



News & views

Vision • Integrity • Quality

Vol. 8, No. 12 • December 1994

Renaissance

Community Alliance Forms

The 1994 National Social Workers Conference marked a milestone in the history of the Transgender Community. Five transgender organizations set aside philosophical differences in order to work together on a common project—outreach and education to social workers about the transgender community. The Transgender Alliance for Community (The Alliance) is meant to build upon that small beginning and continue the cooperative effort begun in October 1994 at the NASW conference.

The Alliance will form the framework for the interactive participation of transgender organizations in community programs and projects. This interactive participation will take the form of sharing and exchanging services, information, and resources available to the partners in the alliance.

The Alliance is inclusive. That is, all non-profit and not-for-profit transgender organizations are invited to participate as a member of the Alliance. The Alliance is also committed to diversity. In that spirit, the Alliance will develop educational and promotional programs and projects that benefit the community as a whole, but also develop programs and projects for minority interests that are not served by other organizations. The Alliance will be pro-active on inclusion and diversity, but will not use those buzzwords to exclude any organization from participation.

Any organization that wishes to participate in The Alliance should make the following Pledge:

“We, the (name of organization), in the spirit of cooperation, caring, and community, pledge to participate in the sharing and exchange of services, information and resources, where possible, with other transgender organizations in order to develop a greater sense of true community among all transgendered people of the world.”

The concept of The Alliance evolved over the past 18 months from discussions between Alison Laing, Chair of the Outreach Institute; Dallas Denny and JoAnn Roberts, Executive Director and Chair, respectively, of AEGIS; and Jane Ellen Fairfax, Chair of Tri-Ess. The cooperative effort for NASW was Fairfax’s idea and was coordinated by Roberts. Encouraged by the success of the NASW effort, Denny, Laing, and Roberts developed The Alliance Pledge and will be presenting it to their respective boards this month. Fairfax has agreed to take the Pledge to the Tri-Ess board for approval, hopefully, sometime next year.

Meanwhile, as both Roberts and Laing are also co-founders of Renaissance, they brought The Alliance Pledge to Renaissance first. The board of directors of Renaissance took The Pledge at their November 13th meeting. It begins!



Breakthrough Outreach Effort A Success

by Angela Gardner

On October eighteenth social workers from all over the U.S. converged on Nashville, Tennessee for the National Association of Social Workers convention at that city’s modern, downtown convention center. A small band of determined representatives of the transgender community also descended on the convention to spread the word about the differently gendered. I was one of that band of gender rebels.

Nashville is known as a bastion of country music and is called the “Buckle on the Bible Belt.” This fact was apparent to me every morning as my route to the convention center took me right past the

headquarters of the Southern Baptist Church. That Nashville is a city of contrasts was illustrated by the fact that one street away from the Baptists our outreach team had to walk past a “gentlemen’s club” which featured exotic dancers. The exotic dancers would not have gotten as much attention as our team did on the convention’s exhibition floor. We were a hit. The man in the next booth told me he had observed people all day long watching us from what they felt were unobtrusive vantage points.

We were worth watching and not only because we were transgendered. We were a genuine break-

continued on page 6



Chapter & Affiliate Information

Renaissance News & Views

© 1994, Renaissance Education Association, Inc., 987 Old Eagle School Rd., Suite 719, Wayne, Pa. 19087. Phone: 610-630-1437

\$2 per issue, \$16 per year (12 issues). Back issues are available for \$2 per copy plus \$0.52 postage and handling. Send check or M.O. to the above address, attention: Beth Marshall.

Editor-in-Chief

Angela Gardner

Contributing Editors

Dina Amberle

JoAnn Roberts

Layout

Creative Design Services

Distribution

Beth & Rachel Marshall

Business Manager

Barbara Schwarz

Articles, opinion pieces, and letters to the editor are always welcome. Ideas for articles and opinion pieces should be sent to our editorial office care of Renaissance, PO Box 530, Bensalem, Pa. 19020-0530. Complimentary and irate letters to the editor may be sent to the same address.

Renaissance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing education and support to the transgender community and the general public.

Chapters

Delaware

Renaissance Delaware Chapter: meets second Saturday of each month. Write for info to: PO Box 5656, Wilmington, DE 19808 or call 302-995-1396.

New Jersey

South Jersey/Shore Area: Write Renaissance SJ, Box 189, Mays Landing, NJ 08330. Meets the first Saturday of the month at the Atlantic Mental Health Center, 2002 Black Horse Pike, McKee City. Doors open at 7 p.m. Call 609-646-5457 for details.

Pennsylvania

Greater Philadelphia area: Write Renaissance GPC, Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020-0530. Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia. Doors open 8 p.m. all year 'round. Call 610-630-1437 for information.

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122 Harrisburg, PA 17105. Meets on the first Saturday of the month. Call 717-780-1LSV (1578) for location and times.

Affiliates

Georgia

Atlanta: The American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033-0724 or call 404-939-0244. Information resources.

Atlanta: Atlanta Gender Explorations (A.G.E.), PO Box 77562, Atlanta, GA 30357, 404-939-2128.

Louisiana

The Gulf Gender Alliance, PO Box 870213, New Orleans, LA 70187-1300. Local support group.

New Jersey

Monmouth/Ocean Trans-Gender, (MOTG), write PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701 or call 908-219-9094.

New York

Metropolitan Gender Network (MGN), write 561 Hudson St., Box 45, New York, NY 10014, or call 201-794-1665, Ext. 332. Local support group.



Resources



Background Papers:

- Background Papers are \$1.25 each:
1. Myths & Misconceptions About Crossdressing
 2. Reasons for Male to Female Crossdressing
 3. PARTNERS: Spouses & Significant Others
 4. The Matter of Children
 5. Annotated Bibliography
 6. Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View
 7. AIDS/ HIV Safety and Ethics.
 8. Understanding Transsexualism

Significant Other Support

To network with other partners of transgendered people contact Evelyn Kirkland, PO Box 1242, Newtown, Pa., 18940.

