

# Illinois Gender Advocates



Advocacy for the Transgender and Gender Variant Community

A §501(c)(3) Charitable Organization

Volume 2 Issue 3

March 2003

## Florida Court Issues Historic Marriage and Custody Decision for Transgender Dad

*From National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) and Equality Florida*

*The National Center for Lesbian Rights and local attorney Collin Vause represented Michael Kantaras in a divorce and custody case in which Michael's wife asked the court to declare him a legal stranger to the couple's two children.*

TAMPA, FL – In a groundbreaking decision, Florida Circuit Court Judge Gerard O'Brien ruled today that Michael Kantaras, a transgender man, is legally male and was legally married to his former wife Linda Kantaras, stating that "the Court has carefully reviewed all the pleadings, record evidence, expert medical testimony, lay witness testimony and the appropriate statutory authority for marriage in Florida and concludes the overwhelming weight of evidence favors declaring the marriage valid." The court also awarded Michael primary custody of the two children he and Linda raised together during their marriage.

Judge O'Brien's opinion is one of a handful of decisions addressing marriages involving transsexual spouses, and one of the first in the United States to hold that such marriages are valid. The only states with similarly favorable decisions are New Jersey and California; in contrast, Texas and Kansas courts have held that marriages involving transsexual individuals are void. Internationally, courts in a number of countries have affirmed the validity of such marriages, including a very recent decision by the Family Court of Australia upholding a marriage between Kevin J., a female-to-male transsexual, and Jennifer, his wife.

*(Continued on Page 2)*

**The Next Meeting of  
Illinois Gender Advocates  
Will Take Place at 7:30 p.m. on  
Thursday, March 6, 2003  
And Will Be Held at  
Transformations  
146 N. Oak Park Avenue  
In Oak Park**

### **Whatever**

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*We Finally Won One*

*By Beth Plotner*

It seems that the cards or should I say the courts aren't totally stacked against us. The Transgender community won a victory in Maryland. We owe a thank you to Alyson Meiselman who is the attorney representing the petitioner.

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## Florida Court Issues Historic Marriage and Custody Decision for Transgender Dad

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After completing sex-reassignment, Michael Kantaras met and married his wife, Linda in 1989. Linda was fully aware of Michael's transgender status prior to the marriage and permitted Michael to adopt her then three-month old son. The couple later had a daughter through alternative insemination. The Kantaras children are now ages 14 and 11.

When the couple divorced in 1999, the focus soon shifted away from the best interests of the children and onto Michael's transgender status. Linda argued that Michael should be considered legally female, their marriage deemed void, and his parental rights stripped away. The three-week hearing, which included extensive testimony from medical experts, was covered live by Court TV last January and February.

"I'm so relieved," said an exhausted Michael Kantaras. "Now my kids and I can get on with our lives in peace."

"The court recognized that the two children in this case have a devoted, loving father and need to maintain a relationship with both their parents," said NCLR Staff Attorney Karen Doering, co-counsel in the case. "This court recognized that Michael's transgender status has nothing to do with his ability to be a good parent. Michael is a loving, responsible father who also happens to be transgender."

According to NCLR Legal Director Shannon Minter, "To our knowledge, this is the first transgender marriage case in the U.S. in which extensive medical evidence was presented, including testimony from three of the foremost experts on transsexualism in the country. As the Court has recognized, the medical evidence overwhelmingly favors recognizing that the law should accommodate transgender people so they can be productive, functioning members of society. This includes permitting transgender people to marry and raise children."

"This is not only a victory for the transgender community, it's a victory for the Kantaras children, who deserve to have their loving father remain a part of their life," said Equality Florida Executive Director Nadine Smith. "We all benefit when gender stereotypes and bigotry are defeated."

The National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) is a national law firm dedicated to advocating for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals and their families. NCLR is working in partnership with Equality Florida's Legal Advocacy Project to protect the rights of Florida's LGBT community by seeking fairness and equal justice under the law. <http://www.nclrights.org>.

### *About NCLR*

*Founded in 1977 and headquartered in San Francisco, the National Center for Lesbian Rights is a national law firm dedicated to advocating for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals and their families. Each year NCLR serves more than 3,000 clients in all fifty states. NCLR is working in partnership with Equality Florida's Legal Advocacy Project to protect the rights of Florida's LGBT community by seeking fairness and equal justice under the law.*

### *About Equality Florida*

*Founded in the mid-1990's and based in Tampa, Florida, Equality Florida is a statewide education and advocacy organization committed to ending discrimination based on sexual orientation, race, class and gender. Equality Florida informs and educates hundreds of thousands of people across the state about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender concerns through its news magazine Equality News, voter guides and its Online Advocacy Center at <http://www.eqfl.org>.*

## ***How to contact us...***

### **Illinois Gender Advocates**

47 W. Division St., #391  
Chicago, IL 60610

### **Telephone Hotline:**

(312) 409-5489

Please leave a message. We will get back to you as quickly as possible.

