

**LAURI** And It goes out of focus. And the family-- he comes home to the family, and they're trying to figure out what's wrong with him. And they don't know what's wrong with him. And the whole family goes to the doctor with him.

And rather than try to fix the problem with him, the doctor gives the family a bunch of glasses that are like these little Coke bottle lenses. And he says, there, put those on you. Can you see him better now? And they're kind of like, well, yeah, yeah, we can see him a little more clearly now.

And it strikes me that that's what a lot of what happens in our families in this community is that rather than try to fix the problem that everybody's kind of concerned about, the transgender issues, what we do instead is we force our families to put on these glasses. And we say, you know, I'm different. You change.

And one of the things that Dana's really struggled with is coming to realize that she has changed. And so she needs to find ways to bring her back to normal for us, for my mom and I. And one of the ways that she did that was to keep an interest in the things that I was doing rather than it always having a me, me, me focus for her.

She's done a lot of work with really trying hard to-- what is my mom interested in, and what am I interested in and that sort of thing? And so that's really helped. And it's been powerful for us for her to say that she loves us and so on. But does that kind of make sense?

**JIMMY CARPER:** Yeah, it makes a lot of sense. I'm a little interested now about the future. I know that you don't have any children at this point. But at somewhere down the line, perhaps, that'll be the case. How are you going to feel about telling them? Or will you tell them? Will you just let them know her as Diana and leave it at that?

**LAURI** That's kind of-- and interestingly, because now, of course, I'm at an age-- [GROANS]. I do a lot of work with **CICOTELLO:** children of gay and lesbian parents, as well. And it's funny because a lot of the activists in that community, we're all the same age. We're all in our late 20s, early 30s.

So we're all getting to that age of, are we having children? Are we not having children? How do we tell them about our parents and so on? And this is something that we've never really considered before is what to do with a transgendered grandparent.

And I've kind of gotten a little taste of that. Because one of my friends has some children. And so we've been kind of watching how they react to Diana and trying to figure out what to say to them. And it's not always easy, especially when-- like, we've got a three-year-old running around now, going, is Dana a guy? And I'm like, oh.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh, boy. Oh, boy.

**LAURI** And so we've got some struggles that way because the kids are confused and trying to explain to them that-- the **CICOTELLO:** one nephew of mine, I told him, I said, some kids grow up to be firefighters-- or some boys grow up to be firefighters, some boys grow up to be doctors, and some boys grow up to be girls. And for him, that seemed to placate him. But there have been plenty of times when that has not been-- it's still, it's something they still struggle with.

I'm not sure that I'm necessarily going to have children. That's still something that I still am thinking about. I'm to an age that I've kind of got to start making a decision. But for right now, it doesn't look like I'm going to. But if I do, I think I would have to be upfront with them. Because there are so many attributes about Diana that she can't hide.

**JIMMY CARPER:** That's right.

**LAURI** And I wouldn't expect her to go back into the closet simply because I'd have children around. And I certainly wouldn't want her to hide around my partner or anything like that. So I think we would have to be upfront right from the very get-go. But I think if a child is around it enough, it shouldn't cause a problem.

But we've got some problems in the community right now that are just starting, where grandparents are actually losing the ability to see their grandchildren because Dad is transgendered. And I'm not really sure-- this is a new level of activism that we just-- we're just on the forefront of where things are going to go.

**JIMMY CARPER:** It's a brave new world.

[CHUCKLES]

**LAURI** Yeah. And we're the Stonewall babies now. The kids who are my age, we're all Stonewall babies.

**CICOTELLO:**

**JIMMY CARPER:** That's right.

**LAURI** We were born after '69. And now we're to this age where we're like, ooh, what are we going to do with our kids, and so on? And I see a lot of positives coming out of this. I really do. Because frankly, once the children, the kids of my generation, our children are going to end up being so much more open-minded. Because this is something that they'll just have right from the get-go rather than having to have the coming out process and so on.

**JIMMY CARPER:** That's my hope for the future, in any case. I have to say the few times that I've met you, I always thought of you as being your own person.

**LAURI** Oh, thank you.

**CICOTELLO:**

**JIMMY CARPER:** But I understand exactly what you're talking about. I've talked to other children of transgendered parents, and they often talk about that. Are you part of an organization or anything? If there are folks in the audience who want to contact you, is there a way that they can contact you or they can get more information if they're in your situation?

**LAURI** Yeah, actually, I'm part of a group called Children Of Lesbians And Gays Everywhere or COLAGE-- C-O-L-A-G-E.

**CICOTELLO:** And they are found on the web at [www.colage.org](http://www.colage.org). And they have a number of resources for children of transgendered parents and so on.

If I can take the liberty to promote the book that I wrote an essay in this last year, I had a book come out called *Out of the Ordinary*. It's essays on growing up with gay, lesbian, and transgendered parents. The editors of the book are Noelle Howey and Ellen Samuels.