Pen Pal Program:

If you would like to correspond with other people around the country contact Pen Pals, care of Maryann Kirkland, PO Box 1242, Newtown, Pa., 18940. Maryann will put you on the Pen Pal List and give you a copy of that list so you may correspond with as many new friends as you like.

TransParent Forum:

If you are transgendered and have children, that makes you a TransParent. If you'd like to network with other TransParents contact Elsa Larson, PO Box 2122, Harrisburg, Pa., 17105, attention: TransParent.

Events Calendar

December

- 3 Ren. South Jersey
- 3 Ren. LSV- Winter Luau
- 10 Ren GPC Holiday Party
- 10 ~~Ren. Del.~~ **Canceled**
- 24 Balto. Grp Xmas Eve Meeting

January

- 7 Ren. South Jersey
- 7 Ren. LSV meeting
- 14 Ren. Delaware
- 21 Ren. GPC
- 28 Balto. Group Meeting

February

- 4 Ren. South Jersey
- 4 Ren. LSV meeting
- 11 Ren. Delaware
- 18 Ren. GPC
- 23-25 Int'l Conf. on Cross Dressing, Sex & Gender, Northridge, Ca.
- 28 Balto. Group Meeting

News Beat & Reminder



by Angela Gardner

High Ho Honeys, and Ho Ho Ho, Mary Christmas! It's December already. Soon it'll be time for the after Xmas clearance sales to start. I hope Santa brings you something nice. If he doesn't, return those items you don't like and use the credit for some new lingerie. See you in your finery at the Renaissance Holiday parties. If you made your reservations.

And now... some tasty tidbits.

DISH: DIRECT

That's right, it's dish, direct from the drag queen's mouth. Last month I had the pleasure of working with the Baroness Fiona James of the Imperial Court of New York. There we were walking a seedy street in the Big Apple's meat packing district, hard at work. (On a movie, not what you thought.) Anyhow, more about the movie later. First the dish.

Baroness Fiona told me she worked on the the Los Angeles scenes of the Spielberg drag epic, *To Wong Foo Thanks For Everything, Julie Newmar*. If you recall, a few months back I reported that Wesley Snipes seemed to be more at ease with his drag persona and Patrick Swayze was dropping out of character as quickly as he could when the director yelled, "Cut!" Well, that was when they started shooting in New York. It seems that the ladies switched attitudes when they got to L.A. and it was Snipes who now acted butch between takes. Could it be that L.A. is Wesley's hometown and he didn't want his homies to think he liked drag **that** much?

Baroness Fiona said that Swayze remained a perfect lady even when the camera stopped rolling. She also said the actors were all grumbling about the burden of glamour after several weeks of shooting all over the country. (Even Leguizamo. He started calling his high heels, "instruments of torture.") Watch for the film to hit the big screen in the spring of '95. Now, a word about that movie Baroness Fiona and I were working on.

STONEWALL AGAIN

The 1969 riot that started the Gay Rights movement is coming to the silver screen. Shooting began in Philadelphia in late October on a drama set against the backdrop of that turbulent time. It's a theatrical release film that will be appearing in theaters but it is being financed by the British Broadcasting System. The title is *Stonewall* and it follows several characters, including a young Puerto Rican drag queen named LaMiranda and her friends Matty Dean, Mizz Moxy and Helen Wheels, thru the weeks leading up to the riot, and climaxes with a re-creation of that event. The film is based on the book of the same name by Martin Duberman.

After one day in Philadelphia re-creating a demonstration at Independence Hall, the crew moved to New York where Baroness Fiona and I came upon the scene. Of course they were shooting in Greenwich Village where it really happened but it happened in June and we were walking that cold, cold street in November.

Have you ever felt the November breeze blow up your black leather mini? I know how the *Wong Foo* girls felt about the burden of glamour.

The film is striving to be true to the fashion of the time so we were all checked closely by the Wardrobe Department to make sure we looked like 1969 hookers. One of our co-workers, Miss Venus, was devastated when they made her change her white, cut-to-the-navel swimsuit and five inch platform shoes for a far more sedate, of-the-period jumpsuit with sensible shoes. We started calling her Anne Bancroft. We're so cruel.

They are letting proper wardrobe slip a little, since in NYC back in '69 you could be arrested for dressing in drag. You could avoid that charge if you could show the cops you were wearing three items of male attire. This made for many curious fashion choices I'm sure. The producers decided to let this fact bow to poetic license so you won't see the stars of the film in fishnets and penny loafers.

Who are those stars you ask? Guillermo Diaz and Fred Weller. I admit I've never heard of them but they say Guillermo was in *Party Girl*. Okay, I never heard of that either. Maybe you did though and if you did let us know how it was.

The producer is Christine Vachon, best know for the lesbian love story, *Go Fish*. She said, "This is not about the Stonewall riots. It's about being gay at that particular time and how the gay rights movement developed." More info on *Stonewall* will appear in this column as it becomes available. As is usual in these cases, the film will probably hit the theaters next year.

LET'S SEE THE REWRITE

The *Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine* suggested that the television season is already tired and boring and it might be time to do some creative overhauling. One of their proposals was to radically change the ABC show *Blue Skies*. As it now stands, the show is about two guys from Boston who hook up with a foxy female in a mail-

continued next page

News Beat...

order business. The *Inquirer's* rewrite would change all that and have two women and a crossdressing guy start a male-order business in Portland, Oregon. What time does that show run? Somebody give me the remote.

QUEENLY CRITICS

When the stars of television shows climb into drag they do so to get laughs. Little did they know they would also be subjected to the close scrutiny of critical drag experts who would give the public the real dirt on how well they pull it off. *Entertainment Weekly* decided to put the "ladies" of prime time to the test by hiring a panel of professional New York drag queens to rate the stars.

Drafted for the panel were The Baroness (Not Fiona), a cable home shopping show spokesmodel, (How come nobody ever tells me about these openings?) Tabboo!, not just a perfume but a drag performance artist and Varla Jean Merman, a cabaret singer/actress who says she's Ethel Merman's illegitimate daughter.

