



April, 2010

## Tranny Road Show in Olympia

Wednesday, April 14

Doors at 7pm, Show at 8pm

Join us for a Rockin' good time at the  
*Evergreen State College Longhouse.*

The Tranny Roadshow is a multimedia performance art extravaganza. It is composed of an eclectic group of artists, each one self-identified as transgender, and includes poets, rappers, filmmakers, storytellers, breakdancers, rock bands, comedians, actors, folk singers, photographers, zinesters, and more. Stationary art (i.e. photography and sculpture) is displayed, but most of the presentation is the live show, a unique variety show where the expression of gender and the expression of self are inseparable. The show is a fluid entity, changing to suit the artists and the crowd, but always it is full of intelligence, fun and humor.



*The multi-faceted Tranny Road Show Troupe*

Although the Tranny Roadshow is done entirely by transpeople, it is not exclusively for transpeople. It is a raucous evening of entertainment, open and accessible to people of all backgrounds. Most of us are experienced performers, and while our goals do include challenging people and making them think, our most important goals are to entertain them, make them laugh, and make them dance.

Some pieces of each show focus specifically on gender, but many others do not. All people have multiple identities, which overlap, intertwine and impact each other in different ways. We recognize that our trans identities are singular facets of who we are, and one of the aims of the Tranny Roadshow is to present transpeople as we are - as whole, multi-faceted people. We are not only trannies, we are singers, filmmakers, dancers, writers, jugglers, etc. And our art expresses many things, of which gender is only one. In the show, we present a wide spectrum of gender identities, a brilliant array of living art, and the ties that bind these identities to our artwork and to the world.

The event is being sponsored by GASS.

<http://www.trannyroadshow.com/>



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## Shining a Light On . . .

This month *The Lantern* had the privilege and pleasure to interview Allena Gabosch, who is the Executive Director of the Center for Sex Positive Culture, a non-profit, membership based community center in Seattle. The center offers more than 100 events monthly including themed dance parties, daytime playtime space, and special events like New Year's Eve. She is the Festival Producer for the Seattle Erotic Art Festival as well as a past board member of the National Coalition for Sexual Freedom. In her spare time, she is a sex educator, activist and lifestyle coach. She speaks at colleges and conferences around the country and on radio shows about various topics involving human sexuality. Allena is a bisexual, poly switch and considers herself extremely blessed as she has a rich and full poly life, with many amazing and loving people in her "polycule"



## Support Groups Working Together Ingersoll and GASS to Share Booth at Seattle Pride!

Seattle's and Tacoma's trans support groups will be at SOAP (Seattle Out and Proud) together on June 27th. Last year saw more than 100 thousand attend the parade and entertainment at the Seattle Center. This year's parade is celebrating the passage of Ref 71, a historic milestone that places Washington State squarely at the forefront of LGBT issues. The 36th annual parade theme is "Over the rainbow- be seen, be heard, be there!"  
<http://www.seattlepride.org/>

Ingersoll Gender Center founder, Marsha Botzer, commented, "We are excited to be doing this together and looking forward to seeing folks at the booth at the Pride Festival."

Following the Seattle Pride Parade, tens of thousands of revelers pack the Seattle Center at one of the biggest free Pride Festivals in the country, to dance, drink, eat, shop, and party. A bigger festival footprint will offer more vendors, bigger stages, and better entertainment than ever before.

"What a terrific opportunity for our two groups to come together. Let's show our colors at the parade and have some fun at the festival.", said Victoria Quaintance, GASS Chair.



## Support Meetings in the Capital City

The GASS Olympia Support Group meets the 3rd Saturday of the month, 7-9 PM in the cozy living room of the Fertile Ground Guest House, <http://fertileground.org/> situated directly behind the library at 311 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW. There is a large private changing space for those who need that option.

Our meeting is hosted in turns by three moderators who are trained GASS Facilitators. We have a wide range of gender expressions and welcome and offer support to all crossdressers, FTM, MTF, transgenders, family, friends and anyone else wishing to explore their gender identity.

We follow a similar meeting structure as our parent group in Tacoma. A greeting and statement of purpose with basic guidelines for respect open the meeting led by that night's moderator. A personal check-in related to one's gender news follows with limited feedback or comment from others. It's paramount for people to feel safe and encouraged to speak their mind without concern for how others may judge them, especially first timers. The later part of our meetings consist of trans topic discussions where we really get to share our views and learn from others.

Our meetings tend to be smaller in number than those in Tacoma but no less spirited and supportive. The strength in peer-to-peer connection is invaluable to anyone, regardless of their place in the gender universe. We've had people in their late teens all the way to folks in their sixth and seventh decades of life presenting all colors of the rainbow in their individual gender identities.

Please join us if you live in South South Sound, want a meeting between the two monthly Tacoma meetings, or are just curious to see what we're all about. Hope to see you soon.



*Allena Gabosch talks with The Lantern*

*The Lantern:* Hello, Allena, thanks for being here.

Allena: Thanks for inviting me.