Noelle Howey is the daughter of a transgendered parent, as well. And she's had articles in Ms. magazine and so on. But that book is very valuable. And we've won a couple of pretty good-sized awards for it. And *Booklist* named it as one of the top 10 gay and lesbian books for 2001. So that has been an excellent resource.

But yeah, COLAGE has been major, major support, a beautiful group of people and young adults and so on. They've got groups for-- there are groups especially targeted for children under 14, and then there's groups for children who are older than 14. So they kind of keep those separated.

But people to talk to. And like I said, a lot of the issues-- as a child of a transgendered parent, a lot of the issues that I have also come up for children with gay and lesbian parents. So this has been good. Because the dialogues we have, we're finding a lot of common ground. And it's really helping for us to make a difference in our retrospective communities.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Well, Laurie, I have to say I think you're just an incredible, incredible person. And you have absolutely earned your spurs on your own right. And it has really been-- it's been a joy to interview and to talk to you.

**LAURI** Thank you. Thank you.

**CICOTELLO:**

**JIMMY CARPER:** Thank you very much for talking to us.

**LAURI** Thanks.

**CICOTELLO:**

[MUSIC PLAYING]

**ANNOUNCER:** All of us here at KPFT are very grateful for the concern shown by our listeners regarding the ongoing changes, both local and national, which are underway at Pacifica. Sunday, beginning at 8:00 AM, KPFT will be preempting regular programming to bring you live coverage of the Sunday session of the Pacifica Interim National Board meeting in New York.

While we apologize in advance to the regular listeners of Blues on the Move and Blues Brunch, there is a need to make sure that the public has the opportunity to stay informed and to participate in this process of change. We expect to have Blues on the Move and Blues Brunch back on the air, as usual, next Sunday. And we appreciate the cooperation of those program producers and hosts who have graciously stepped aside this week to allow coverage of this National Board Meeting beginning Sunday morning, 8:00 AM, at 90.1, KPFT.

**JIMMY CARPER:** And it is 1:01 in the AM. You are listening to KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station. Before we get into-- I need to read this announcement, that the interim local advisory board of KPFT invites all listeners to its next meeting, to be held on Friday, January the 18th, at 7:00 PM. The meeting will be held at Leisure Learning Unlimited, 2990 Richmond Avenue, in Houston.

This week's topics will be a wrap-up of the recent national board meeting, which is going on as we speak, of the five stations of Pacifica Radio and an open discussion on the future direction of KPFT. Public participation is welcomed and needed as KPFT moves forward. So stop by and voice your opinion.

Prior to the meeting, there will be an open house at the radio station-- yes, right here, at 419 Lovett Boulevard, from 5:00 to 6:30. Come on down and find out what's up with the new KPFT. And that music was Veronica Klaus from her CD, *All I Want*. That was the title cut.

**SPEAKER 1:** What a great cover.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Thank you.

**SPEAKER 1:** I want to talk a little bit about that interview with Laurie Cicotello.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Yes, please.

**SPEAKER 1:** The issue of being a child of a transgendered parent can be played out in many ways. And if you listen to the interview, you heard Lori Cicotello talk about going to a therapist. And one of the things that she talked about is that many transsexuals go through a period of puberty, so to speak. They sort of go back and have to relearn the things that most girls would learn as teenagers. And it's often referred to as a puberty for transsexuals.

And this particular therapist told her that the puberty for Diane was more important than puberty for her. And so consequently, she said, well, all right, that's fine. And she gained 50 pounds so Diane would not be able to wear her clothes or borrow her makeup and do those kinds of things.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Why did she think that Diane wanted to do that?

**SPEAKER 1:** Well, because the therapist--

**JIMMY CARPER:** Why did she think Diane wanted to do that?

**SPEAKER 1:** Because the therapist told her that was what would happen.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh.

**SPEAKER 1:** And I mean, as I told her, well, she needed to find a different therapist.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Boy, no kidding.

**SPEAKER 1:** She, says, well, yeah, she knows that now. But that's fascinating to me. Because that is a common issue. And Laurie is such an incredible person on her own strength, in her own right. Her personality is so well-developed, and she's such a clear voice. It's hard for me to imagine that she went through that kind of a problem, but she did. And I found that fascinating.

And I also want to talk a little bit about the website that she mentioned at the end. This organization, it's called COLAGE-- C-O-L-A-G-E. And to get to it, it's [www.colage.org](http://www.colage.org). And this is the organization for the Children of Lesbian and Gays Everywhere. And it is the only completely inclusive gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender website that I know of strictly for the parents of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered parents.

I've spent a couple hours skimming through their site and looking at the information they have. And it is truly an outstanding website, one of the best I've come across in a very long time. So I strongly recommend that if you fall into this category, or even if you're just looking for more information on the children of GLBT community, it's called COLAGE-- C-O-L-A-G-E. And you can find it at [www.colage.org](http://www.colage.org).

OK, as long as we're on the subject of transgendered parents, I wanted to do this. Some of you, if you're longtime listeners, will remember Dee McKellar. Dee McKellar was a frequent guest on this show and was one of my closest friends.