The shows the panel critiqued are: *On Our Own*, *Martin* and *The Dame Edna Experience*. *On Our Own* star Ralph Harris (who won't return my calls anymore. I could have given him good fashion tips) got good marks for attention to detail, "the glasses, the pearls, the cleavage." They thought Ralph moved well in a dress and heels, utilizing the proper feminine body

language but over all he lost points for being, "frumpy."

Martin Lawrence got a mixed review, too. The Baroness felt that Martin's character Sha Nay Nay could use a corset and some drama. Varla Jean said "She definitely needs some new clothes. She looks like she shops off-rack in the Debbie Gibson collection." Tabboo thought she was frumpy but had "a little sex, a little spunk."

Since the ladies doing the reviewing are drag queens, Dame Edna fared the best. They loved her hair color, "It never occurs in nature" and the Baroness said, "This is true fantasy. True theater... Dame Edna knows what drag's about."

SEX, DRAGS & ROCK & ROLL

What it's about is a lot of good fun to benefit a good cause. Back in May, twelve of the countries' hottest drag superstars came together in New York at the Squeeze Box nightclub. Among the stars appearing on the stage that night were; **Lady Bunny, Jimmy James, Dueling Bankheads, Sissy Fit**, the aforementioned **Varla Jean Merman** and **Mistress Formika**. What the girls did was perform their little hearts out, doing original songs and cover versions of classic tunes by the Plasmatics, Patti Smith, **Led Zeppelin, Tom Petty** and others. Of course, the girls brought their own special style and rewritten lyrics to the songs. (**Jimmy James** sang *Stairway To Heaven* in his **Marilyn Monroe** character. I've gotta hear that.)

The concert is now available on a CD and a portion of the proceeds will

go to Lifebeat, the music industry's organization to fight AIDS. Larger portions of the proceeds will go to the performer's hairdressers, dressmakers and makeup artists. (It's only fair.)

To order your copy of *Sex, Drags and Rock & Roll* send \$12.95 to PO Box A624, Radio City Station, New York, NY 10101. Be sure you open the windows and play it loud. Your neighbors will **love** it darlings!

CRASS DRESSING?

That's what film critic Stephen Hunter of the *Baltimore Morning Sun* called *Just Like A Woman* in his October twenty-eight review. Vera Rae House shipped it along to us and again, I have to ask, what film did this guy see? He called it, "A vulgar, slow and manipulative British comedy-drama on the subject of cross dressing, it makes *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* seem like *Citizen Kane*."

I admit the film wasn't perfect but when I said I thought it was the best film about crossdressing that I've ever seen, I meant it. Hunter seems to be hunting for faults in this picture. He thought that Adrian Pasdar was holding back and that the film would have benefited from a "real transvestite" in the lead role. Well, it certainly might have, but I thought Pasdar did a fine job and I didn't notice any "holding back."

Hunter's final assertion is that the film insists, "... men dressed in women's clothes are, without further polish, funny." I didn't think Pasdar or his chums at the CD club were supposed to be funny. (With the

Since 1969!

Lee's Mardi Gras Ent., Inc.

Lee G. Brewster, President

Bookstore

565 10th Ave., 2nd Floor
New York, N.Y. 10036

Boutique

400 W. 14th St., 3rd fl
New York, N.Y. 10014

Both Stores Open Monday through Saturday!

Hours: 12 noon - 6 pm
(212) 947-7773

Hours: 11:30 - 6:30 pm
(212) 645-1888

MICHELE LACRETE, R.E.
California Licensed

DAY, EVENING &
WEEKEND HOURS

— ELECTROLYSIS —

MEDICALLY APPROVED METHOD OF PERMANENT HAIR REMOVAL

Individual, Sterile, Disposable Probes

Experts in Face, Eyebrows, Bikini Lines, Legs and Beards

WAXING AND PEDICURES AVAILABLE

PROFESSIONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL • FOR WOMEN AND MEN

10% Off First Treatment • Senior Citizen Discount

FOR FREE CONSULTATION
CALL: 201-886-8198

10 BEVERLY PLACE
(off River Road)
EDGEWATER, NJ 07020

exception of the hefty guy.) They were supposed to be people. The humor arose from their situations.

Critics are often said to be people who can't do it themselves so they take a stab at fame by cutting up other folk's efforts. Maybe Hunter can't walk in pumps as well as Adrian Pasdar and he's jealous. If you saw *Just Like A Woman* drop me a line and give me your opinion. I'll tabulate the results and then I'll have something to fill space in a future column.

ART GETS PAID

So often in this hustle-bustle world we hear about something in the media and then we never hear any follow up. Somebody gets caught stealing hundreds of pairs of panties or there's a story about transvestites picketing a newspaper office and, then, since the outcome of the situation isn't as weird as the original story, the papers never print it and you never know what happened.

Well, *News & Views* doesn't like it one little bit. For example, whatever happened to that artist who painted a picture of the late mayor of Chicago and portrayed him dressed in a G-string and bra? It caused a small stink at the time. Three aldermen of that toddlin' town got all upset and removed the offending painting from an art show. Now, thanks to the clipping skill of loyal reader Joni in Ohio we can tell you the city of Chicago had to cough up \$95,000 to the artist and they had to agree to give police detailed instructions on when materials protected by the First Amendment can

be confiscated. I have to go now. I'm working on a painting of Newt Gingrich in a teddie. I figure that ought to be worth at least a \$100K.

THE ELTON JOHN OF MOSCOW?

Billie Jaye West has sent a bit from the *Arab Times* about a Russian lad who is trying to cash in on the outrageous type of image that wild Brit **Elton John** has been working for most of his career. The Russian's name is Sergei Penkin and he wears a lace skirt, enormous white wig and a tinsel hat with peacock plumes onstage. This is only one of the outfits that has earned him the nickname Mister Extravaganza in France and Britain. After he toured in Canada with **The Rolling Stones** people started calling him Prince Silver.