*The Lantern:* How did you get involved with promoting a positive image of sex and alternate ways of living?

Allena: Wow, it seems that I just kept being pushed in front of that bus. :) My former husband and I used to be involved with the National Leather Association and through that we put on events called Kinky Couple Parties. They were very pansexual and in hindsight very sex positive. We had a huge mix of attendees of all genders, orientations etc. From there I and a friend started Beyond the Edge Cafe up on Capitol Hill. It became the gathering place for the kink community and eventually our basement became the local dungeon. After we sold the cafe, I was involved in starting the Center. It's kind of like I can't get away from it. And it helps that I'm a bi poly switch (in other words greedy) so I kind of fit into a lot of categories.

*The Lantern:* Your organization used to be called "The Wet Spot". Why the name change?

Allena: Our organization is a 501 (c) 7 Social Club and it's original name was the Seattle Sex Positive Community Center and "The Wet Spot" was just a nickname that stuck. In 2005 we tried to change our designation to a 501 (c) 3 education and arts organization. While that was unsuccessful the IRS did assist us in creating a separate organization in 2007 for our education and arts and that's when the Foundation for Sex Positive Culture was formed. Our attorney and board felt that we wanted to create a brand that would connect the two organizations since they are considered "sister organizations" and that's how we came up with the Center for Sex Positive Culture. It's also a bit more "grown up" than The Wet Spot. :)

*The Lantern:* What events or groups are specificity for trans people?

Allena: We hold a monthly party called Crowbar that is specifically for our trans-men and those who love and like them (or like to play with them). We do not have specific event for trans women however we do a monthly party called SHE for female identified members. That came out of the work of several of our trans-women members who felt that our women's party (which required female ID) was not serving the full women's community. Since then SHE has grown to be a popular party and is one that our trans-women and cis-women members really enjoy. When there are five Fridays in the month we have a party called Blood Sweat and Queers that is for our queer identified members and it's become another very popular event with the trans community.

*Check the site event listing at*  
<http://www.sexpositiveculture.org/eventlisting>

*The Lantern:* Which way is the scene headed? Say ten years from now? What are we doing now to get there?

Allena: I think we're in the midst of what I like to call a Sexual Renaissance. Like the Italian Renaissance we are a small group of people who are changing how the world looks at sexuality. I think that in 10 years there will be

# The Gendered Coconut

Poem by JAS

Can I buy a coconut?

I just want to pull the inside out of this body. It is as though the two do not fit.

Can I buy a coconut?

The round peg goes in the square hole. I rattle around becoming bruised becoming broken.

Can I buy a coconut?

Draining my soul, I am able to function within my dysfunction. Yet, I die slowly.

Can I buy a coconut?

I am left grasping within this empty space, searching for my lost self.

Can I buy a coconut?

I gave up understanding, numbing my own being for acceptance from the outside world.

Can I buy a coconut?

The coconut has no relevance; it does not make sense. Just as my changing gender makes no sense to you, it therefore has no relevance.

But yet I still want to buy a coconut and could you, oh would you please direct me to the nearest coconut stand? Oh and by the way coconuts do exist and so do I.



## Health Care Reform and Its Impact on Transgender People

In March of this year major new federal healthcare laws were passed. How does this effect transgender people and their families?

The impact of this legislation will begin this year as insurance companies will be required to cover children with pre-existing conditions, dependent children can remain on their parents' health insurance until they are 26, lifetime caps on coverage will be eliminated and Medicare recipients will find additional help in paying for prescription drugs.



Over the next few years, the healthcare reform law will ensure that millions of people in the United States can afford insurance coverage. The law will also subsidize insurance premiums to make insurance coverage affordable. Additionally, Medicaid will now cover every individual up to age 65

much less negative attitudes about so called Alternative Sexuality. Poly and BDSM will be less of a shock to people and just part of the fabric of human sexuality. We've still got more than 10 years for full acceptance, however I do believe that we're headed to a time when it's not that big of a deal to most people. I actually am on a campaign to remove the word "alternative" from what we do as I don't feel it is alternative. BDSM, Poly, etc are just different facets the larger globe of sexuality.

*The Lantern:* You have made a major contribution to making SPC a legitimate, sustainable organization. What are your future plans?

Allena: Personally? I'm going to stick with the Center for now. I had thought to run for city council (and still may when I'm old and ready to retire :) ) I want to make a difference in the world of sexuality so I need to continue working with the sex positive community. I want to write a few books (need to find the time) and someday have a kinky bed and breakfast. For the Center, we're looking at the option of expanding to other cities and creating chapters. I think that's very exciting.

*The Lantern:* What did you do on the Seattle Commission for Sexual Minorities? Did you have cases involving trans folks?

Allena: As a commissioner I, along with the other commissioners were a conduit for the LGBT community to the Mayor and to the City Council. We had several trans members on the commission and we worked closely with the Mayor and City Council to increase awareness of issues that pertained to trans folks as well as LGB folks.