Well, Dee had a daughter. And the daughter wrote this wonderful piece about what it was like to be the child of a transgendered parent. Now, Dee is no longer with us, but I'm going to simply go ahead and read this story exactly as it was written here.

"When I was growing up, there were good times and conflicts, as in any other family I knew. We were living the average middle-class American life, and everything seemed fine. It was not until I was nine years old that I was told about our family secret. My father was a cross-dresser and had been for all of my life.

This admission shocked me, of course, but I was really too young to understand what was going on. Over the next four or five years, the cross-dressing continued with my knowledge. However, our encounters at home were infrequent enough that when he was dressed that I was able to block out the feelings that I thought my father was a freak.

Things changed, however, when I was 13 or 14 years old. He actually started wearing these clothes in front of me on a regular basis. It became a routine. When he came home from work, he would check the mail and proceed to go and change. Other than the clothes, the evenings went on as always.

During my teen years, I spent a lot of time in my room to get away. I also kept very busy with school, a job, and spending time with my friends. I did anything I could to distance myself from this freak. Needless to say, there was a lot of discord in our house and animosity between us.

Things finally came to a head when I was 18. I found my own place and moved out. Things were tough, but there was no way that I was going back. Shortly thereafter, my parents separated and filed for divorce. In a period of approximately seven or eight months, my father had effectively erased his family from his life.

Over the next two years or so, I would occasionally visit my father and share small talk to catch up. A close friend of mine likened these visits to business meetings because of our demeanor. Over time, however, I began to notice changes. His hair was getting longer, and he seemed to be developing, dare I say it, breasts. Finally, my father put me out of my questioning misery and gave me a letter. This was his way of coming out of the closet to publicly live his life as a woman.

The letter explained the steps that would follow, such as the name change, changing the sex on a driver's license, and everything else that goes with becoming a new person. When I read that letter, I felt as though I would fall over. This piece of paper was telling me that my father was essentially dead.

After this revelation, I saw my father even less than ever. Suddenly about three years ago, I grew up. Visits became more frequent, and conversations were longer and more enlightening. Now I am 28 years old. I am proud of my father. I'm proud of my father and what he has become and the person that she is. She is not ashamed of her identity and does a lot of work in the community. She's a major force in the transgender community. She's working nationally and internationally to help make things better for other people in having trouble adjusting to their identity.

I still have problems getting my pronouns straight and, on occasion, I still accidentally call her Dad in public. She's patient, though, and tells me that it will be-- just take time. She tells me she's thankful that we are talking because there are kids that sometimes turn completely away from their parents. I never want to completely lose contact with her. After all, deep down inside, she is the person that raised me. She's my father."

**JIMMY CARPER:** [SIGHS] Yes. That's a wonderful letter. There was a part in there that brought back memories. Because you've said this many times, that when transgendered folks come out of the closet to their family, it's a lot more heavy--

**SPEAKER 1:** [INAUDIBLE]

**JIMMY CARPER:** --than gay and lesbian people. Because if you're gay and lesbian, you're still a son or a daughter. But when you come out as transgendered, then, or transsexual, then you're saying that the son or the daughter is now dead. And that's really hard on the parent. And here, I'm hearing it from a child.

**SPEAKER 1:** Yeah. And in fact, I still have that problem with my brother. My brother has never adjusted to my transition, after all these years. And the reason that he hasn't is he says he still has all these memories of this older-- this old male person. But he's unwilling to open up and allow for new memories with this new person.

And I can remember in Dee's case, Dee used to tell me-- I remember Dee telling me that a story about going shopping in Kroger's when her daughter, Debbie, yelled across the store, not thinking, hey, Dad, I found thus and such and immediately realized what she had done. And Dee, in her dry way, walked over to her quietly and said, I don't mind you calling me Dad, but next time, do it a little softer.

**JIMMY CARPER:** [LAUGHS]

**SPEAKER 1:** It is hard for the kids. And the kids don't really have a support network. It's interesting that the transgendered parent often does have a support network, whether it's through a local organization or through some organizations that they find on the internet or perhaps from a supportive church or any of those numbers of things.

But the children of the transgendered parents don't have support networks. And that's why I was recommending this group COLAGE, or this website, COLAGE, because it is a tremendous resource. I was really shocked at all of the material that's available there.

And they have national conventions where the kids can come and safely-- it's held in Michigan every year. And it's a terrific organization. And Beth, you've been sitting there. You've been going-- what are you thinking about this? I mean, you're a transgendered parent. And your kids seem to be just wonderful.

**BETH:** Yeah, I didn't suffer through a lot of the things that you are talking about because my kids have never really known me any other way. I transitioned legally and officially when my daughter was four and my son was six, thereabouts, if I'm getting the dates right. But my transition was very slow. And so at least by the time they were four and two, I was getting called ma'am in public probably 50% of the time. So they never called me anything other than what they call me now, which is my name. They call me Beth. So they didn't have anything to adjust to. They didn't have to worry about my dad is dead, and there's this new person in my life. Because I've always been who I am around them from the start.

