amendment? The threat that it would outlaw single-sex bathrooms was enough to scuttle the promise of equal opportunity and equal pay for equal work.

I've been in a number of places where the only restroom was single person occupancy. Everyone took a turn and there were no complaints. Obviously this won't work for places where a lot of people may need to use the facilities at once. Re-plumbing America, so that bathrooms come in trios for men, women, and others, isn't practical or likely. And how many of us would admit to being "other"?

Some of us don't pass very well, and may never pass very well. The restroom wars don't seem to be an issue for most

non-T\* people, except when they give us dirty looks, challenge our right to be there, and even chase us out, so this seems to be uniquely our issue to deal with. What are some creative approaches we can take? Are there alternative ways to designate the facilities to include us? How about a campaign to remark doors "for those who really need privacy" and "for those who don't give a hang"?

I'm also enclosing my nomination for the latest Darwin Awards. You can credit it to Chuck Shepherd's column in the Albany Times-Union.

Peace!

Evan

Evan [REDACTED]

!!

And thank you for a well-thought out discussion. I'll be back with more transition tales in the future.  
— Ricky

■ Joseph N. Gilson, 20, in jail in Stevens Point, Wis., on a variety of minor charges, had told fellow inmates he planned to hang himself until unconscious so that he would be sent to a mental health facility that would be easier to escape from. On April 2, he put his plan into effect and accidentally strangled himself.

July 30, 1998

Dear TGIC members and friends,

I am organizing a commemoration of gays who were persecuted by the Nazis, to be held during the Capital District Pride Week (Sept. 27-Oct. 4). Along with eliminating Jews, Gypsies, people with mental and physical disabilities, Jehovah's Witnesses, Communists, and dissenters of any sort, the Nazis wanted to exterminate men who didn't conform to the Aryan ideal of manliness. An estimated 100,000 men were arrested on suspicion of being homosexual. Some were actually gay. Some were bisexual, transgendered, or cross-dressers. Others were straight victims of false accusations. They were seized from all parts of the Third Reich: Germany, Austria, France, Poland, and other occupied territory. Tens of thousands were sent to concentration camps, and many died under the most horrific circumstances.

I believe that this is part of our history that we need to remember. At the very least, I plan a contingent in the Pride Parade on Oct. 4. Other possibilities are a speech or reading during the post-parade rally, an exhibit at the Gay & Lesbian Community Center, a reading or prayer during the Interfaith Service on Sept. 28, and a dramatic presentation during the Cabaret.

I invite anyone to participate, on whatever level is comfortable. You don't have to be white, gay, or male. I would love to include a few drag queens! I understand funding is available through the Capital District Gay & Lesbian Community Council, so you will not be asked to do any fund-raising. If you are interested, know of someone who might be, or have ideas, contacts, or information to pass on, please call me at 677-5662 (my phone is very secure).

Peace!

**Evan** [REDACTED]

Evan [REDACTED]

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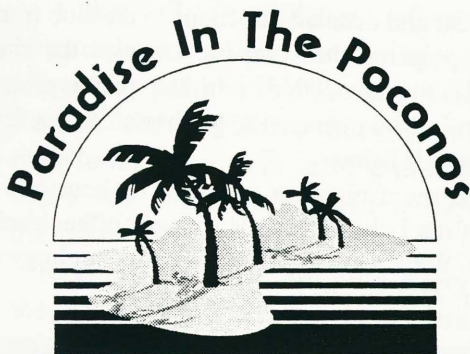
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artists. We'll also have four seminars, two of them by Dr. Sheila Kirk. And, we'll have our world-famous parties, tag sale, and talent show.

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■ Among the occupational hazards of "underwear wrangler" Jeffrey Bruce, according to an April *New York Times Magazine* piece, is that his job of hooking and unhooking underwear models for photo shoots sends him to several cities and that he must take his satchel through airport metal detectors. When he is called on to open it, his explanations for the bras, panties, stockings, briefs, tape and safety pins often fall on deaf ears.