*The Lantern:* Trans civil rights is a relatively new movement that has built on those that have gone before. Are we the last in line or are there other groups that still deserve equal treatment? What about poly people?

Allena: I think it's a never ending struggle. I think that it's exciting that there's an active trans civil rights movement. And yes, I think that Poly may be next. And then there's sex worker rights that still have a long way to go. And I'm sure that there will be another minority that will need our support and help over the coming years.

*The Lantern:* Thank you for this interview and thanks for all you do to help our community.

Allena: You are so welcome.



Visit the Center for Sex Positive Culture site at <http://www.sexpositiveculture.org/>



## GASS PRIDE TOUR 2010

June 4th

Lewis County Pride, Centralia

<http://www.myspace.com/centraliacollegegsa>

(families with or without children, pregnant women, adults without dependent children) with incomes up to 133% of the federal policy level.

#### What the healthcare reform law will do for transgender people:

Increased access to health insurance: Because of rampant workplace discrimination, transgender people are under- and unemployed at significant rates, with an incidence of poverty at more than twice the national average. The reform law's provisions that impact low-income Americans will provide new opportunities for many transgender people to access health insurance.

Cannot be denied coverage or dropped: Also importantly, the healthcare reform law would prohibit insurance companies from dropping or denying coverage to individuals or their dependents because of their 1) pre-existing condition, 2) medical condition, 3) claims experience, 4) receipt of health care, 5) medical history, 6) genetic information, 7) disability, and 8) any other health-status related factor determined appropriate by the Secretary of Health and Human Services. This means that transgender people cannot be dropped or denied coverage by insurance companies because they are transgender or have received transition-related medical care. This is a huge leap forward for the transgender community. However, this provision does not affect insurance companies' exclusion of transition-related care.

Ban on some forms of discrimination: Additionally, the law also forbids discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, age, and disability. If an individual experiences discrimination by a medical provider or organization, (s)he may seek remedies under existing statutes that protect the previously mentioned groups. Even though sexual orientation and gender identity and expression are not included in the anti-discrimination provision, current federal, state, and local anti-discrimination statutes that protect the LGBT community are still in force.

#### Continued barriers to health care faced by transgender people:

Discrimination and distrust: Transgender people suffer from multiple barriers to accessing affordable and quality healthcare, including extraordinarily high rates of discrimination from medical providers and organizations. Lambda Legal conducted a survey which found that 70% of transgender and gender-nonconforming respondents had experience some form of discrimination by medical practitioners. (<http://www.lambdalegal.org/publications/when-health-care-isnt-caring/>) Because of this discrimination, transgender people mistrust medical professionals and put off necessary preventive care and treatment. This leads to additional complications and deteriorating health, and adds additional costs.

Lack of insurance and denial of coverage: Because of discrimination in the workplace, there is a significant lack of insurance coverage within the transgender community. Even if they do have insurance, transgender people often cannot access medically necessary care because insurance companies, Medicare and Medicaid explicitly exclude transition-related care. Additionally, many insurance companies refuse to cover transgender people at all. Some insurance companies do provide coverage to transgender people but deny claims citing that transition-related treatments can lead to other, unrelated health issues, even when there is no scientifically based link between them.

*This article was taken from the NTCE archive and was written by Mul Kim and Justin Tanis*  
<http://transequality.org/news.html>

June 13th  
Capital City Pride, Olympia  
<http://www.capitalcitypride.net/joomla/>

June 27th  
Seattle Out and Proud  
<http://www.seattlepride.org/>

July 10th  
Out in the Park, Tacoma  
<http://www.rainbowcntr.org/outintacoma2010.htm>

July 17th  
Kitsap Pride, Bremerton  
<http://www.kitsappride.org/>



#### GASS Statement of Foundational Beliefs:

G.A.S.S. embodies and celebrates the wide diversity within the gender spectrum, believes that this variation is part of the human family's common, normal and natural predisposition, and supports the establishment of social and legal rights for all individuals who desire to temporarily or permanently present and live their lives in a manner different from the gender roles mandated by traditional culture. GASS rejects the notion of a gender polarity or duality in which there are only two accepted modes of gender expression, and disputes that one must remain fixed in the gender role assigned at birth or in accord with anatomical manifestations. Additionally, GASS fully supports the right to privacy, and encourages its membership to consistently maintain awareness of and respect for the confidentiality that non-conformist gender expression often requires.

#### G.A.S.S. Mission Statement:

G.A.S.S. is a not-for-profit organization, located in and primarily serving the southern Puget Sound region of Washington state, and providing support, referral to resources, peer counseling and fellowship for individuals who are transgendered, crossgendered, intersexed, androgyne, gender variant, cross-dressing or are involved in activities or expressions of gender identity or presentation divergent from their gender assigned at birth. The organization also provides educational and social services, materials and programs for these individuals and their families, friends and allies. Additionally, the organization engages in community outreach, educational efforts and social action to promote better understanding and acceptance of gender diversity, expression and identity issues, and works to establish and enhance the social and legal rights and protections for such individuals.



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



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