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transsexual, ran, transgendered, lesbian, transgender, talking, people, gay, city, state representative, houston, openly, city council, elected, shame, guilt, closet, self esteem, transition, shows

## SPEAKERS

Michelle Meyers, Anise Parker, Sarah DePalma

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Sarah DePalma 00:01

pervasive, it is blocking is no way transgender activists can expect people to support them on political issues. If they can't even deal with their own internal workings. Yeah, it just isn't going to happen. So my advice to people first of all, is sad yourself. It's not my fault because it isn't. The second thing is, tell the truth. Face it. Why is it so important? Tell the truth. Because every time you tell a lie, whether it's a lie of omission, or lie of omission, you chip away a piece of your own self esteem. You do that enough times you have nothing left, you don't know who you are anymore. And no one around you knows who you are either. Two absolutely wonderful pieces of music. First one was by Ronnie Gilbert, who has been around I think, since the dawn of time, from a great CD that you do with Halle near called the trains still run. Got some great stuff on it. And the second piece, of course, the ever popular Romanovsky and Phillips with closet case, seem like to appropriate songs to us in the discussion that we're having about shame and guilt. Oh, yeah. And as as usually the case that happens around here, we start some music. And then the discussion starts in the studio. And we start talking about, you know, there's something we should have said, and you want to say something about self esteem, I think,

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well, yeah, we've talked about guilt and shame, guilt and shame, guilt and shame, guilt and shame, guilt and shame is like, you know, this kind of a negative attitude thing. And I tend to like phrasing things more on the positive attitude side of the same coin in the same coin here has a positive side. It's called self esteem. So, you know, I think less in terms of decreasing guilt and shame, then increasing self esteem. It's the same, same thing. It's just a little little difference in attitude towards in, well,

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01:57

okay, I can buy that. To me, when I talk, I guess I probably made a mistake, because I assumed that when talking about guilt and shame that self esteem is all part of that.



02:07

Yeah, how many times you've been around the block, Sarah? Too many? Okay. Not necessarily will are teenagers out there? Or, you know, people haven't thought about it in those terms pick up on it. Because I know when I was a teenager, I sure didn't. Yeah, you mentioned that the teenage aspect back in that guilt and shame thing. And I hated high school. And most of it was trying to get through life dealing with these issues and keeping everything in the closet. And it just was too much for somebody to do at any age, let alone teenage,



S Sarah DePalma 02:39

there are two incidents in my life learning process that really stand out in my mind. One was that I had a friend in high school by the name of Adrian Fullerton. And I used to go over to Adrian's house and his mother would let us use her clothes. And I think she must have sensed that we needed that it was important. And she actually encouraged us to do it. And she would, she actually taught me how to do makeup and how to use perfume and when not to use perfume. And when I were at night, we would go out and stand on this porch at night was middle of the night. But you had a view of the town that we were living in and we felt like we were parading before the whole city. Now of course no one could actually see us but it was all part of the trying to learn process. Yeah. The other thing is I can remember after I was married, and I think I mentioned at the tape about going to Kmart and buying lingerie and then going down to the park sitting in the dark at night in a park and laundrette you did mention that now I'm probably lucky that I didn't get killed or knifed or busted or all of those all of the above all at one time. Yeah. And you want to know where shame comes from. And guilt boy comes from doing things like that. You know, Monica, you were talking about some of the the guilt and the shame. And you were making some comments during the break. What did you want to say about the guilt and shame



04:02

in terms of the guilt and shame? So, we were talking during the break, and we were talking also about guilt and shame in terms of in terms of transition. And the interesting thing about it, oh, the interesting thing about it, in terms of guilt and shame and in terms of the transition aspect is, you know, I think a lot of people tend to, you know, blitzkrieg through transition. Yeah, they really tried to blitzkrieg to transition, and then go back into the woodwork in a nutshell. Go back and hide and all that's doing is if you're trying to get rid of the stress in dealing with you know, coming to terms with being trans being a transsexual, but how much sense does it make to go back into the closet and then have the stress again of trying to



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be sold one Bye Gotta stress and bought yourself another with it and that a great plan.