### **E-Mail:**

[IGA@genderadvocates.org](mailto:IGA@genderadvocates.org)

### **Web Site Address:**

<http://www.genderadvocates.org>

## **Whatever . . .**

*(Continued From Page 1)*

This is not just any old victory but a victory in Maryland's Court of Appeals in Maryland. The Court of Appeals of Maryland is their highest court, like Illinois' Supreme Court.

The case I'm referring to is In Re Helig. The petitioner sought a court order changing her name and sexual identity. The Circuit Court granted the name change but denied the change of sexual identity despite that the petitioner had gender reassignment surgery. Maryland's Court of Special Appeals upheld the Circuit Court. The Court of Appeals of Maryland reversed and remanded the case back to the Circuit Court for further proceedings consistent with their opinion.

I'm not going to reprint the Court's unanimous opinion. It's about 40 pages long. It is available on the web at [www.courts.state.md.us/opinions/coa/2003/38a02.pdf](http://www.courts.state.md.us/opinions/coa/2003/38a02.pdf). The opinion is well written and has a lot of information in it concerning gender identity.

This decision left open who is male and who is female. The Court did not just say gender is determined at birth or by surgery or by hormones. The Court recognized that you have to look at all the medical evidence available. Finally, a Court has done its' job and not just put us into a little box based either on old out of date law or a religious text.

In Maryland, their highest court, has in effect said that a person can change their sex and have legal recognition of the change. The Kansas Supreme Court in Gardiner said just the opposite. We now have 2 courts of equal stature that have come to different findings. This will increase the likelihood that the next time this issue is appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court they will hear the case. Since there was no opposing party the Helig decision can't be appealed.

On the legislative front we won a record number of victories last year. Though still early that trend seems to be continuing this year. Winning in the legislature is important but we also have to win in the courts. Laws and statutes are interpreted by the courts. The courts enforce our rights. The courts must see us for who we are not some old stereotypes.

We're lucky that we have Alyson Meiselman. I've known her for several years and serve with her on the board of the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association. She is a tireless fighter for our rights. She made the State of Maryland sit up and listen. With advocates like her I'm sure other courts will recognize our rights.

## **Miranda Writes...**

### *Who Cares About Trans Youth?*

*By Miranda Stevens-Miller*

I don't know how you feel about it, but I think that the climate today for our LGBT youth, and especially for our transgender youth, is getting out of hand... and it's time we did something about it. We've all heard about or read the statistics, and many of us experienced it firsthand. Our youth can't get away from the incessant name calling... not to mention the harassment. It's bad for all LGBT kids, but for transgender or gender nonconforming kids it is always worse. Does anyone care that 90% of transgender students report feeling unsafe in school because of their gender identity or expression? Does anyone care that the dropout rate, the suicide rate, the homelessness rate is disproportionately high for our transgender youth?

I've been trying to relate this to my own experience as a youth, and you know I just can't do it. The experience is entirely different for someone like me who transitioned much later in life. I was able to repress my identity and "pass as straight" until I could no longer live with myself. Or, as a friend of mine once put it, I had already "made it in the world" before coming to grips with my gender. But for transgender or gender nonconforming youth, "passing as straight" is just not an option. It is impossible for transgender youth, or for little femme boys and little butch girls for that matter, to hide their gender identity.

I had the love and support of my family because I was able to hide my true gender identity and be someone I wasn't for them. But transgender youth often risk the loss of any family support they might have received... again because they cannot hide who they really are, especially from their own family. And when they get rejected, as more often than not is the case, they wind up with nowhere to go for support. And if they do find their way into the "system," be that an LGBT youth group or a DCFS home or anywhere in between, more often than not they are told that they should just learn to conform to the gender stereotype, and they would be okay.

The following is the experience of one transgender youth, from an interview in "Hatred in the Hallways" published by Human Rights Watch, 2001.