"Many think my image is strange and shocking—too bad to be true" said

Penkin, "But I just want to look the way I feel. I want to live in a world of my own. It isn't like any other's."

Sergei started singing in the church choir and worked as a street cleaner and postman before his four octave voice finally got him into music school. With four octaves and a lace skirt I can't help but feel he's destined for stardom all over the world.

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

I've probably used that headline before but it just goes so well with this lifestyle. Anyhow, here are two stories that utilize crossdressing for noble purposes. The first comes from Joni in Ohio. It appeared in the *Dayton Daily News*. If you've seen **Kiss Of The Spider Woman** then you have some idea of the plot.

Hiram Gonzalez was imprisoned in Cuba's La Cabana prison back in the early 1960's. He had been plotting against Castro and like many members of the army who had grown disenchanted with the bearded-one, he paid for his disloyalty by being sentenced to thirty years in prison. After his friend and cell mate was executed he knew he had to escape. He did it in drag.

On visiting day the prisoners crowded around the 10 foot high chain link fence that separated them from the visiting women. Gonzalez had already gotten a blond wig, brassiere and sandals smuggled in and another prisoner had made a skirt from a blanket. At the proper moment he slipped into the crowd in the prison



Faithful Clipper, Bille Jaye West

continued on page 14

DONNA'S HAIR STUDIO 1 AND BOUTIQUE

Hrs. Tu. 9-5 • W.-Th. 9-8 • Sa. 8-4

TANNING • BODY WRAPS • NAILS

181 SCOTCH RD • TRENTON • NJ 609-883-0002

SELMA BLAKER 609-428-8448

Wig Service Shop

Specializing in the Sales and Service of all Human & Synthetic Pieces

Barclay Towers
1200 East Marlton Pike, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034
Hours 11AM to 4PM, Mon. to Sat.

Renaissance Elects First Female National Leader

This seems the month to break old habits. The board of directors of Renaissance held its national elections at the November meeting and Linda Chenowith, a genetic female and former Chapter Leader of Renaissance LSV, was elected unanimously to the position of Managing Director of Renaissance National.

Other women have been group leaders at the local level, notably Linda Peacock of Tri-Ess, and have served on national boards. But Ms. Chenowith is the first woman to lead a national transgender organization. Linda fills the chair vacated by Beth Marshall who led the group for 1994. The board thanks Beth for her service and welcomes Linda.

Breakthrough Outreach...

through for the transgender community. For the first time the five major transgender organizations in the country were working together in a major outreach effort. Coming together under the IFGE banner were that organization's Operations Director, Yvonne Cook-Riley, our team captain, Tri-Ess' chair of their national board, Jane Ellen Fairfax and her spouse, the publisher of the *Femme Mirror*, Frances Fairfax, Evelyn Kirkland of Renaissance and SPICE, the Reverend Carla Pridgen representing AEGIS and myself carrying the banner for the Outreach Institute as well as Renaissance. IFGE paid the most money toward the effort with contributions of five hundred dollars from each of the other organizations helping to pay the expenses of our appearance.

In the hectic first day session we handed out over twelve hundred copies of the *Tapestry Journal* along with a trifold brochure which gave information on the participating groups. We stood in front of the IFGE display which has been utilized at that organization's conventions in the past. Prominently displayed photos of various transgendered people, including our own Michelle Lynn, caught the eye of passers by and a friendly smile and inquiry as to whether they had gotten a complimentary copy of *Tapestry* made sure that we held their attention. Only a small minority of the social workers chose to ignore our offer. Most reactions ranged from mild interest to enthusiasm that we were there. Some told us they had worked with transgendered clients in the past and had not had the resources to deal with those people. Others said they had a present client who would benefit from what they had just learned.

The second day was not as frantic. With most of the *Tapestry* copies given out our task became more focused on

one-on-one question answering. Team members gave each inquiry as much time as was needed. Other exhibitors came by to see our booth and were just as interested in getting our information as the social workers. Members of the armed forces had displays but, they didn't ask and we didn't tell.

That evening the local support group, The Tennessee Vals held a reception and dinner in our honor at a local restaurant. If you are ever in Nashville contact their boss lady Marisa Richmond and they will throw down the welcome mat for you, too. They are a great bunch of folks and they know how to show a girl a good time.

The third day, after reluctantly prying ourselves out of bed, we engaged in more of the same type of outreach as day two. While all of the team members had special moments with convention attendees, my moment came with a woman who worked for the Emergency Medical Services company that was there in case of any medical problems. She had walked by the booth on the first day and I had smiled and asked if she would like a copy of *Tapestry*. On the third day she came by and said she had read the magazine from cover to cover and now felt she had learned a lot about the transgendered community. She said it made her feel good that I had taken the time to say hello and offer her our literature since most of the exhibitors did not pay any attention to her. We shared a good bye hug and she left the booth better prepared to deal with any transgendered person who has a medical emergency.

Next year's NASW convention will happen in Philadelphia at the new Marriott Hotel near the convention center. After the great success of this year's outreach each organization's team member has recommended that their group participate again. For information on how you may participate, contact me through the national office.

