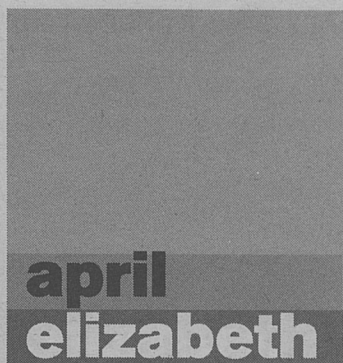


# Views: Celebrating Unique Lives

I am writing this to tell my personal thoughts about the Transgender Day Of Remembrance Ceremony in Burlington. I am a Male to Female trans person. When I started my journey I took it for granted that all people would either accept me or ignore me. Living in Vermont sometimes one gets too comfortable, as this is a pretty liberal, accepting place to live.

I have been living full time as a woman for a few years and as I adjusted to my new life I got interested in what the lives of others like me were like. I have had it pretty easy, no one really has given me too tough a time except a few comments and problems at work, which I finally resolved by



people die every year mainly unnoticed by the public at large and finding out some people actually cheer – like we deserve the hate or something. We don't ask for who we are, and most will tell you if they had a choice they would change the inside not the outside – it would be so much easier. It's hard

just wanted to live their lives how they wanted and to expose the hatred and prejudice caused them to lose their life.

As in all this concern for terrorism, we cannot live our lives in fear and let hatred control our lives or they win. I don't care if you are Gay, Lesbian, Straight or Trans it shouldn't matter. We are all people on this little planet and we either learn to accept differences in each other or we all end up destroying each other, and that would be sad. We are all wonders of life, we are all god's creatures. We all have something to give and that is too precious for any of us to be thinking we have the right to take it away.

Maybe you don't think you need to go to our service because you aren't transgendered and this doesn't affect you. Maybe you think it's our problem. Hatred is everyone's problem – not just trans people or people in Iraq or poor souls in the twin towers. We either stand up together against hatred or we all fall one by one. Please come to our service to honor those fallen souls who just wanted to live their lives. Please come and stand up and let those who hate know we will not tolerate it. We all need to stand up for our children, otherwise how can we say we did the best we could to them? I hope you all show up and if you don't I hope you send prayers for those in pain and those who no longer have a voice. Thank you. ▼

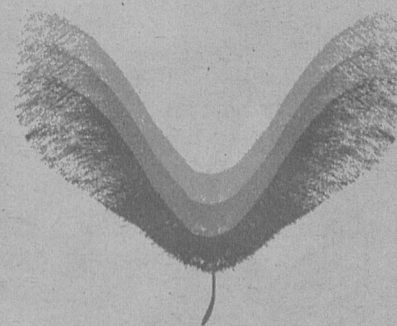
*April Elizabeth is a carpenter who lives in Milton.*

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leaving my job and starting my own business. As I looked around and did research and spoke to other trans folk I learned about the atrocities done to others. I started wondering if my comfort level was a bit too comfy for my own good.

I remember the fear I felt knowing so many trans

enough for us to find self acceptance – many of us lose family, friends and jobs, and to top it off we find ourselves the victims of hate. It has always puzzled me how people can hate others for being different, when uniqueness is what makes every one of us special. I am glad we have found a way to celebrate the lives of those who



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## Our Mission

The Samara Foundation of Vermont is a charitable foundation whose mission is to support and strengthen Vermont's gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered communities today and build an endowment for tomorrow.

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