S Sarah DePalma 05:04

Yeah, we have to do a station break. This is KPFT 90.1 FM in Houston, Texas, United States of America. No, I think you get the general idea. This is 90.1. Okay, this is KPFT Houston and ke O 's College Station. Are we still doing que els? I think so. I don't think so. What's it? Well, the sign is still up there. So hello, i Hello. 89.1k els College Station. I thought we stopped doing K us. I don't know. See this happens when you only come in once a month, people near people never clued you in anything that's gonna



05:39

teach you like a mushroom house. They're



05:41

telling you they just keep me wet and under rocks.



05:47

Oh, okay. Yeah, if you if you try to go into the woodwork after cloud after transition, what you're doing, if you're actively trying to keep people from finding out is building up a false facade. And the energy that it takes to maintain that it's going to eat you alive. I believe it's called living a lie, actually. Yeah. Now now I do know people. And I guess in a lot of respects, it just might be one of them that go into a closet after transition. But not so much because they spend all their time maintaining this light just because look, folks, we just want to get on with our lives. Just leave us alone, let our do our thing. And it gets so natural to just do your thing. That the fact that you transition just kind of disappears into the background noise. Because really, when you come right down to it, who you are is a heck of a lot more important than who you were.



S Sarah DePalma 06:41

And one of the pieces of tape that I was listening to I heard Danielle say the question is not read is not what kind of a woman you will be or what kind of a man you will be after the transition. The question is, what kind of a person will you be? I'll agree with that. And I thought that was one of the best pieces of advice that



07:02

I've heard. Let me guess that was in transsexuality. 101 That was part of a transgender one. Yeah, one. Yeah.



S Sarah DePalma 07:09

I thought that was a great piece of advice. And it stuck with me because I thought, well, wish I said that. That was good. Okay, well, let's do the



07:20

other thing I wanted to reiterate from that was your bit about tell the truth. I got a lot of trouble when I said that. You don't have to go around with a sign on your head. But on the other hand, you know, like I was saying about the maintaining this, this lie with all the energy, which is something I can't manage to do, I got way too much energy invested and everything else to spare any for that. But on the other hand, I'm sort of closeted, because nobody asks me, and I'm in that kind of a mode where an honest question deserves an honest answer. And if you don't ask, then I'm not going to bother to tell you because like, like I was saying, it's who I was not who I am. So



08:02

well, we've had an unusual situation, because I've had people at work who listen to the program. So you know, and and it really has been sort of a non issue. I'm good at my job. And we only had one incident natural. It was a bathroom incident. Oh, lovely. You know, I don't want to be in the party with her too. What's the response was then don't go while she's there. Good answer. Um, and so it just hasn't been an issue. But I mean, everyone knows, but it's like, yes, in so what? Yeah, get over with. Yeah. And again, I think a lot of that is attitude. I don't go around, trumpeting it from the rooftops. But I don't have to ever worry about telling any lies either. Yeah. No, it's stress free.



08:46

That's the way to be no stress. I



08:47

have was punching a time clock.



S Sarah DePalma 08:51

And that can be stressful. In your job? Yes. Especially. Okay, let's switch to a little different topic here. We had a nice Parker on the program. In my opinion, the election of a nice Parker was the Houston gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered story of 1997. No doubt. And I'm very, very proud that so many transgendered people were involved with the running of a nice Parker's campaign. It was transgenders who ran the phone banks. It was transgenders, who stuffing envelopes. Especially early in the campaign when no one else was turning out. There were weeks on end where the only volunteers were transgender people that were coming mostly from tats and GCTC. Yep, that's a Texas area, transsexual sport, and Gulf Coast transgender community. And a nice acknowledge that many times, in fact, an interesting story. She went out to interview with Log Cabin Republicans. And the only question they asked her was about her support of transgender rights. Hell really I'm not kidding, it's true. And they just took her over the coals about it and she finally said, this is a non issue. I'm going to support

transgenders if it means you don't want to support me then don't check out their support. But I but I it's nice to have somebody for all the bad mouthing you hear about politicians? Here's somebody running for office who stood up and said here's how it is take it or don't

