



# TransCentralPA Newsletter

*Serving the Transgender Community of Central Pennsylvania since 1989*

October 2008

WWW.TRASCENTRALPA.ORG

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## Announcements

### HOT

**Hungry?** Join us for dinner and drinks at Café Fresco ( [www.cafefresco.com](http://www.cafefresco.com) ) on Saturday, Oct 4th at 5:30 pm prior to our meeting. Please RSVP to Kristy if you plan to attend the dinner at [info@transcentralpa.org](mailto:info@transcentralpa.org)

**2009 Nominations and Elections** The nomination period for the 2009 officers will open on October 4th at the start of our meeting. If you are interested in a position, please let Jeanine or Kristy know. Elections will be conducted at our November 1st meeting. To see a summary of the proposals, activities, ideas, and policies we have for next year, see page 3 of this newsletter.

### GROUP

**Thank you** to everyone who made our last meeting such a success. We had 18 people join us for dinner and 37 people attend Mara's presentation. This was our largest event based on attendance this year. We are already in the works to schedule more speakers for next year.

**Happy Halloween!** Along with our annual elections, we're going to have a Halloween costume contest at our November 1st meeting (the day after Halloween). A prize (or prizes) will be awarded so start looking for that one-of-a-kind costume!

**Big Hug** Please welcome our newest members Colleen, Penelope and Ashley.

**Good Choice!** As you know, the Canna Country Inn recently changed hands. The previous owners were very welcoming and had hosted our annual holiday party for the past several years there. We announced last month that we decided not to have the party there which turns out to be a wise choice—the new owners sent out emails asked us to be removed from our website and other GLBT resources.

**Holiday Party** Jeanine has been discussing with several leaders in the GLBT community the idea of an all-inclusive, end-of-year formal dinner and dance. A shared event like this would not only provide us an opportunity to better acquaint ourselves with others, but also provide us an



TransCentralPA welcomed Mara Keisling, the Executive Director for the National Center for Transgender Equality at our September meeting. Mara is a transgender-identified woman, a parent and one of the nation's leading voices for transgender equality appearing on news outlets such as CNN and CSPAN. A native of Harrisburg, she is a former member of TransCentralPA.

The presentation was quite exciting as we heard about the myriad of work being done by the NCTE and other pro-transgender rights groups across the country. She discussed the soon-to-be announced Transgender Federal Policy Agenda that covers a wide range of federal policy areas as well as the current status of a transgender-inclusive Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). Mara answered a variety of questions concerning other current legal battles such as Montgomery County's Ballot Initiative, right-to-work at the Library of Congress and the recent rescinding of Pennsylvania's non-discrimination law.

Visit the NCTE website ( [www.nctequality.org](http://www.nctequality.org) ) to see the great work they are doing. NCTE is a non-profit organization funded by the donations of people wanting to promote the rights and freedoms of transgendered individuals.

opportunity to spread the cost of hosting such a party. If you are interested in helping out, please let Jeanine know. We are still looking at several other venues if this idea does not pan out this year.

**Good Luck Jeanine!** Our very own Managing Director Jeanine Ruhsam has been asked to host the workshop "Living Life in Both Genders" at the Southern Comfort Conference in Atlanta the first week of October. Let her know if you would like more information about her presentation.

**Ready for a Laugh?** The Women's Center, Office of Diversity Initiatives, and the Clarke Forum are bringing the gender-bending performance of the Kinsey Sicks ( [www.kinseysicks.com](http://www.kinseysicks.com) ) to Dickinson College in Carlisle to highlight the new Women's Center as a cross-campus resource for conversation, activities, and activism on women and gender. The event is scheduled for Saturday, October 25, 7:00 p.m., ATS Auditorium. Admission is free of charge. We are planning to all meet for dinner before the event, so please RSVP at [info@transcentralpa.org](mailto:info@transcentralpa.org)

### LOCAL

**The Rainbow Rose Community** is a non-profit service organization dedicated to strengthening the GBLT community by building a network of visible and safe businesses, organizations and environments to visit. See their website at ( [www.rainbowrosecommunity.org](http://www.rainbowrosecommunity.org) ) for more information.

**The LGBT Center Coalition** is excited to announce that Beth Stroud ( [www.bethstroud.info](http://www.bethstroud.info) ) will be speaking at Market Square Presbyterian Church in Harrisburg on Friday, October 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. Ms. Stroud was an ordained minister in the United Methodist Church and served at a church in Germantown, PA until she lost her credentials in a church trial for openly being in a relationship with another woman.