"I had to quit school because the teachers were, like, 'you can't wear a dress, you can't wear your hair like that.' ... It freaked them out, I guess. When I started dressing as a woman, they didn't know what to do. They decided they couldn't have that kind of thing going around. They started making up rules, like, you can't wear a dress in a way to interrupt class, so no long hair or makeup... I had to use the boys' restroom or the nurse's restroom, but if the nurse wasn't there, then I didn't go at all."

When she entered the foster care system... "They moved me from shelter to shelter. They're like, 'We don't want to confuse the other kids... A lot of them refuse to take transgender youth. For the past seven years I've been dressing as a woman. But they're like, 'You have to cut your hair, you can't put makeup on.' Sometimes they tell me I can't wear a bra... I couldn't talk about my life with the other kids."

This scene plays out over and over again in every major metropolitan area in our country. And I have heard the same stories repeated from just about every transgender youth I have spoken to in the Chicago area. Is there anything that can be done to make life better for these youth? Of course there is! And we could start with the schools.

In Florida, at the end of January, GLSEN and Equality Florida announced that they had teamed up to kick off a massive community organizing effort around the Florida Dignity for All Students Act. The grassroots effort began with training student activists to lobby their state legislators for passage of the Dignity Bill.

I expected the bill to be designed to protect gay and lesbian students from harassment, and not really dealing with other kinds of students. I was very pleasantly surprised to find that the bill was broadly worded to cover “real or perceived identity or expression of race, color, religion, national origin, marital status, sex or gender, disability or sexual orientation, on the basis of stereotypes of persons identified by these categories, or on the basis of association with others identified by these categories.”

What a powerful statement! Real or perceived identity or expression of gender, among other categories, on the basis of stereotypes. What a novel and completely inclusive way of talking about gender identity. And in a state that doesn't have a nondiscrimination law protecting on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, and likely won't have one in the near future, going after safe schools is exactly the right approach.

There are several organizations in Illinois already advocating similar safe schools or dignity for all students legislation for our state. To these organizations, I say thank you... it's about time! Hopefully we can get as much momentum behind safe schools as we did behind the state nondiscrimination bill that is currently pending in the State Senate and House. We all need to care about our LGBT youth. We all need to care about our gender nonconforming youth. We all need to care about our trans youth... We are their family, and often the only family they have.

*Miranda Stevens-Miller welcomes your comments at  
MirandaSt1@aol.com*

## **Notes from the Scullery**

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### *Thoughts of Transgender Youth*

*By Diana Williamson*

Although the transgender community is extremely diverse in many ways, there is one thing that is true of virtually all transgender adults. That is, at one time in their lives they were transgender youths. And for almost all of us, the transgender aspect of our nature added confusion, worry, and loneliness to the assortment of problems that most teenagers experience.

Most of us never knew any other transgender people while we were growing up. We lacked positive role models to show us how we could openly express our gender identity and still become productive and respected members of society. Many of us kept our transgender nature a closely held secret. Those who were open about their gender identity were often subjected to horrible consequences from their peers and from their own families.

If we could re-live our early years with the knowledge we have today, most of us would have done a great many things differently. While it is impossible for us to change our own past, we now have a very real opportunity to have a significant and positive influence on the lives of many of the transgender young people who are growing up in the Chicago area today.

Illinois Gender Advocates is about to open a drop-in center where transgender youth can go on one evening every week to meet with others in a safe environment. The location of the center is still being negotiated as of the publication deadline for this newsletter, but will hopefully be finalized within the next few days. The location for the center will be announced on the IGA web site (<http://www.genderadvocates.org>) as soon as we know for certain where it will be.

The youth center will be facilitated by IGA's new Director of Youth Advocacy, who previously ran a similar center for Horizons Community Services. The activities at the center will be strictly non-clinical in nature, and will avoid any kind of therapy sessions.

Our Youth Director is actively seeking to recruit transgender young people from all over the greater-Chicago area. Unfortunately, there is a sizable number of transgender youth in Chicago who are “street people,” having been thrown out of their homes by parents unable to tolerate their child's gender expression, or having been made homeless for a variety of other reasons. In order to address an important need of such homeless youths, the plans are for the drop-in center to have a dinner setting. Each week, the young people will work with Josie to prepare a nutritious meal, which will then be shared by everyone in attendance. For some of the participants, that dinner may be the only decent meal they have all week.

So what can you do to help? There is a need for a small number of volunteers to work directly with the young people, and to substitute when the director is unable to attend one of the weekly sessions. It is mandatory for any such volunteer to undergo a background check conducted by the Department of Children and Family Services prior to any interaction with the youth participants. Such volunteers also need to have training and experience in working with young people.

