

## The Last Word

By Brian Feist

# clip . . . hmmm

clip Film Festival <sup>SM</sup>

I have to admit that when I heard the new name of the Tampa Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, even though I smiled approvingly, what I was really thinking was, "Huh?" "Where's the 'gay?'" "Where's the 'Tampa?'" "What does it stand for?"

But "clip" is kind of growing on me. And the logo design is sharp, crisp and contemporary. It's different. I like it.

And it doesn't have to be an acronym for anything.

Film Festival Executive Director Chuck Henson is right. Computers and fruit have no relationship at all. But who doesn't recognize that little apple with the bite out of it?

My copy of *Websters Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* (the BIG dictionary) isn't that old, but it doesn't even have "google" in it. In a few short years "google" has entered the lexicon not only as a noun — the name of a business, but has also become a verb. Nowadays "to google" something is to research it on the internet.

The argument that "clip" doesn't identify the Film Festival as LGBT is unwarranted, as well. Neither "logo" nor "here" are words that are linked in any way to the LGBT community, but make it "LOGO" and position it at an angle, or add an exclamation point to "here!" and they are immediately recognized as gay TV channels.

People! It's all about marketing — creating a recognizable brand. The whole point of branding is to make "clip" synonymous with the Tampa International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. I have complete confidence that the board of the Film

Festival has a plan in place to make sure that when people see "clip" they will immediately think gay and Tampa Bay and film. Of course, it's going to take some time.

The Tampa International Gay & Lesbian Film Festival may be the 6th largest LGBT film festival in the country, but for most of us, it's just our little Film Festival. We still see it as a small town event. What the Friends of the Festival Board has done is given TIGLFF a push into the big leagues. Think Frameline (the San Francisco LGBT Film Festival) or NewFest (the New York LGBT Film Festival — or Clip! You get the picture).

Still, I understand the sentiments of those who are underwhelmed with the new name. We have grown comfortable with our Film Festival, like an old pair of shoes or a favorite sweater. When someone messes with it, we get testy. As a former colleague once said, "When we are part of the process of change, it is much easier to accept, but when change is forced upon us, it is uncomfortable, even threatening.

Shed your discomfort and let's celebrate this change in our Film Festival. Our "Pride and Joy" is growing up and taking its place as one of the premier LGBT film festivals in the country. Let's all do our part to make sure that everyone knows that what "Clip" stands for its quality LGBT cinema in a welcoming, active community. What "clip" stands for is the Tampa International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival.

Oh, and for those who simply must have an acronym, there's always, "Celebrating Life in Pictures."

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Well, the *St. Pete Times* has done it again. On the editorial page of the Friday, October 19 issue they ran an op-ed piece about Rep. Barney Frank's attempts to get the Employment Non-Discrimination Amendment passed. Frank is adamant that the bill has no chance at passing if it includes gender identity protections (sound familiar, St. Petersburg?), and gay activists are calling for his head on a platter because he's reintroduced the bill minus the trans protections.

The op-ed piece, titled "There's no pleasing the fringes" was reasonably well balanced, and painted a pretty clear picture of Frank's dilemma, although it made LGBT activists sound like raging all-or-nothing lunatics. But the *Times* couldn't pass up an opportunity to get their digs in where the gay community is concerned. Directly above the op-ed piece was a huge — and I mean huge — photo of "drag nuns," with the caption "The U.S. is not ready to give legal protections to transgender people, such as transvestites." I guess a photo of Susan Stanton is ok for the front page of the Mother's Day issue but isn't shocking enough for everyday use. Are they trying to scare parents into believing that passing ENDA will put drag queens in school classrooms?

Never mind the "nuns" were not run-of-the-mill transvestites, but were members of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, who use their outrageous costumes to call attention to their mission of HIV/AIDS education and charitable philanthropy. I guess when you're trying to scare people, facts aren't important.



**"Terrific!"**  
-Tara Schroeder  
Tampa Theatre

**"Phenomenal!"**  
-Andy Orrell  
American Stage

**"Superb!"**  
-Terry Hagstrom, Carter's Florist

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