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## Vanessa's Journal

*Androgyny in New York City*

Saturday was perfect for my first day in the City, clear skies, temperature in the 80's. Exiting the Queens-Midtown Tunnel, I drove uptown and parked on Amsterdam Avenue at 68th Street and stuffed the meter with quarters. In a short straight red skirt, white v-neck blouse, white pantyhose, red mid-height heels, red earrings, and white purse, I walked and walked and walked. The streets were packed, musicians on break cluttered about Lincoln Center, vendors and bargain hunters crowded around curbside booths on Central Park South. I wove through the crowds, then ran the gauntlet. A phalanx of NYPD's finest uniformed officers lined the street for three blocks guarding the Essex Hotel where Netanyahu was camped out for weekend events: chats with Madeleine, Kofi, and Rudolph and Sunday's Honor Israel parade. St. Patrick's Cathedral, the southern terminus of my walk, offered cool shade, a wedding, and an *Ode to Joy* organ recessional. Busloads of tourists streamed in, thickening the faithful throng. After returning to the car by way of Rockefeller Center, Broadway, and Columbus Circle, I bought a cold fruit drink at a deli then slaked my thirst while resting on a bench in a shady park nearby. I drove to 78th Street and walked four long blocks to the American Museum of Natural History. I had forgotten my membership card but the lady at the desk took my name, confirmed my membership status and allowed free entry for three fascinating hours of life and times in Africa, Asia, and South America. Tip for the day: Girls, don't wear new shoes if you are planning to walk all day.

History lesson over, it was time for the present, the cultural and social aspects of NYC. Thanks to Callan and the e-mail list I learned of a recently opened club downtown in Soho at 35 Crosby Street, a block east of Broadway between Broome and Grand. All routes heading south were jammed. I drove down Broadway and through Times Square. Normally I would have been frustrated by the snail's pace, but I was enthralled and enlightened watching the thousands of people swarming about. I learned what women were wearing to dinner, to the opera, to the concerts, to the nightclubs, and shows. Two hours later I arrived.

Androgyny's co-owners Marquesa and David greeted me warmly. Showing up early gave the advantage of their undivided attention to discuss the club and to learn more about city politics and the NYC club scene. As they spoke of what it takes to get a club started, it became clear that Marquesa and David had gone out of their way to score a first for the City, a transexual lounge, extraordinarily comfortable for patrons and girls in particular who may feel uncomfortable in public. Girls enter free from 6-8, time to put faces on in a well-lit changing room. Androgyny features a relaxed atmosphere available to all. I was at home.

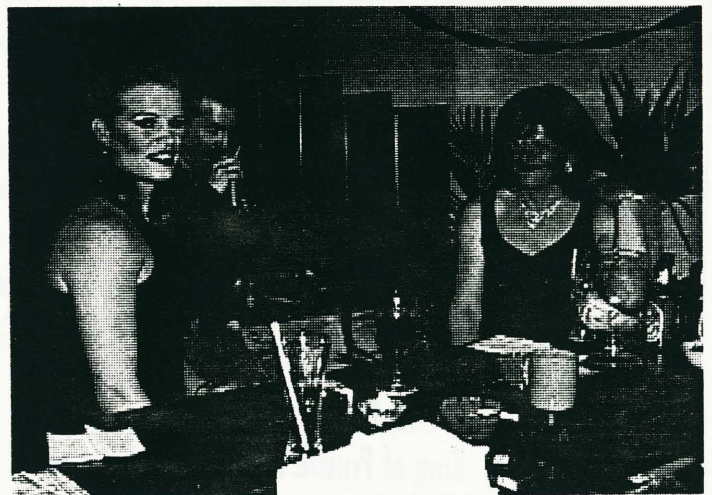
The gorgeous Marquesa with her black dress and black high heels inspired me to change from my daytime

attire to my little black dress with rhinestone accents, ultra sheer jet black pantyhose, and very high black heels complimented by rhinestone necklace, earrings and bracelet. From my car parked directly in front, I got my change of clothing and joined Laura in the changing room. It is not hard to find mirrors at the club. Later, Connie, Jean, and Traci joined assorted couples and other singles in the fun and conversation. Jean's electronic camera captured several candid. We lounged in comfortable sofas, munched cheese, dips, raw vegetables, and chips, listened to soft music, and discussed hair removal, nails, high heels, and the extent to which one should use plastic to enhance ones shape.

Beer, soda, and wine are served. Open Thursday through Saturday, admission is \$20 for men and \$10 for ladies after 8 PM. Weekdays, opening is 6, closing at 2 AM, except 4 AM Fridays and Saturdays. Special rates are available for associations. Videos play above the bar, e.g., *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* and other such fare, no pornography. No dancing. Guests are expected to be discrete. The neighbors don't appreciate loud unruly patrons. Talent nights and theme parties are planned. Parking can't be more convenient, right out front on the street at no charge. The tapas place next door serves good food. The neighborhood is as safe as Androgyny's cheese. You can eat the complimentary cheese without fear of ill effects, David having successfully completed a city-mandated cheese cutting course. He'll demonstrate on talent night.