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well, she got in I hope she's got the stomach for it because I know it's chased out people with integrity before I hope she can keep it going

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which is don't take any money while you're in the restrooms and

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well yeah but but people people that like you know have integrity get tired of those who don't you know, surrounding them what is it how can they fly like eagles when they're surrounded by chickens?

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Well, you know there's something to be said for that actually. Yeah.

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So if a niece is listening, Go girl go.

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No doubt because I was very impressed because the night I was channel surfing looking for our channel surfing that night, Dorney said during the election returns, and I was and I was interested to see when they finally interviewed a nice, and as she said, and one thing that stuck with me, she said, Not only am I proud of being an elected resident, representative of the gay, lesbian, bisexual transgender community, I'm also proud of being elected representative, all Houstonians.

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Yeah, and it was interesting when she was being interviewed, we were at the at the victory party. And the first thing that she said was that she's proud to be elected as a gay as represented as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender community, I thought my god, elected representatives, you can say the T word, T word. You were holy cow, I can hardly believe it. So this was from the show, a show that we did in May. And this is a nice Parker talking about what

she believed was the importance of her candidacy. But let's talk about what it means for you to be running. I remember when I was I'm a when Harvey Milk ran the first time in in what it meant for them. And I know in other cities where they have been able to get gay and lesbian people elected to City Council seats, it has meant a very important things to the city, what would it mean here?

 Anise Parker 12:26

Think I think it would be a symbol of tolerance in a city that while having openly gay people elected to office, to those of us who are gay, it gives us role models, it gives us something to aspire to, it makes us feel that we're we're equal and a part of what goes on in the city. But for people who are non gay, it also sends a message Houston likes to think of itself as an as a city where anyone can make it it likes to think of itself as a very tolerant city, a city that embraces diversity without really having that diversity divide us. We haven't had a history of riots and racial strife that other some other cities have had. And not to say that it's that it's perfect by any means. But that it, it allows all of us to say we're taking one more step to show that what we care about in this city is what you can do what your qualifications are. Not not your gender, not your sexual orientation, not your gender identity, not any of those other not the color of your skin or your ethnic background.

 Sarah DePalma 13:38

I in one of the one of the shows that we did, I was talking about a a state representative in the state of Minnesota and openly transsexual state representative who won and what that had meant as a role model for other transgender people around the country. And when I go and talk to the groups, I always like to use her as an example and say, it would have been easy for her to say all I'm transsexual, I can't do this, or I'm transgender, and I can't do that. Instead, she said, hey, I can do anything. And I agree with you. I think it would be a terrific thing for people here to know that in Houston, it if you're qualified, you can win, period.

 Anise Parker 14:16

Well, I'll tell you what inspired me was the new sheriff of Travis County. Oh yeah, you might want explain. Margo Frazier is the new sheriff of Travis County which is the county that includes Austin. She's an open lesbian, but she was a qualified candidate for sheriff she was the best qualified candidate for sheriff had been in the sheriff's department for years and years. And if you could see her I had the opportunity to meet her she's just a nice down to earth. I have to say it, tough looking woman. But the fact that the citizens looked at her qualifications and her opponent, her Republican opponent, did not gay bait her at all. He ran strictly on the issues. And I know he may be kicking himself now for doing that. But it was a, it was a very issue oriented, clean race heads up race and she won. We tend to think of law enforcement as incredibly reactionary. And that scenario, no one would would elect someone who's openly gay. But the fact that Margo Fraser was able to get out and run is wonderful now. Dallas has openly gay city council members in Galveston has an openly gay city council. I Yeah. And I understand, though, that most of those got elected. And it was, may have been known. But they really came out after they were they were elected. The only person I know in the state of Texas, who's openly gay in the holding office, who was an activist beforehand is Glenn Max, like McAfee,

right. And it is different. Being a gay, lesbian, or gay or lesbian activist, and being a spokesperson for the community, and then deciding to run for office than to be someone who, well, some people may know that you're gay, but you've never been publicly gay, before you run. It's a very different position. It works for other communities as well, if if you've been a black activist, and you've been you've led marches in the street, people are going to have a different view of you than if you've been sitting in the boardroom. So