**SPEAKER 1:** Do they understand?

**BETH:** They certainly understand. And they understand, or they know abstractly the concept and all that. But they don't have any personal history with it. It's like you, Jimmy. You've never met me in any other way than I am.

**JIMMY CARPER:** No, that's true.

**BETH:** And so that's the picture you have of me. And that's pretty much the way it is with them. Now, they still have all those fun issues of things like going to school and being asked, do you even have a dad and things like that.

**JIMMY CARPER:** So they consider themselves having two moms. No?

**BETH:** Not exactly. They consider themselves having two parents. They consider themselves having one mom and one parent. Dad really doesn't fit who I am, but I don't have the stretch marks to prove that I'm Mom, either. [LAUGHS]

**SPEAKER 1:** I wouldn't have thought of putting it in those terms.

**BETH:** Well, that's the terms that I hear. You haven't got the stretch marks. You haven't earned that name. I get that name, not you.

**SPEAKER 1:** OK, well, she's right about that.

**BETH:** She is right about that.

**SPEAKER 1:** So fair is fair.

**BETH:** And I don't have a problem with that. I really don't. They have a mom. I don't need to be their mom. But I am their parent.

**SPEAKER 1:** And Beth goes on camping trips with these kids, and she does-- I mean, she's one of the most devoted parents, I think, I've ever known.

**BETH:** Oh, really?

**SPEAKER 1:** But it's interesting. Because Dee's daughter and Laurie Cicotello were both, I think, 14 when they were told.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Now, that's a hard time because you're right there with puberty.

**BETH:** You're dealing with your own adolescence, yeah.

**SPEAKER 1:** That was part of the problem with my daughter is she was a junior in high school when I told her. And she couldn't cope.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Yeah, you're discovering yourself and your own sexuality and stuff like that. It's gotta be tough.

**SPEAKER 1:** I think, Jimmy-- I mean, I have no nothing to back this up except my own opinion-- but I think it is harder to be a child today than it has ever been in the history of the world.

**BETH:** Probably.

**SPEAKER 1:** Things come at them faster today, whether they can learn to cope with it or not, whether it's through television or just the news broadcast or the things that they pick up from their peers. I mean, when I was a kid, no one ever had to tell me, hey, look out for strangers because they might cart you off. I mean, truly. I grew up in a small town, and that was unheard of.

**JIMMY CARPER:** That's true. Me, too.

**SPEAKER 1:** Today, if you're talking to a kid, on one hand, you're almost reluctant to say to them you can trust the policeman because you don't know the policeman isn't a pedophile.

**BETH:** Oh, really.

**SPEAKER 1:** I think it is harder for kids today. If you're a child growing up today and you've got the stuff that's going on in New York after September the 11th and all of these issues to explain to children, I have great sympathy for them. I think it is just harder now than, probably, ever. And I thought it was-- I thought it was confusing in the '60s. But to me, it's peanuts compared to today.

**BETH:** It's a different kind of confusion, though.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Yes, it is.

**BETH:** Well, yeah, it is.

**JIMMY CARPER:** There was a lot of change happening in the '60s.

**BETH:** But today, it's more directly aimed at the kid. Today, kids are likely to be kidnapped-- it's more personal to them, I think. And so I really thought it was very interesting when Laurie was talking about when she was 14 and trying to cope with this. Because Diane became public pretty fast. She explains in the interview it was less than a year from the time that she was told to the time that Diane became this activist. And that's a lot to deal with.

**JIMMY CARPER:** That is.

**SPEAKER 1:** That's laying it-- that's really laying it on somebody in a hurry.

**BETH:** Yeah. And like I was saying earlier, things have gone well for me. But that doesn't mean it's easy. Like, right now, my daughter is, what, 11, and my son's 13. And by the end of the summer, he'll be 14, she'll be 12. And you're hitting serious beginning to deal with physical puberty times. And they're going through this whole finding out about their body as a sexual being just at the time I'm scheduled for SRS.

**SPEAKER 1:** Yeah, SRS being surgery. When is your surgery scheduled?

**BETH:** June 27.

**SPEAKER 1:** June 27.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Of this year?

**BETH:** Of this year. Five and a half months.

**SPEAKER 1:** Unfortunately mine is still in 2003.

**BETH:** Yeah, well, you know, hey, that's what, 18 months, 19 months.

**SPEAKER 1:** About 18 months, yeah.

**BETH:** It sneaks up on you quick.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Save your pennies.

**SPEAKER 1:** Save my pennies and lose about 80 pounds.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh. What?

**SPEAKER 1:** Yeah, most doctors have got to a requirement that you are height and weight proportional, which I'm not and which I will have to be.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Wow.

**SPEAKER 1:** It's for my own safety on the operating table.

**JIMMY CARPER:** I understand that. But there are a lot of people who were never going to be height and weight proportional.