Androgyny's home page is well constructed with informative crosslinks, bulletin board, sounding board, photo album, event calendar and detailed directions to the club from every conceivable point on the compass. Do visit the site, <http://members.aol.com/andro10013>. In the photo album you'll find yours truly who managed to get herself into a few of the shots. A sample is below.

Traci stood me a nightcap and with an hour and a half drive ahead of me I chose David's special coffee, black. Home at 4:30 AM. What a great day in the City!. Androgyny is an absolute must. Go! -- [REDACTED]



Marquesa, a thirsty guy, and Vanessa



Transgenderist's Independence Club  
PO Box 13604, Albany, NY 12212-3604  
(518) 436-4513 (live Thurs.7:30-10 PM)

Transgenderist's Independence Club (TGIC) is a nonprofit, educational, non-sexual social support group for persons wishing to explore beyond the conventional boundaries of gender, including crossdressers, transsexuals and their friends.

**TGIC Officers**

|                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| President         | Winnie [redacted] |
| Vice President    | Tina [redacted]   |
| Secretary         | open              |
| Treasurer         | Winnie [redacted] |
| Newsletter Editor | Vicky [redacted]  |

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Readers are invited to submit articles relevant to the Transgendered Community for consideration. You may bring or mail typed pages for publication to the TGIC clubroom. Format should follow that shown in the current newsletter. You may also e-mail the articles to [redacted]. The article should be part of the body of the e-mail.

Regular Meetings are held every Thursday at the TGIC Club Room on Central Avenue in Albany, 7:30 PM to 10 PM. Some come earlier and stay later, but it is wise to call if you are not a Keyholder or if it is your first visit. Come dressed either way, meet and talk with friends. Many continue to socialize at one of the local night spots after the meetings.

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**CLOSETS AVAILABLE FOR RENT**

Two closets in the TGIC Club Room are now available for rent at \$30-\$40 per month, including a key to the room. If you are interested in a closet or becoming a Key Club member (\$10 per month) please call, write, or come to a meeting.

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**BECOME AN IFGE MEMBER**

The International Foundation for Gender Education is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Basic membership is \$25 per year. Subscriptions to Transgender Tapestry are \$40. Brochures and forms are available in the TGIC Club Room. Call or write to:  
IFGE (617) 899-2212  
PO Box 229  
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**ANONYMOUS HIV ANTIBODY TESTING**

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## TGIC On-Line

All transgendered people are invited to join TGIC On-Line, an informal e-mail network sponsored by Transgenderist Independence Club (TGIC). Messages exchanged on TGIC On-Line focus on events of interest to transgendered people in a region from Lake Placid to Newburg. If you are interested in joining the network, or want more information about TGIC, send an e mail message to: TGIC-request@hartebeest.com with any subject line and in the message body, the text:

JOIN TGIC  
STOP

(Please note: JOIN TGIC must be on line 1. STOP must be on line 2) You will receive an automated acknowledgment (Journal) of your request, which must be approved with the list moderator.



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Thanks for the articles!  
— Vicky

## Calendar and Events

TGIC meetings are held Thursdays at 7:30 in the clubhouse.

### Events of Note

August 8 Twenty Club, Hartford

August 22 Twenty Club, Hartford

### PRIDE

September 19 Miss Pride Pageant,  
Waterworks

September 26 Family Pot Luck

September 27 AIDS Walk 98;  
Cabaret Show, 6-8PM

September 28 Gay Teens Panel;  
Healing Celebration at  
Emmanuel Baptist 7PM

September 29 Religious Holiday

September 30 Community Breaking Fast  
For Yom Kippur

October 1 Awards Banquet with speaker  
Carl McCall

October 2 Golf Tournament;  
Extravaganza with Men Out  
Loud and Michelle Balon at  
the Egg

October 3 One Dance, Dance Of The  
Proud; Under 21 Dance

October 4 Noon March & Rally in  
Washington Park with Kate  
Clinton

September 30-Oct 4 Southern Comfort

October 18-25 Fantasia Fair

September's Transgenderist will  
feature Callan [redacted] thought-  
provoking article, "Wither  
TGIC?"

Comments? Vicky E. [redacted],

vicky\_s@juno.com

1971 Western Ave, #108, Albany, NY 12203.

All the news that fits.