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Sarah DePalma 16:25

reputation does precede you, I can tell you that from experience. When you use that song, in the context of having our first openly lesbian representative in the city of Houston, it has a whole different meaning to

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it, and it could meaning to hear. I'm

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sure there are people out there saying what in the hell is she doing with Peter, Paul and Mary? Well, that's what the that's the thinking behind that is if as you've got, it just seems to me that that has a whole different meaning to it. And anyway, I like Peter, Paul and Mary. So that's

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good enough for me. Truly,

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that was the reason that we did is it seems to be when Bob Dylan wrote that song, he probably didn't have gays and lesbians in mind. But

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he could have, hey, the times are changing, the times

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are changing. I noticed the triangle. Texas triangle hit it called 1997. The year of the queer. Well, I don't know if that's true. Exactly. That seems to me. Like that's a little bit of a stretch. But



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optimates It



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was a breakthrough year for the first openly lesbian or gay or lesbian character on television for a main character. Oh, yeah. I don't know if you watch a program called Spin City. But they the one of the directors at the City Council or city hall there is openly gay. And they do some little inside jokes. There is a program that just recently came on came on called Ask Harriet. I don't know if you've seen it, but it's about a crossdresser. Yeah. That is, that's what that was. That's probably one of the Chromia shows I've seen. They took Living Single off. It is that it's a heterosexual male fantasy of what they think crossdresser is, and they have no clue whatsoever. None it all. And I watched the first few shows and said, That's it. I'm not watching anymore. It stinks. And Lori says the she figures at this show last six weeks, it's doing good. I give it three weeks. You know, it's just it's just that that but it's typical



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of the it's typical little way that transgenders are portrayed on TV on on mainstream network shows to begin with anyway. Because, um, usually, they're either killed off as part of the plot. Oh, yeah. Or let's see what else. They're usually either working the strolls to prostitution scrolls, or they're usually not positive characters. I think there's only been one show that even had a semi. It was a Diagnosis Murder, one that they did on CBS a couple about a couple of years ago, where the character was transsexual moving in the town, and of course ends up getting murdered anyway in and they then get the murder gets solved. But



19:24

well, it seems like every one of the shows that either have to kill off the transgender character, or make it make the person diseased, or in jail, or prostitute. And we've talked about this before, but the problem is that you can't get healthy transgendered people on television and spring as a prime example. Well, Jerry Springer is, you know, I mean, I read an article where somebody was calling him one of them was calling his show, one of the sleaziest shows on television. I'd second that.



19:54

Yeah. But in the recent sweeps week, guess what, guess what beat out Oprah



Sarah DePalma 20:00

Jerry Springer, you got it? Yeah, it's a sad commentary on on where American society is going. I think that's a whole different show in itself. I did want to say that in East Parker's election, I think was a key for the city of Houston, we may have turned a corner here. You know, I was

here for the referendum in I remember the posters, and I remember some of the angry words that were exchanged and some of the horrible things that were said. And 10 years later, we now have an openly trained and openly lesbian person on city council. Times have changed for



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us newcomer Yankee types. What do you mean, when you say the referendum?



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Ah, well, whatever years ago, there was a it's, it's kind of a convoluted story. But to make it short, there was a referendum that was held in the city of Houston, on giving work protection to gays and lesbians in the city. And it got ugly, real, real ugly. And there was a guy here named Steven Jota, who ran a slate of candidates called the straight slate. You know, and actually one of them actually made it into the runoffs. And it was just, it was truly ugly. It was homophobic to the max, get lost in it last big.