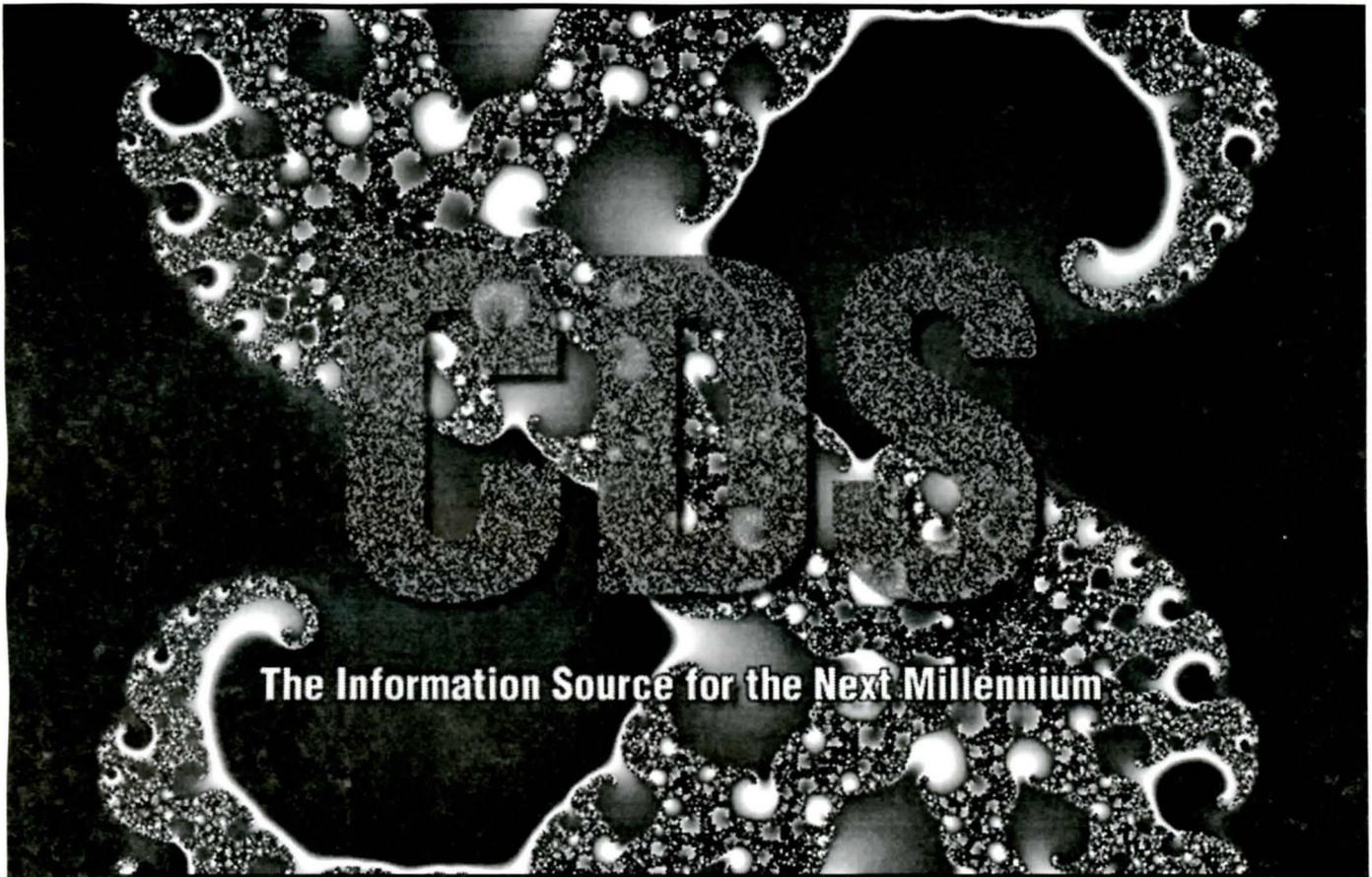


Unemployed? Underemployed?

Ben Franklin said, "The Lord helps those that help themselves." Renaissance is going to try and help the transgendered who are unemployed or under-employed.

Announcing: Renaissance Job Match, a national employment resource center. If you are looking for work send a resume or brief description of what type of employment you want. Make sure you include a way for us to contact you. If you are in a position to offer employment or let someone know of a job opening send a description of the position. Maybe we can make a match. To be included in the Job Match files send your information to:

Renaissance Job Match,
c/o Renaissance, 987 Old Eagle School Rd, Suite 719
Wayne, PA 19087



Creative Design Services celebrates its 10th Anniversary in 1995, and we'll be here celebrating our 20th in 2005. CDS is committed to bringing you the highest quality information in the highest quality formats like the books *Art & Illusion: A Guide to Crossdressing*, Vols. 1 & 2 (\$US15 ea.) and the video *The Straight Dope On Hormones* (\$US30), or the 1995 *Who's Who & Resource Guide to the Transgender Community* (available now) with hundreds of listings of biographies, therapists, support groups and vendors—and still only \$US10. No one has a larger selection of self-help videos or publications. As we move through the last half of this decade, CDS will exploit existing and new media to meet your evolving information needs.

CDS is THE INFORMATION SOURCE FOR THE NEXT MILLENNIUM.

Write, call, or surf the net and ask for more information on our videos, books and our flagship publication, *LadyLike Magazine*.

CDS • PO Box 61263 • King of Prussia, Pa. • 19406

610.640.9449 • cdspub@omni.voicenet.com

WWW@ <http://www.ifi.uio.no/~tina/>

VISA and MasterCard Accepted





December: Not just the rear end of another year but the onset of the Holiday season. And I already know what our Renaissance office manager is giving me for Christmas. A manila envelope filled with transvestite support group newsletters from which I will cull my January column material.

Gee, I hardly know how — or why — to say “Thanks”

CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS

The Christmas season is the time to give—and forgive. And in that spirit, I want to take this opportunity to send these holiday wishes out to some of the people who helped bring this column some life over the past year. I may have praised these people or I may have trashed them and some have repaid me in kind, whether good or bad, but this wouldn't be as much fun without the give and take, the volleys and retorts afterwards. So, may misteltoe hang in every doorway for the following gals:

Brenda Davidson, who originated this column early last year, and whose retirement in favor of parenthood gave me the chance to cover this beat.

Angela Gardner, our editrix-in-chief, who gave me the job, and except for a few maddening swipes of her blue pencil has let me do my thing here and even supported me in a few of the controversies I've stirred up.

Joann Roberts, who encouraged me with a nice review when I was still wet behind the ears as a columnist and unsure if I could keep going.

Jane Ellen Fairfax, who has written to me on several occasions from her home base in Texas to encourage me with insightful, analytical agreement

with most of my opinions.