**Congratulations!** Kristen Kest recently won "Best in Show" with her piece at the

*See 'Announcements' on page 2...*

## Announcements (continued)

Common Roads - "Coming out - 15 years, 15 LGBT artists" exhibit. Her unique work explores transgender and breaking gender boundaries, and will be featured at Mantis Collective on Friday, October 3, 2008.

### EVENTS

**Southern Comfort Conference** is from Sep 30-Oct 5 in Atlanta, GA. SCC is the largest transgender conference in the country. Visit [www.sccatl.org](http://www.sccatl.org) for more information and to register. The hotel is always sold out so make your reservations early.

**34th Annual Fantasia Fair**, Oct 19-26 in Provoctown, PA. "Fan Fair" is the oldest and longest running transgender conference. ([www.fantasiafair.org](http://www.fantasiafair.org))

**TG/CD Weekend @ Rainbow Mountain**, Oct 24 - 26 in Stroudsburg, PA. This is a weekend to let your hair down and party! There will be a talent show so come out and show your talent! There were over 100 ladies out for the last TG/CD weekend. Visit [www.rainbowmountain.com](http://www.rainbowmountain.com) for details.

**Beauty at the Beach**, Oct 29 - Nov 2 in Rehoboth Beach, DE. For more details, visit [www.cdspub.com/batb.html](http://www.cdspub.com/batb.html)

**2008 Fall Harvest**, November 4 - 9 in Kansas City, MO. Fall Harvest began several years ago and was originally part of a group called the Mid America Gender Group Information Exchange (MAGGIE). MAGGIE was an alliance of gender support groups in the Midwest United States. Visit [www.fallharvest.org](http://www.fallharvest.org)

**2008 Lake Erie Gala**, November 17-22 in Erie, PA. This is a 10th anniversary event complete with sightseeing trips, wine tasting, fashion shows, evening entertainment, casino night, etc. in Erie, PA. Visit [www.eriesisters.org](http://www.eriesisters.org) for details.

**IFGE Conference** (Feb 28) will be held in Alexandria, VA. The discounted hotel room for the event is \$132, half the standard rate. The block of rooms available actually starts on Feb 2 and will go quickly, so make your reservations early at [www.ifge.org/conference](http://www.ifge.org/conference)

**Liberty 2009**. Dr. Kristine James from TransEvents USA is looking for volunteers to help plan and organize the Liberty 2009 conference in Philadelphia April 30 – May 2. Volunteers will receive reduced or free registration to the event. If you are interested in volunteering or would like more information about the conference, visit their website at [www.transeventsusa.com](http://www.transeventsusa.com)



We had a wonderful dinner at The Blue Bistro and Wine Bar in downtown Harrisburg prior to our September meeting. We had eighteen people in attendance for dinner. Pictured (above left to right) are Natasha, Kitty, Janine, Samantha, Randi, Jennifer and Michelle. Pictured (below left to right) are Pam—the owner of the Blue Bistro and Wine Bar, Jeanine, Kristy, Sara and our guest speaker Mara Keisling—the Executive Director for the NCTE.



### DID YOU HEAR?

- Maryland High Court threw out the referendum petition that attempted to overturn a Transgender anti-discrimination law.
- A comprehensive national survey on Transgender discrimination is underway. Please take the time to participate at [online.survey.psu.edu/endtransdiscrim](http://online.survey.psu.edu/endtransdiscrim)
- A federal judge ruled that the Library of Congress broke the law when it refused to hire Diane Schroer's after she informed them that she would be transitioning.
- 71% of Americans agree that Transgender employees should be judged by job performance, not gender identity.



## From the Managing Director



Jeanine Ruhsam

Mara Keisling, director of the National Center for Transgender Equality, in her talk to our Association on September 6<sup>th</sup>, urged us to be active and involved in furthering the Trans cause on our local level, and remarked that we also have the geographic advantage of being in our state capitol. She shared her excitement that this is a great time to be a Trans person in the United States...and that our increased visibility is a big part of our acceptance by society in general. Since her talk that evening two big victories were won for the Trans cause- both that she'd been working on: Diane Schroer's victorious lawsuit against the Library of Congress for her dismissal because of her gender identity, and the decision by Maryland's highest court to invalidate an effort to remove a local gender identity anti-discrimination law ([www.nctequality.org/news.html](http://www.nctequality.org/news.html)).