**SPEAKER 1:** Even when I-- I used to play competitive tennis, and I was never height and weight proportional.

**BETH:** OK, they want you to be, right?

**SPEAKER 1:** Right.

**BETH:** But the real, final determination comes down to you're in the doctor's office for that last physical the day before surgery. And if the doc looks at you and says, I'm going to have a problem, then he's going to have a problem. But if he says, you know, OK, so you didn't quite meet the exact proportions that we like, but I'm not going to have a problem, then that's really what the decision is out to.

**SPEAKER 1:** Yeah. Now, you're going to Dr. Schrang, right?

**BETH:** Yeah.

**SPEAKER 1:** Dr. Schrang, the person with the worst bedside manner in the world but one of the best surgeons going.

**JIMMY CARPER:** And where is he located?

**BETH:** He's located in Neenah, Wisconsin.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Wisconsin?

**SPEAKER 1:** Neenah, Wisconsin, that's right.

**JIMMY CARPER:** All these small towns.

**BETH:** Well, there's a reason for that. You know what a hospital bed costs in Houston? You know what a hospital bed costs in Neenah, Wisconsin or Trinidad, Colorado? And that's partly why Portland, Oregon has the situation they do. A hospital bed costs a lot in Portland, Oregon, but you only stay there for three days before they move you off to some halfway house.

So the situation is you get out of the hospital way early, but you don't go home because you're not ready to go home for another week. But yeah, I agree. He's fairly brusque. He doesn't have the best bedside manner.

**SPEAKER 1:** He's irritated a hell of a lot of people in our community--

**BETH:** Yes, he has.

**SPEAKER 1:** --with the comments he's made. But he's one of the best surgeons going.

**BETH:** But he is absolutely magic with the knife.

**SPEAKER 1:** As one person told me, you're not going to him for his personality.

**BETH:** Absolutely right.

**SPEAKER 1:** You're going to him for his surgical skills.

**BETH:** Yep, yep. He does a fine, fine job.

**SPEAKER 1:** And there's something to be said for that. It's also more expensive than going to Canada. But on the other hand, you can get your surgery a lot faster.

**BETH:** Yeah, he's more expensive than Canada. He's almost, penny for penny, equal to Portland. And those are the three that I really considered hard.

**SPEAKER 1:** Toby Melzer in Portland.

**BETH:** Toby Melzer in Portland. Ménard in Canada-- or Brassard, no-- in Montreal, Canada.

**SPEAKER 1:** Yeah, Brassard is where I'm going.

**BETH:** Yeah. Well, Ménard used to be the guy in Montreal, Canada. But he's getting up there in age. And he's pretty much passed his practice over to Brassard.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh, OK.

**SPEAKER 1:** Yeah. The audience maybe may not realize how much-- since we're talking about kids-- they may not realize how this kind of a thing affects the kids, either.

**BETH:** Yeah, well, I'm gonna find out.

**SPEAKER 1:** Yeah. But, you see, these are the kinds of issues that the gays and lesbians don't normally have to deal with. It's hard being a gay parent. It's hard being a lesbian parent. But you're not going to go off and have surgery and come back as-- you know.

**JIMMY CARPER:** You're going to be the same person.

**SPEAKER 1:** Yeah, no, no, that's-- she's going to be the same person.

**BETH:** I'm going to be the same person. I'm going to have--

**SPEAKER 1:** She's just getting the frosting put on the cake.

**BETH:** I'm going to have a different--

**JIMMY CARPER:** So to speak.

**SPEAKER 1:** So to speak, yeah.

**BETH:** I'm going to have a different anatomy. And it's one, Jimmy, that you aren't going to see. [LAUGHS]

**JIMMY CARPER:** That's right.

**SPEAKER 1:** And your kids aren't going to see it, either.

**BETH:** Well, yeah, they probably will. Because getting up to go to the bathroom and stuff like that.

**SPEAKER 1:** The recovery's going to be--

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh, OK.

**BETH:** I mean, we're not like, notice, but we're not--

**SPEAKER 1:** It's a six- to eight-week recovery time. In, especially, the first 10 days, somebody needs to stay home and help you.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Well, that's true. And then, what do you explain? What do you say?

**BETH:** Yeah. And there's that ever-favorite activity that has to happen on a real frequent basis for quite some time when you get back called dilation. And so that's going to be not at all public, but it's like, where's Beth going? Uh-huh, OK. And they know what that-- they're going to figure out what that involves. They're not stupid.

**SPEAKER 1:** No, her kids are extremely bright.

**JIMMY CARPER:** So you have that to look forward to as a test case. Do they know you're going for surgery?

**BETH:** Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Yeah, we're already now making plans for, let's see, Grandma's going to come visit you on this date to this date. I'm leaving earlier. Mom's going to leave in the middle of the week. We're all going to come home together, that kind of thing. Those kind of plans are being made right now.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Great.