Allison Marsh, of the Emerald City group in Seattle, who fired off a letter to me in fierce defense of her friend Cassie Owens after I lambasted one of Cassie's columns. I didn't agree with everything Allison had to say but I had to admire her tenacity on her friend's behalf.

And to Cassie Owens, Jane Kamper Bentley, Kiki Carmichael, Joan Goodnight, Diane L. from Erie, Jennifer Rose Lenfestey, Vernon's Specialties, and Linda Phillips, all of whom provided me with material to tear into throughout the year. This column would cease to be if there weren't people out there writing articles with a point of view, whether I agree or disagree, or the occasional silly item to pick on. Girls, it was just business — nothing personal.

So Happy Holidays to you all.

COMING TOGETHER – BUT SEPARATELY

In a previous column, I mentioned the controversy surrounding the IFGE's plans for its 1997 annual Coming Together convention. IFGE decided to hold the event in Southern California but did not work with any of the five local TG organizations and chose a date that seriously conflicts with the local groups' regional event called California Dreamin'.

In my previous piece, I said that part of the blame for the fiasco could be spread to the Powder Puffs Of California because they had adopted a sarcastic, negative stance toward IFGE, and that's still partly true. But what I didn't consider was that PPOC is only one of the five local So. Cal.

groups affected by the IFGE's heavy-handed tactics. Even if the IFGE held a grudge against PPOC, there's no reason why the other groups should have been ignored in the planning process for the Coming Together convention. So I'm amending my position to say that solely IFGE was dead wrong in trying to buffalo its convention onto the California Dreamin' turf.

To make matters worse, the IFGE sent one of the local leaders a letter trying to rationalize their position and in that letter said the following: “[Coming Together] is a serious-minded event for serious-minded people... and California Dreamin' is primarily a fun event with the emphasis on recreational crossdressers.” The implication being that the IFGE's event was somehow better because it was for the self-proclaimed 'serious' crossdressers.

Can you feel a little righteous indignation beginning to boil up in that frivolous, recreational crossdressing stomach of yours? Yeah, me too. The leaders of California Dreamin' took real exception to that remark because their event also has serious-minded programs and to brush their event off because the attendees might actually enjoy themselves is denigrating to the work of the organizers and attendees.

I've said this a dozen times in this column: I don't know what the IFGE is all about and have no connection with it or axe to grind against it, but they always seem to get embroiled in controversies of their own making and usually manage to put their feet in their mouths when they try to talk their way out of it. They may be serious-minded... but they also seem a little empty-headed.

THE THIRD GENDER

Cross-Talk magazine, published in California, carried an item about a documentary film called 'Queens' that is still in the making. The filmmakers are focusing on non-operative transsexuals in San Francisco's Tenderloin district. Steve Greenberg, one of the filmmakers, says that non-operative transsexuals are an increasing popula-

tion within the transgender community. Just so we're all on the same page here, a non-operative transsexual is one who lives full-time as a woman, probably is taking female hormones, and may have undergone breast implant and/or other cosmetic surgeries to effect their transformation, but who have not—and may not wish to—have complete sex reassignment surgery. (Also called transgenderists-Ed.) By keeping their male genitalia in combination with their otherwise feminine bodies, "...these transgendered women are in essence forging a third gender," Greenberg says.

One of the film's subjects is quoted as saying, "I want to be just passable enough to look female and just clockable enough so they say 'Hey, she's not really a woman'... they [the public] don't even realize they've already crossed over the line [by saying 'she' instead of 'he'.]"

Adopting that philosophy and taking it to the streets requires real courage. Daring people to notice that the statuesque woman who just walked by was in fact a genetic male is a far cry from the type of 'passing' most crossdressers strive for. But which is the more healthy and natural way to express ourselves in public: surreptitiously slinking through places hoping not to be noticed (the classic 'passing' game), or being yourself, ready to face the slings and arrows—and perhaps the compliments—of the people you meet, as these non-ops prefer?

And now, I'll combine two themes I've covered many times before in this column: it isn't easy to be different in

this society and it's very difficult for most crossdressers to 'pass' effectively. If you had one transgender-oriented Christmas wish, would you rather have the ability to 'pass' convincingly all the time, or would you rather that society would be accepting of you as you are, whether or not you are 'passable'?

OF ILLNESSES AND UNDERWEAR

The *Fiesta!* newsletter comes to us from the New Mexico Chapter of Tri-Ess in Albuquerque. Their September issue carried a reprint of an article that appeared in another newsletter called *AlphaBits* by a Janyne P., called "I Thought I Was Going to Die."

Janyne recounts a morning in which she woke up anticipating a shopping expedition en femme but began to have back pains. Taking Tylenol and a little extra rest didn't keep the back pains from getting worse. The shopping expedition was cancelled and Janyne wound up going to bed early because lying on her back was the only way to get relief.

When she awoke on Monday morning, she was in agony, unable to stand or move without making it worse. Luckily, she had her cordless phone handy and decided that she would have to call the paramedics to help her get medical attention. Aside from the physical pain Janyne was suffering with her bad back, she was lying in a Betty Boop nightshirt, women's panties, with her nails polished. That's the reference for the title "I Thought I Was Going to Die," not just the physical ailment but also

the predicament of being 'caught' in ladies undies and polished nails.

By the time Janyne called the emergency squad, she frankly didn't care too much about being half dressed in drag. And the rest of her story recounts how the paramedics and firemen, the hospital nurses, attendants and medical staff, acted in a thoroughly professional manner with her, despite her embarrassing choice of nightclothes and nail polish.

I know a lot of crossdressers prefer to wear women's underthings beneath their everyday male attire. Some keep their toenails polished under their Gold Toe socks and wingtips. And I know at least one person who found herself in a medical emergency where the underclothes had to be explained away. It always makes me think of the old parental precaution about making sure your underwear is clean in case you get in an accident. Is it worth the risk to wear your dainties if you, one day, find yourself in a hospital in nylon panties and scarlet toenail polish?

WHO NEEDS PRUFEREEDERS?