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Matter of fact, if I recall correctly, one of those straight Slater's actually ran for Helen. He was in the running for Helen Huey see.



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Straight Slater. Yeah, extreme. Not that he's not that, you know, he's changed his views. I'm sure what it was truly ugly. It was, I still have some of the pamphlets leftover from that I kept them. In fact, that was the year that I did my first gay pride parade, because they so aggravated me, I said, That's it. I'm going to start going these parades. And there was a lady that I as we were standing in line, we were right behind the group from the National Organization of Women. And somebody handed me a button there that said, No one can make you feel inferior without your consent. Oh, yeah. And then I kept that button. Because because after this stuff with a straight slate, we really needed something that was positive to bring us in here.



22:17

Well, that plays right back into the shame and guilt trip, because if you've got that shame and guilt, somebody can pray on that somebody can attack you there. If you've got the self esteem, then you'll just kind of slough it off. Yeah. Okay. What's new? Go on move. Let's go.



22:34

We just got it. We had a question come in from a caller. I wanted to know if there are any transgender or transsexual elected public officials? And the answer is yes, there are actually

several in the country. The one that comes to mind is Is she was actually a city council woman, first in in Minneapolis, and is now a state representative. And her name is Karen Clark. And Karen Clark was a real breakthrough person. And since then, there have been others. There is one on the city council and San Francisco server name escapes me right this minute. And there's



23:07

another one on Minneapolis that ran from Indiana.



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There's there's one in Colorado too, but I as a state representative in Colorado, yeah. Yeah. The caller didn't say open transgender. Well, actually,



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she is open but she she was when when she she got out. It was actually what happened. She wasn't when she ran. Yeah, that's an interesting story. She was, um, she was running for I believe it was a state representative seat. Yeah. And this they her opponent outed her to what she said. So what it has nothing. It has nothing to do with whether I'm qualified, and she won. There's also a transsexual that's, that's a elected official in Cambridge, Massachusetts. There was one that recently ran in the city of New York itself, lost on a very, very close race. And it had nothing to do with her being transsexual or transgendered. She lost because there was a Republican sweep there. And she was running as a Democrat.



24:03

Yeah. And there was an African American transgender who's running who's running for a seat on the city council in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina right now.



24:12

Well, that. Yeah, that race is over. Did



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she win? Or did you hear haven't heard anything on that? We've not heard I haven't heard anything yet. I'm going to have to check the net myself on that to find out



24:21

Monica is research topic 14.



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I admit that at some point I have I am seriously thought about and May we'll take a run at a state representative seat, go for it go for it isn't going to happen anytime soon. But it's something that I have thought about very seriously. And I can see I could see myself in the future doing exactly that. The problem with running with the state rented representative seat or really with any seat for that matter, is finding the money to do it. Now state representatives position would be very interesting, because you because our state legislature is becoming more and more serve ative. And it would be hard for me to run right now because the positions that we have are filled with incumbents. But in the future, I could see somewhere down the line, my making run into state representative position, I'd love to be the first openly transgender state representative in Texas, or even in the southwest.



25:21

What sir, being the first openly transgendered radio host there isn't enough for ya.



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I've actually had a whole series of firsts, and I'm looking for some new ones to make in this. That's one of the questions whether I could ever get the money to do it. Yeah, that's a hard question to answer. Yeah. State Representative seats, though, luckily don't require as much money as a city council race does. Because, you know, the reason is very honestly, is most people don't know who the state representatives are. Anyway, this is true. If you run you're pretty much reflecting on a party affiliation. So it's something to think about, and it's something I certainly and would give serious consideration to downline. There's anybody the Democratic Party listening, I'm available. Just thought I'd mention it. But the answer to the question is yes, there are trying to state representatives. I don't know if there are any federal officials that are openly transsexual. I've not heard of any.