**SPEAKER 1:** How is your wife taking all of this?

**BETH:** Very well.

**SPEAKER 1:** No, I wanted to ask because--

**BETH:** It's one of those things that, for years, it's been one of those, well, I'm not sure how I'm going to take this when that time comes. And I have not pushed, not even in the slightest.

**SPEAKER 1:** Beth's wife is terrific. Teresa, she's really a cool person. And she's extremely intelligent.

**BETH:** She came up to me--

**SPEAKER 1:** And she gets it.

**BETH:** She came up to me just after Thanksgiving. And actually, I'd already gone to bed. And she woke me up, and she says, here, take this check. Deposit it. And do this with it. And put this in the mail. And take this, and send it to Wisconsin. And I look. And it was a \$500 check. And on the memo, it was deposit for surgery.

And I'm like, whoa, what happened here? And she said, well, you know, I'd been thinking about it and talking with friends and stuff. And you are who you are, and you're not going to change, and you're not going to go back. So it's not like I have that to look forward to. And I'm not stupid. I know where this is going. And so I have to either make up my mind to deal with it or get off the pot and not deal with it. And I want to deal with it. I want to stay with you. So that was it.

**SPEAKER 1:** Early on--

**JIMMY CARPER:** Love is pretty damn strong.

**BETH:** Yeah.

**SPEAKER 1:** Yeah, early on, that was a big debate in my mind. Laurie has always said that I should go for the surgery, always. But I was the one holding back because I was afraid that it would affect our relationship.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Sure.

**SPEAKER 1:** And that was my issue, not hers. And it finally, it dawned on me that she had been saying for years that I should go. So what was holding me back? And I finally just had to have that reassurance one more time that if I had the surgery that she wasn't going to leave me.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Well, there was a mindset there, too, several years ago that you know yourself it's not necessary, and it's a lot of money to spend and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

**SPEAKER 1:** It's a lot of money, and things can go wrong.

**BETH:** Define necessary.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Yeah, I know.

**SPEAKER 1:** Well, that's exactly where we got to, yeah.

**JIMMY CARPER:** There was a death in the family. And I believe it was at that point you decided, I don't want to die with this body.

**SPEAKER 1:** Yeah, when my dad died, that was the clincher for me. That's right. That's right. Hey, that's a big decision. And as I always like to say, you don't get a refund.

**BETH:** No, yeah. And it's not like you can take it back under the warranty period, either.

[LAUGHTER]

**JIMMY CARPER:** No.

**SPEAKER 1:** Not easily.

**JIMMY CARPER:** So we're going to have some nearly hands-on experience with your surgery right here on the show.

**BETH:** Well, if you don't mind, I think my August show is going to be my audio diary of a certain trip to Wisconsin and back.

**SPEAKER 1:** Hey, cool.

**JIMMY CARPER:** That is cool. That is cool.

**SPEAKER 1:** That should be interesting. Well, can we change topics here for a little bit?

**BETH:** And real quick, can I squeeze in what my February topic's going to be?

**SPEAKER 1:** Yeah, please. Go ahead.

**BETH:** So next month on this show-- one month, second week in February-- we're going to be talking with transgendered people who were out a long time ago. How long ago? In the '60s or earlier.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Wow.

**BETH:** And I've invited several people. So far, I've heard a definite back from two of them. And that would be Lynn Conway-- and if you want to know more about her it's [www.lynnconway.com](http://www.lynnconway.com)-- and Sylvia Rivera. And if you want to know more about Sylvia, look up anything about the Stonewall you can find.

**JIMMY CARPER:** That's right.

**SPEAKER 1:** We've had Sylvia Rivera's tapes on the show.

**JIMMY CARPER:** You bet. She's been interviewed twice now on this show.

**BETH:** Unfortunately, during the course of this week, Sylvia was in the hospital, and I am not sure for what or for how long. So I consider her a tentative. But she's interested, and she wants to do it. So she'll be here if she can. But Lynn's a definite.

**SPEAKER 1:** Cool.

**BETH:** And like I say, there's more invitations that I haven't heard back from.

**SPEAKER 1:** If you're a transgendered person out there and you think that you're going-- that maybe your life will be a failure, you need to hear Lynn Conway talk.

**BETH:** Oh, yeah.

**SPEAKER 1:** There's a success if ever there was a success. And she's living proof that things can go right. But you gotta work at it.

**BETH:** National Institute of Science member, that kind of thing.

**SPEAKER 1:** Let me talk a little bit about this case before we go off, before our segment ends. Now, this is something I'm really kind of interested in because I've been talking about this for years. This came to me off a newswire. A man who claims he was sexually harassed because his coworkers mistakenly perceived him to be gay cannot sue under Title IX unless he can also show that the mistreatment he suffered was somehow connected to his lack of conformity with stereotypes of how men and women should behave, a federal judge has ruled.

**JIMMY CARPER:** This is so crazy. Because being gay questions that.

**SPEAKER 1:** I told you, I told you, I told you.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Just being gay and lesbian questions all of that. So how can you rule that way?