Those of us who lack the experience and training to work directly with the young people can still help keep the drop-in center operating. Programs like the youth center are constantly in need of financial support. Your direct contribution to IGA would help provide the necessary funds to keep the center open. If you want to be sure that your contribution will be used specifically for the youth program, you can donate a gift card from one of the major grocery store chains. Gift cards can be purchased for any amount, and would be used to buy food to be prepared and served at the weekly drop-in sessions. (As an added incentive, by the way, please be aware that all such contributions are tax deductible.)

If you want to help in a more “hands-on” activity, you can volunteer to help with the planning of IGA fund-raising

events. In addition to the annual Transgender Pride Event to be held in June, plans are being currently being considered for various other fund-raisers. A volunteer coordinator will soon be appointed by the Board to facilitate all aspects of IGA volunteerism. Until that appointment is made official, however, please contact either Beth Plotner (BethJD@earthlink.com) or Diana Williamson (DianaAW@aol.com) to offer your services as a volunteer.

Today's transgender youth need your help to fulfill their potential of becoming responsible and productive adults. We need you to do what you can to help us help them.

## Minutes for the Monthly Meeting of February 2003

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*By Diana Williamson*

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m. on Thursday, February 6, 2003, in the lower level of Transformations, 146 N. Oak Park Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois. In attendance at the meeting were Beth Plotner (Chair), Diana Williamson (who was acting as Secretary), and eleven other participants.

### YOUTH ADVOCACY

Our Director of Youth Advocacy, reported that she is currently working on obtaining a location to be used as a youth drop-in center on Wednesday evenings. The youth space is intended to be a place where transgender young people between the ages of 13 and 21 can feel free to talk and express their gender preferences without social pressures. The center will not be clinical in nature, and no therapy will be attempted. She and one of the youth participants will co-facilitate the sessions. A number of other adult volunteers will be needed. Each such volunteer will need to undergo a DCFS background check prior to serving. Contributions of snack type foods are being sought in order to provide refreshments each week. Transgender youth are being recruited for participation through word of mouth and through therapists, social workers, and other social service organizations.

She also reported that she continues to work with a particular transgender girl who is currently in the DCFS system. A protocol for dealing with transgender youth is being developed by DCFS with her input, support, and assistance.

### LEGISLATION

Legislative Director Miranda Stevens-Miller reported that there are several different bills pending at the state level that are of particular interest to us. The proposed legislation to prohibit certain discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity has been introduced in the Senate in this session of the General Assembly, and carries the designation S.B. 101. Although the legislative language is similar to that of H.B. 101 (which passed the House in the last session, but died in committee in the Senate), the reference to gender is much more specific and more likely to stand up as a protection for transgender and gender variant people. The reference to gender identity is still included under the definition of sexual orientation, however. It is anticipated that S.B. 101 will be passed by both houses relatively quickly, and will be signed into law by the governor.

Rep. Sara Feigenholtz has reintroduced her gender violence act, which would provide a civil remedy for persons who have been the victim of violence on account of their gender. The act specifically includes gender identity.

### ***Feedback...***

Problems? Questions? Disagreements? Want to submit an article? Please write to us. We love to get mail.

#### **Board Members of Illinois Gender Advocates:**

##### **Chair:**

Beth Plotner  
BethJD@earthlink.net

##### **Vice Chair:**

Diana Williamson  
DianaAW@aol.com

##### **Secretary:**

Rebecca Davis  
rebecca8216@aol.com

##### **Treasurer:**

Marsha Jackson  
MarshaJ@aol.com

##### **Legislative Director:**

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Toni Monzo

#### **Staff Director of Illinois Gender Advocates:**

##### **Director of Youth Advocacy:**

Jostime@earthlink.net

The safe schools legislation is in the process of being drafted, and probably will not be introduced until next year. The purpose of the legislation would be to prevent bullying of students on account of a wide range of factors, including race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, and gender identity. A broad coalition of activist groups is being sought to support passage of such legislation.

## LEGAL

Beth Plotner reported that Lambda Legal will be arguing the case in the U.S. Supreme Court that challenges the constitutionality of the Texas sodomy law. Although this case does not involve a specific gender issue, it may indicate the attitudes of the justices with respect to sexual minority cases.