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Um, there was another article I ran across there where there is transgender, there are some transgendered folks in in federal agencies.



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Yeah, I know of several, especially in the air traffic control division.



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The question, however, refers to elected so yeah, so there was



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in fact, an open transsexual is one of these is an assistant director for the air traffic control in the southwest air areas section of the United States. And I know, I know, I've met Jessica Stern, who is a pilot for Continental took continental to court. They fired her. She took them to court and one she got it. So transgendered people are in positions as far as elected ones, the only one, as far as I know, the highest position that was elected is a state representative level. So, but the time may come, we may have a senator Well, I don't think senator, but perhaps Congress person, I could picture that happening. Won't be Ricky Wilkins. But I'm sorry.



27:21

Patty is here. Well, we have at least somebody fairly highly ranked in the federal government who is very trans friendly. Anyway. Who's he talking about while you're at the law conference?



27:33

Oh, he's talking about reg Jones course. Yeah. Reg Jones is the one of the directors on the I was the EEOC. It's the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. And yes, not only is he trans friendly, he actually helped us to get a transgendered version of ENDA introduced. It didn't fly, but at least we took a running stab at it so



27:55

well, we're all not dead yet. I have a feeling that won't be the last time it tries to.



28:01

Yeah, well, I see that our folks are setting up in the other studio. It doesn't look like they're quite ready. So why don't we go to a piece of music here in I think this is Meg Christian that we have set up. Oh, yeah. And I don't know I forgot what what cut do we have cute you remember,



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this would be southern home for those of you don't know, Meg Christian was one of the founders of lesbian music in the Olivia record label, along with Chris Williamson and several others, but those were the two first artists of women's music in the world. Okay, so



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let's go to a piece of music. We're going to come back and then we're going to do Walter went you will follow the news. That is the news, miss. Good morning, Mr. Mrs. America and all the ships at sea and all that good stuff. We'll be back in a little bit. Let's try that again. There we

go. That was Meg, Christian. And met Christian. I guess you I think it's fair to call her musical pioneer.

♂ 28:55

Oh, you bet.

♂ 28:56

Yeah. Okay, I think we have your microphones on let's go ahead and get a sound check.

Ⓜ Michelle Meyers 29:00

Okay. Here we go.

♂ 29:02

We are live in downtown Montrose.

Ⓜ Michelle Meyers 29:08

And it's the news with big boy and Michelle. Usually we've been for the last couple weeks, we've been talking about political things. And I'd like to start off by talking about a political thing, a political thing. Yes. The A lot of what went on recently was a result of the HTL PC, right? And we have to remember that we have to continue to support HDL PC. They've been very influential and everything.

♂ 29:38

Why? Why do we have to they haven't done a damn thing for us. I mean, I'm not being argumentative, but they have refused to include us in their mission statement numerous times. I'm not inclined to do squat form. I mean, honestly,

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bar is an acronym challenged folks. What

♂ 29:56

are we talking about? Houston, gay, lesbian Political Caucus. Oh, that I've heard Also known as transgenders ain't welcome here. Okay.



Michelle Meyers 30:02

But they work for they work for a nice and they and the whole slate of the gRPC candidates won this year. So I think they did a real good job. And I just wanted to mention that they recently, this past Wednesday we had an election and after election, they have elected Clarence Bagby. He's gonna be the new president of the H G RPC. So that he think that



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sounds interesting. What is as bad we been president before the election?



Michelle Meyers 30:42

This is his first time he was the chairman and



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well, Clarence had has to this point shown an interest in being transgender inclusive. He certainly knows me he knows a nice, and I'm hopeful that if with Clarence as the president that maybe something will change there. So you might be maybe I'll keep my fingers crossed. Fingers crossed. Yes.



31:03

And I got some wonderful news for the folks of after hours and for our listeners, one of our very own, from after hours is down at City Hall. And that is Lujack Tyler, who many of you know may know very reason up to very recently had a segment