**SPEAKER 1:** Well, because there's no supporting law, Jimmy. See? We've talked about this in the past, that judges go by precedent. There is no precedent for what this guy is saying because there's no law on the books that covers transgenders. Transgenders are not covered under Title IX. The way the law, that law, came down, what it said was you can sue for sex discrimination but not change-of-sex discrimination.

**JIMMY CARPER:** [GROANS]

**SPEAKER 1:** OK? I mean, it's splitting a hair.

**JIMMY CARPER:** It sure is.

**SPEAKER 1:** Well, since then, there have been a whole series of laws that have built on top of that ridiculous ruling. And so this judge comes along, and he's stuck with the precedent that he's got. And unless he wants this case to go all the way to the Supreme Court, which obviously, he doesn't, he says, well, that's it. There's no law.

And he said that there was-- see if I can find it-- said that there were four things that had to be proven and that one of them was that he had to prove that there was discrimination. Let's see. There it is. Yeah, they had to be able to prove-- that it wasn't enough that his coworkers were calling him effeminate and faggot and female whore.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh!

**BETH:** Great.

**SPEAKER 1:** That wasn't sufficient. Because that could be construed as, quote, "horseplay."

**JIMMY CARPER:** Horseplay?

**SPEAKER 1:** Horseplay.

**JIMMY CARPER:** How about horseshit?

[LAUGHTER]

**SPEAKER 1:** Well, that's what I thought, too.

**BETH:** You did hear the language disclaimer, didn't you?

**SPEAKER 1:** It says "the only evidence that might directly link the harassment of Bianchi to gender stereotype is the reference in April when he received the letter in which he was told he was in a pussy job," quote, end quote.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh, brother.

**SPEAKER 1:** OK. So the point that I want to make about this is for years, I have said on this show and I have said, if laws do not specifically have the word "transgender" or "gender stereotypes" or something that specifies transgender behavior in it, that the laws that protect gays and lesbians aren't going to be worth spit.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Right. That's right.

**SPEAKER 1:** Well, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls and grownups of all ages, here's this court case. And by God, that law that protects gays and lesbians isn't worth spit because transgenders weren't included in it. OK. Now, what really set me off about this is that Clarence Bagby-- I mean, Clarence is a nice guy-- but he sent around this information about the Human Rights Campaign and all this stuff, the Human Rights Campaign in the year 2001. I don't want to hear it.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Boy, me, neither.

**SPEAKER 1:** I don't want to hear it.

**JIMMY CARPER:** You know, I see HRC-- delete, delete, delete, delete. Can't be bothered because it's all BS.

**SPEAKER 1:** Yeah, because here's the deal. If we're not included in into the federal laws that are going to protect the transgenders, gays and lesbians aren't going to have protection, either. The Human Rights is spinning its wheels. I don't care what they do. What they do has no effect on us. I just thought this was a fascinating case.

This case is called *Bianchi versus the City of Philadelphia*. And they found that the plaintiff can survive summary judgment only if he presents some evidence that the discrimination he suffered resulted from his failure to match the societal ideals of manliness. Now, how many times, Jimmy, have I sat here and said that gays and lesbians are transgendered?

**JIMMY CARPER:** That's right.

**SPEAKER 1:** And here's this case just sitting out there. And I thought, OK, I'm going to sit here on the air, just once. And I'm going to take advantage of this and say, I told you so, I told you so, I told you so. Don't ever come back to me and say we're going to pass this law that protects gays and lesbians but we're not going to include transgenders because you're slitting your own throat, and it's stupid, dumb, ignorant.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Yes, it is.

**SPEAKER 1:** Just don't do it. OK. I had my rant. I feel better.

[LAUGHTER]

It just so happened that this case came down the same day that I got this stuff from Clarence about the Human Rights Campaign. And it set me off.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Yeah, I know.

**SPEAKER 1:** Because you know how I feel about that, anyway.

**JIMMY CARPER:** I do, indeed. Well, it's time to wrap it up.

**SPEAKER 1:** Wait a minute. One more thing.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh, my.

**SPEAKER 1:** OK, Beth, are you ready?

**BETH:** Sure.

**SPEAKER 1** (SINGING) Happy birthday to you.

**AND BETH:**

**JIMMY CARPER:** [LAUGHS]

**SPEAKER 1** Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday, dear Jimmy. Happy birthday to you.

**AND BETH:**

**JIMMY CARPER:** Thank you.

**BETH:** What is it, 29?

**JIMMY CARPER:** Yeah. Yeah.

**SPEAKER 1:** For the 29th time.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh, yeah.

**SPEAKER 2:** [SHOUTS]

**JIMMY CARPER:** Pretty close to it. We have some screaming out there.

**BETH:** You should hear the loud noises in the lobby.

**SPEAKER 1:** We have people in the lobby running because we're singing.

**BETH:** Are they running in or out?

**SPEAKER 1:** Out. They're running out. They hear us singing. They're, oh, my god. Well, Jimmy, our time has flown by--

**JIMMY CARPER:** It certainly has.

**SPEAKER 1:** --as it always does.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh, wait.

**SPEAKER 1:** Oh, wait a minute. Wait a minute.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Yes, I have all the mics on.