I continue to be busy and active as your Director and representative. I attended the Central Pennsylvania Chamber of Commerce (of which TransCentralPA is a member) networking meeting in Lancaster on September 10, and a house party and rally in Harrisburg for the LGTB Center Coalition on the 14th. At both gatherings I had a very positive feeling that we Transgender people are fully accepted as legitimate and positive members of the community. After I get back from the Southern Comfort Conference ([www.sccatl.org](http://www.sccatl.org)) next weekend, I'll be addressing a psychology class at Dickinson College on the subject of Gender Identity Disorder on Thursday Oct 9.

We've got a fun evening in store for October 25! The Women's Center at Dickinson College has invited TransCentralPA to see the Kinsey Sicks ([www.kinseysicks.com](http://www.kinseysicks.com)) perform at the ATS Auditorium on the campus in Carlisle- free of charge. We'll meet for dinner at 5:30 at the nearby California Café ([www.calcaf.com](http://www.calcaf.com)); the show starts at 7:00PM.

We have been granted our status as a 501 (C) (3) tax exempt, non-profit organization through the continued efforts of our Treasurer and other board members. In order to bring our organization

into compliance with IRS guidelines, we need to amend our bylaws to change the titles and structure of our board of directors. We board members have met and worked on the proposed amendment, and two of our members who are attorneys and have expertise in this area are reviewing it. When they have finished, we'll be posting it on our various e-sites for your review. We'll be voting to approve this amendment as the first order of business at the November 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, as the annual board member/officer election that follow will involve differently named positions and duties than we currently have in effect.

I am sorry to miss all of you at our October meeting this coming weekend, as I'll be at SCC in Atlanta...but I hope to see many of you on October 25 in Carlisle.

Sincerely yours,

Jeanine

## Mark your Calendars!

Sep 30 - SCC in Atlanta, GA

Oct 4

**Oct 4 TCPA Group Meeting  
2009 Nominations Begin**

Oct 24 "Kinsey Sicks" at Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA

Oct 24 - CD/TV Weekend at Rainbow Mountain, E. Stroudsburg, PA

**Nov 1 TCPA Group Meeting  
2009 Elections**

Visit our website for more event info!

## TransCentral PA

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## Upcoming Plans and Goals

**CELEBRATE!** 2009 marks our 30th anniversary serving the Transgender Community of Central Pennsylvania. Be proud!

**DUES** Membership dues for 2009 are \$30 if paid by December 31st, 2008, \$35 afterwards. Dues are reduced by \$5 a month on or after August 1st. Current members may renew online via PayPal starting on approximately October 15. Visitors and Guests are free to encourage people to attend meetings, but are asked for a \$5 donation to offset meeting costs. Donations will be solicited at entry and the policy announced during the meeting.

**MEETINGS** Our group meetings will be moved to the second Saturday of the month starting in May 2009 to stop conflicting with major holidays and other events. The reason we are waiting until May is because Valentine's Day and Easter fall on the second weekend of the month in February and April, respectively.

**WEBSITE** Building a new, more interactive website to allow blogs, picture posting, more comprehensive list of local Transgender and other LGB activities and resources, including a password protected member's area.

**YAHOO GROUP** Opening the Yahoo Group to both members and non-members to reach out further to the Transgender community. Must give valid reason. Non-member postings will be approved by the moderators. Pictures may

be posted with the consent of those in the picture. Outside organizations may post their events.

**ACTIVITIES** Liquid 891 has tentatively agreed to schedule bands, shows, etc. on our meeting night. We will continue to seek dinner, hotel and other discounts for members. We plan to co-host an end-of-the-year formal party with other LGBT organizations in the Central Pennsylvania area.

**OUTREACH** Continue advertising in the Central VOICE as well as the Panzee Press and Lavender Letter. Send letters to local area counselors and therapists announcing who and what we are, offering our assistance in helping their Transgender clients accept themselves.

**EDUCATE** Continue to provide gender education to businesses, organizations, educational institutions and governmental agencies. Build upon our relationships with local universities by providing guest speakers as needed. Press the PA DMV for a comprehensive Transgender policy.

**FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED** Complete process of status for a 501c3 entity. This will allow us to solicit donations and grants from outside organizations as well as allow members to claim dues and donations as a tax deduction. Change from 6 Directors to annually elected 4 Officers to simplify our operations and to better align ourselves with a standard non-profit organization.