## MEMBER PARTICIPATION

Beth Plotner opened the meeting for discussion by asking the members present to describe what they felt IGA should be doing on behalf of the community. One participant felt that there was a need to increase visibility of the community, in order to show that we are ordinary people with the same kinds of hopes and goals as the rest of society. Miranda Stevens-Miller pointed out that our monthly television show is one way that IGA has been achieving that goal for some time. Another participant pointed out the need for trained advocates to provide education about gender identity issues to public and private service agencies, as well as schools. A function of IGA should be to provide the training for such advocates.

There was a lengthy discussion in which the wisdom of vigorously pursuing a youth advocacy program was challenged. One participant strongly voiced the opinion that youth advocacy was a subject about which most of our members knew very little, and therefore were unable to participate. There was concern that youth advocacy would take over as the primary focus of IGA, to the exclusion of other issues. It was pointed out in reply that IGA's involvement in youth advocacy was mainly due to the availability of Josephine Christopher to manage the program. If Josie were not available and willing to undertake the project for very little compensation, IGA probably would not have a youth advocacy program. Initiating the program was a utilization of available resources.

In order to determine if there were other potential resources among IGA's membership, each participant was asked to give a brief description of her background experiences. A number of potentially useful skills were discovered.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Diana Williamson announced that OPALGA will sponsor a drag show at Temptations on the evening of March 22. Miranda Stevens-Miller announced that March 22 is the same night as the LGBT Bowlathon. Eight IGA members expressed an interest in participating in the Bowlathon, giving us two teams. Diana Williamson also announced that the latest

edition of the newsletter of the Chicago Chapter of the National Organization for Women contained an article about the passage of civil rights legislation for gender identity in Chicago and Cook County, and stated that Chicago NOW was proud to have supported both pieces of legislation. Carole Abrams announced that she is the newly elected chair of the Suburban TS Support Group, and that the next meeting of that group will be at 9:30 p.m. on February 22 at her home.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Diana Williamson

## **Be Sure to Attend Our Next Meeting; Plans to Be Developed for Transgender Pride and Other Fund Raising Events**

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The next regular meeting of Illinois Gender Advocates will be held on Thursday, March 6, 2003 at 7:30 p.m. in the lower level of Transformations, located at 146 N. Oak Park Avenue in Oak Park.

This will be a working meeting to develop plans for the annual Transgender Pride Event to be held in June, as well as for other fund raising events for the rest of 2003.

## **Thanks to Our Contributors:**

A big thank you goes out to those who contributed articles to the newsletter this month. It is really appreciated from month to month. Thanks!

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|--------------------|--------------------------|
| - Beth Plotner     | - Miranda Stevens-Miller |
| - Diana Williamson | - NCLR and Equality FL   |
| - MCC              | - GenderPAC News         |

## **MCC Reaffirms Commitment to Transgender Persons**

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*From Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC)*

Los Angeles, February 3, 2003 – The head of the world's largest Christian denomination with a primary affirming ministry to gays and lesbians has reaffirmed the church's commitment to transgender persons.

"All of God's creation is good and holy, and that includes our transgender brothers and sisters," said Rev. Troy D. Perry,

Moderator of Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC), a denomination with almost 300 congregations in 22 countries.

The MCC statement comes in response to a Vatican declaration, reported in the Roman Catholic news agency Adista, that “transsexual persons suffer from mental pathologies,” have “pathological personality situations,” and are to be barred from serving as Roman Catholic priests, nuns, monks, friars and brothers in religious orders.

The report, prepared by the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, further instructs that transgender persons currently serving as Roman Catholic priests or in religious orders are to be expelled from their vocations.

“It is not surprising that the God who created our world with incredible diversity and complexity also created humanity with a diversity of sexual orientations and gender variance,” said Perry, a veteran human rights activist and past delegate to the White House Conference on Hate Crimes. “Metropolitan Community Churches reaffirms its long-held belief that all life is sacred and holy, and that God calls people from every human experience to vocational Christian ministry.”

“Rather than condemn our transgender brothers and sisters, we should celebrate people who have often made great sacrifices to grapple with issues of gender variation and who are committed to living their lives with openness and authenticity,” added Perry.

Others within Metropolitan Community Churches echoed Perry’s comments.

“This may raise medical questions for some, it does not raise moral questions,” said Rev. Dr. Justin Tanis, MCC’s Director of Clergy Development and a transgender clergy person.

Tanis, a graduate of Harvard Divinity School and author of *“Transgendered: Theology, Ministry and Communities of Faith”* (Pilgrim Press, 2003), added, “We’re learning that our world is far more diverse than we previously imagined, and that includes our chromosomal, physical and emotional diversities. This diversity is part of God’s plan and is to be celebrated.”