Every once in a while, something serendipitous will happen in life. Unfortunately for me, this time around it wasn't hitting the lottery. No, serendipity came this time in the form of a column idea.

I came across an item in *Powder & Pearls*, the newsletter of The Memphis TG Alliance, authored by Melanie Anne Phillips, and that was down-

continued on page 17

CREATIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSOCIATES

BOARD CERTIFIED SEXOLOGIST

Individual, Family, Marital, Divorce & Sexual Counseling

Judith D. Dean
Ed. D., M. Div., M.S.

Suite 110
55 Princeton-Hightsown Rd.
Princeton Junction, NJ 08550

(609) 275•6556



Theseus Counseling Services



ARI KANE, M.ED.

GENDER SPECIALIST

DIPLOMATE, AM. BD. SEXOLOGY

FOR NORTHERN
NEW ENGLAND
126 WESTERN AVE.
SUITE 222
AUGUSTA, ME 04330
207-623-2327

FOR GREATER
BOSTON AREA
233 HARVARD ST.
SUITE 302
BROOKLINE, MA 02146
617-277-4360

MC/VISA ACCEPTED

More TG Characters In Comics



by Robyn Dormer

Let's continue our examination of current comic books featuring transgender characters.

From Viz Comics comes *Ranma 1/2*. This manga (Japanese comic) comes to us monthly and features the martial arts hijinks of Ranma, a teenage boy. Extremely popular in Japan, it has spawned an animated television series and feature films. Videos of these have recently been released in the States and should be available for rental at

better video and comic stores.

Ranma's story begins as he and his father, Genma Saotoma, embark on a voyage of training. The trek takes them into China to the "training ground of accursed springs." Each of the more than 100 springs has its own tragic legend and whoever falls into one of these springs takes the form of the creature or person who died in it. Ranma's father takes the plunge first, falling into the "spring of drowned panda" and emerges from the drink transformed into a giant panda. This unnerves Ranma so much that he falls into the "spring of drowned girl" and emerges with the shapely body of a beautiful young girl. From that point on, whenever Ranma is doused with cold water he becomes a she until doused with hot water when "she" reverts back to "he."

White Like She, a four-issue series from Dark Horse Comics, appeared over the summer of '94. Written and illustrated in black and white by Bob Finger, *White...* is the story of Luther and Louella. Luther is a politically active black janitor, Louella a white teenaged punk lesbian. Through the miracle of science (and a little unauthorized brain surgery) Luther's brain winds up in Louella's body. Luther then learns of gender inequality and experiences his first menstrual period in Louella's body. A version of this series appeared in *Heavy Metal* magazine in 1988.

Mantra from Malibu's Ultraverse

line of super-hero comics concerns the eternal warrior Lukasz, who is reincarnated throughout history to battle the evil Boneyard and his minions. After being slain by Boneyard's henchman Warstrike, Lukasz comes back in the body of the beautiful Eden Blake, a divorced mother of two. As Mantra, Lukasz dons a skimpy outfit (courtesy of a magical charm) and continues the fight against evil, all the while learning about life as the opposite sex.

Some notes and corrections regarding my last column: I have since learned that DC Comic's *Doom Patrol* author Rachel Pollock is indeed a member of the transgender community. Unfortunately, her title has been canceled. The last issue of *Doom Patrol* will appear in December. What do you say we make it the best selling issue ever? I also wrote about a title coming out in November called *Deathwish*, a four-issue miniseries featuring a pre-op, m-to-f transsexual police officer investigating the slayings of transvestite call girls. I mistakenly called this a DC/Vertigo title, when in fact it is a DC/Milestone title. Milestone is a minority owned and operated publishing branch of DC Comics, and as such may not be carried by your favorite comics establishment. Ask for it by title, they will be glad to order you a copy.



**Next issue:
A look at
Howard
Chaykin,
emphasis on
the notorious
Black Kiss.**

8 COMICS & COLLECTIBLES

Robyn Dormer 609-883-8899
Open 11:00 AM - 7:00 PM, Sat. & Sun.
206 Scotch Rd, Ewing, NJ 08628

TG Political Action Underway

Sarah DePalma, It's Time Texas!

This past August a new political organization called *It's Time America!* was created. Originally formed to lobby certain select committees of Congress for transgender inclusive language in the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, we are now ready to begin soliciting your advice and your help.

As you would expect from any organization in existence for only a few months, much of the work has been focused in areas like the creation of by laws and resolving our tax status. *It's Time, America!* has been incorporated and within a few months the national organization should be up to full speed.

I chair *It's Time, Texas!* and am not a national director. The national directors of ITA are Karen Kerin, Jane Fee, and Jessica Xavier. All of these people have a long list of political and social activism victories to their credit. However, they are concerned that the organization not be viewed as transgender "elitists." Quite the opposite is true. We are interested in compiling a list of transgender organizations around the country who would be willing to become part of our information network. We are actively soliciting advice and suggestions about what issues you feel are most important for us as a political entity to pursue. We are willing to work with any group, from Transsexual Menace to Tri-Ess Sorority, we welcome everyone and want to hear from you.

Since the state organizations do not have to comply with the same set of federal regulations as the national level,

action at state level has been somewhat more rapid. In Texas for example, we have a legislative session which begins in January. I have 11 appointments with state legislators of both parties scheduled in an attempt to get a combination name/gender change law passed. In Maryland, where they also have an early legislative session, Jessica Xavier is working on several issues.

The reason this article is written by me and not one of the national directors is the following: *It's Time, Texas!*, in cooperation with the national group is launching a discrimination documentation program. The guidelines for this project are as follows:

1—You must have verifiable proof that you either lost your job specifically because you transitioned on the job, or you were denied a position solely on the basis you are a transgendered person.

2—You must provide a written statement giving all the details, names, places, circumstances, etc..

3—You must be willing to stand by your story.

Why must these rules exist? We intend to compile them for future use in state and local hearings as proof discrimination actually occurs. In nearly every case, these hearings will only accept that an event has happened if the person supplied all the necessary data. Finally they may want to contact you to verify that the information we provided is correct. So let's be clear about this; if your information isn't verifiable, written, signed, dated, and a way to contact you provided, your claim isn't usable.