**SPEAKER 3:** OK. I just checked something, Jimmy, because you were saying no one was born on your birthday.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Yes.

**SPEAKER 1:** This is now the 13th.

**SPEAKER 3:** OK, Sunday.

**SPEAKER 1:** Sunday, Sunday, Sunday.

**SPEAKER 3:** You know, that's disappointing. Because, see, if you were born on Saturday--

**JIMMY CARPER:** Yeah?

**SPEAKER 3:** --you'd share a birthday with Rush Limbaugh.

**SPEAKER 1:** Oh. Oh, my god.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Thanks, Mom.

**BETH:** Thanks for waiting.

**JIMMY CARPER:** I would never admit to that.

**SPEAKER 3:** Because your mother crossed her legs for another couple hours. There's a couple other famous queers that are born on your birthday.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh, really?

**SPEAKER 3:** Charles Nelson Reilly.

**SPEAKER 1:** Girlfriend!

[LAUGHTER]

**SPEAKER 3:** And Rip Taylor.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh, my god.

**BETH:** Oh, my god.

**SPEAKER 3:** So you are not the flamingest queer born on this day.

**JIMMY CARPER:** I'm sure not.

**SPEAKER 1:** Rip Taylor.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Both of those make me look butch.

**SPEAKER 1:** Folks, if you--

**SPEAKER 3:** Rip Taylor turns 68.

**SPEAKER 1:** If you remember the original show with the center square, Charles Nelson Reilly sat in that seat, it seemed like, forever.

**JIMMY CARPER:** No, no, no, that was Paul Lynde.

**SPEAKER 1:** Oh, that's right it's Paul Lynde.

**SPEAKER 3:** Charles Nelson

**BETH:** He's another queer for you, though.

**SPEAKER 1:** Another queer for you. That's right.

[LAUGHTER]

**SPEAKER 3:** But no, because you were saying before, Jimmy, that you weren't sure of anyone famous on your birthday.

**JIMMY CARPER:** That's right.

**BETH:** Well, there you go.

**SPEAKER 3:** And so we just pulled out-- unfortunately, you also share it with Julia Louis-Dreyfus.

**SPEAKER 1:** That's not so bad, Julia Louis-Dreyfus. I'll take her money.

**SPEAKER 3:** And Robert Stack.

**SPEAKER 1:** Oh, he's a hunk. When he was young, Robert Stack was hot.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Yeah, he was, yeah.

**SPEAKER 3:** Army Archerd.

**JIMMY CARPER:** I'd do him.

[LAUGHTER]

**SPEAKER 3:** Well, yeah, of course, because he's older than you.

**BETH:** We'll let him know that, too, Jimmy.

**JIMMY CARPER:** How do you know that?

**SPEAKER 3:** He turns 83.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Robert Stack?

**SPEAKER 3:** Mm-hmm.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Wow.

**BETH:** Oh, Jimmy, he started in the '40s, the gangster movies.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Must have.

**BETH:** He did, yeah.

**SPEAKER 3:** Army Archerd, Liz Anderson, Frances Sternhagen, Charles Nelson Reilly,

**SPEAKER 1:** (SINGING) Ah-ah!

**SPEAKER 3:** Rip Taylor, Billy Gray, Richard Moll.

**SPEAKER 1:** Billy Gray?

**SPEAKER 3:** He's an actor/director-- oh, sorry, actor.

**JIMMY CARPER:** You know who Billy Gray is?

**SPEAKER 3:** No.

**JIMMY CARPER:** He played the son on *Father Knows Best*.

**SPEAKER 1:** No, really?

**JIMMY CARPER:** Billy Gray.

**SPEAKER 1:** Is that right?

**JIMMY CARPER:** Yeah.

**BETH:** Oh, SPEAKER 1: My god. How interesting.

**SPEAKER 3:** I have to look at the other list and see. Richard Moll. And all of those are older than you.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Wow.

**SPEAKER 3:** That'll make you feel better.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Now she's going to make me feel worse.

**SPEAKER 3:** Somebody from the group Yes.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh, really?

**SPEAKER 3:** Trevor Rabin.

**JIMMY CARPER:** OK, I know the group Yes.

**SPEAKER 3:** Fred White, who's a rhythm and blues musician. Kevin Anderson is an actor. Julia Louis-Dreyfus. Rock singer Graham "Suggs" McPherson from a group called Madness.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh, goodness.

**SPEAKER 1:** Never heard of them.

**JIMMY CARPER:** I have a Madness album.

**SPEAKER 3:** Country singer--

**SPEAKER 1:** I figured you would.

[LAUGHTER]

**SPEAKER 3:** Country singer Trace Adkins, Penelope Ann Miller, Patrick Dempsey, Keith Coogan and--