“Just as we have come to learn that there is a range of human sexual orientations, we are also learning that there is a range of human gender variance,” added Tanis. “Several MCC clergy persons are transgender and have served in both local congregations and in denominational roles with excellence and distinction.”

Along with its positive ministry to gays and lesbians, Metropolitan Community Churches has a long history of ministry with the transgender community. “A transgender person participated in the very first MCC service, and MCC members who are transgender have served as elders within our denomination, pastors of our local churches, and on the MCC headquarters staff,” said Perry.

“It is the great sin of the Church to exclude those whom God created and loves. We call upon all faith communities to welcome all people of faith, just as God invites and welcomes all, including transpeople who are called as members, friends, clergy and lay leaders,” added Perry.

*Founded in 1968, Metropolitan Community Churches offering positive, affirming ministry to gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender persons, and their families and friends. Additional information on MCC is available on the Internet at [www.MCCchurch.org](http://www.MCCchurch.org). A free MCC e-mail newsletter is available upon request by writing to [info@MCCchurch.org](mailto:info@MCCchurch.org).*

## **GPAC Applauds MD Ruling Upholding Sex Change, Stage Set for Conflict with Recent TX, KS Decisions**

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*From GenderPAC News*

WASHINGTON, DC (Feb. 18, 2003) The Gender Public Advocacy Coalition (GenderPAC) today applauded a unanimous Maryland Curt of Appeals ruling on Feb. 11 stating that a lower court may provide legal recognition of a transsexual woman’s sex change, so long as she provides medical evidence showing a “permanent and irreversible change.” The court did not say whether sex change surgery or hormone therapy would constitute sufficient medical evidence.

“We applaud the Court’s decision as an important step toward legal recognition of changing sexes,” said Gender PAC Executive Director Riki Wilchins. “We continue to believe that, regardless of the medical decision they have reached with their private physicians, transgender Americans deserve to be recognized in the sex in which they live their normal daily lives.”

The decision sets up a potential conflict with recent high-profile rulings in Kansas and Texas that found that birth sex cannot be altered. In March, 2001, the Kansas Supreme Court ruled that J’Noel Gardiner’s marriage to her late husband was invalid, despite her undergoing complete sex reassignment. In October, 1999, the Texas Court of Appeals upheld a lower court ruling invalidating the 7-year marriage of Christie Lee Littleton. The Texas Supreme Court later refused to hear an appeal of that ruling.

The ruling does not clarify the status of many transsexual or transgender people who do not or cannot show sufficient permanent medical change, including so-called “pre-operative” and “non-operative” transsexuals.

Janet Heilig, a male-to-female transsexual, appealed to the high court after several lower courts granted her request for a name change but would not alter her legal sexual identity on

the grounds that they did not have legal jurisdiction over a birth certificate from Pennsylvania, where Heilig was born. The appellate court ruled that circuit courts may issue an order to change an individual's legal sex in the state of Maryland based on sufficient medical evidence.

*The Gender Public Advocacy Coalition is the national organization working to end discrimination and violence caused by gender stereotypes.*

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## Application for New or Renewal Membership

YES, I would like to join (\_\_\_\_) or renew (\_\_\_\_) my membership in Illinois Gender Advocates.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Name to Be Used on Mailing Label (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP+4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Level (check one):

(\_\_\_\_) Annual - \$15      (\_\_\_\_) Supporting - \$35      (\_\_\_\_) Household - \$50      (\_\_\_\_) Sustaining - \$75  
(\_\_\_\_) Benefactor - \$150      (\_\_\_\_) Lifetime - \$250      (\_\_\_\_) Other - \$ \_\_\_\_\_

How would you like to be involved with Illinois Gender Advocates? (Please check all that apply.)

(\_\_\_\_) Keep informed by newsletters      (\_\_\_\_) Participate in monthly meetings  
(\_\_\_\_) Participate in actions      (\_\_\_\_) Join a working group or committee  
(\_\_\_\_) Liaison with other human rights groups. Please specify \_\_\_\_\_  
(\_\_\_\_) Do you have any special skills that could help us out? (legal / legislative, artistic / design, technical / computer) Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been a victim of a hate crime or discriminated against because of your gender identity, expression, or image? Yes / No (circle one)

If yes, may we document your case for our report? Yes / No (circle one)

Please mail, along with your check or money order, to:  
**Illinois Gender Advocates, 47 W. Division St., #391, Chicago, IL 60610**