Let me tell you, I do the first radio program in the country by a transgendered person for the transgendered community and thus have a very high profile in Houston. As a result, I get 10 to 20 calls a month asking for help dealing with problems with the police, etc. Not even the police will pursue an unwritten complaint. Consequently, very few cases are resolved due to the unwillingness of the victim to provide a written statement and pursue their right to a hearing.

Another reason this article was written by me instead of a national director is that I am Internet connected and, in part, because I volunteered to provide the PO Box and computer for database building. If your organization would like to become part of our information distribution network, if you wish to offer advice or suggestions, or if you want to file your complaint with the discrimination documentation program, please send your mail to ITT!, PO Box 74-1193, Houston, TX. 77074.

I can also be contacted by e-mail at fingers@phoenix.phoenix.net.

Financial donations to *It's Time, Texas!* to help defray the mailing cost etc. involved with the discrimination documentation project will be especially appreciated.

I leave you with the motto of the Texas group which is worth considering, "The day you choose to stand up for yourself is the day your victimization ends."



A View From The Goddess

By: Stephanie Elizabeth

Listen sisters...THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH US! This statement may seem too simple to many of us but this article is intended for those sisters who are still making the decision to come out. (However, I believe those of us who are more experienced at going public cannot hear this message enough.) Many of us

experience a sense of guilt, sometime even shame connected with cross dressing. In fact it is the shame connected with our behavior that gives some of us the most trouble.

Let's clear up the two terms: guilt and shame. The term 'guilt' conveys to us the idea; "I have done something wrong." The term 'shame' conveys the idea; "I am something

wrong." These concepts usually come from messages given to us in early childhood, primarily from parents, teachers, clergy etc. The messages they give us are based on their view of proper behavior. All of these messages belong to someone else, and to another time. Most messages are intended to be a guide for us as we go through life and are necessary. Most are intended to protect us as children. However,

continued on page 21

Hot Buzz

JoAnn Roberts • Queen of Prussia



"The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say 'Thank you.' In between, the leader is a servant."

Max DePree, in *Working Communicator*

•••••

The Hottest Buzz in December is the war of words between Davina Anne Gabriel, editor/publisher of *TransSisters: the Journal of Transsexual Feminism*, Riki Anne Wilchins of *Transsexual Menace* and Dallas Denny of AEGIS. Wilchins and Menace cofounder Lynn Walker want to do a publication called *In Your Face* to chronicle "subversive trans actions around the country, with instructions on how to roll your own." An ad for *IYF* was rejected by Gabriel on what I consider specious grounds. Denny and AEGIS, supporting the First Amendment and free speech, accepted the ad. Now Gabriel is PO'd at both Denny and Wilchins. Bear in mind *IYF* has not yet been published and all of this is over ad copy. Wait 'til the first issue.

•••••

A friend of mine faxed me a file downloaded from a BBS concerning sources of natural plant estrogens, specifically Black Cohosh. Here's what the file says: "...synthetic estrogen has all kinds of harmful side effects that can only be avoided if one is under a doctor's care and being carefully monitored." This is absolutely true and good advice. However, the piece goes on to say: "... Black

Cohosh is a NATURAL (sic) source of estrogen and *does not do violence to your physical being in the way synthetic estrogens would do.*"(emphasis mine) — THIS IS FALSE. First, if there were enough estrogenic compounds in Black Cohosh to actually cause a noticeable effect, it would be classified as a drug not an herb. Second, it does not matter if a hormone is "natural" (such as Premarin) or synthetic. If it can attach itself to estrogen receptors in the body, either will have the same desired effects and the same serious side effects. In fact, overdosing on herbs can cause additional side-effects you wouldn't get from estrogen alone. Why play chemical Russian roulette with your body. If you're going to take hormones, do it right and do it under a doctor's supervision.

•••••

With all the press heaped on the film *Ed Wood*, how many of you have actually seen Wood's *Glen or Glenda*? Or, have you ever heard of a film titled *A Man Called Eva*? Or, how about *I Wanna Be A Beauty Queen* with Divine? Well, all these titles and many more can be yours. All you have to do is call the MC Film Festival at 813-972-7995 (Florida) and request a catalog. They've got scads of movies and lots with transgender themes. Want your own copy of *The Crying Game*? They've got it. Tell Mark or Carrie that JoAnn Roberts sent you.

•••••

Speaking of the *Crying Game*, Jaye Davidson (Dil) is back in the news and the movies with *Stargate*. This Sci-fi thriller has been described as part *Star Wars*, part *Close Encounters* and part *Indiana Jones*. Davidson plays Ra, the film's antagonist. Interestingly, Davidson doesn't get to speak in his own voice and doesn't speak any English in the film at all. Sources involved with the filming of *Stargate* said Davidson was extremely difficult on the set and threw hissy fits frequently. Such a Queen! But the reviews and box office receipts have been excellent. Look for at least one and pos-

sibly two sequels. The scripts were ready before the first movie hit the streets.

•••••

It looks as though we've finally crossed some kind of barrier. I've mentioned that last year *Playboy* featured tidbits about RuPaul in several issues. Next month *Playboy* takes on the issue of Brandon Teena's murder. Yeah, I know they were interested because Teena was living as a male, but every little bit helps.

•••••

The board of directors of AEGIS approved a motion to change AEGIS from a service organization to a membership-based organization. Member privileges will be finalized at a December 4 board meeting and a formal announcement will be made in the transgender press. Subscribers to *Chrysalis*, AEGIS' premiere publication, will be grandmothers into membership.

•••••

Hey, how about some "serious" news! Okay. Warners has entered the cleavage wars with their BodySational bra, which they claim will create cleavage without the use of pads. It's the angle of the cups, a unique underwire, and the position of the straps that gives the bust boost.

•••••

Have you ever wanted to be a green-eyed, red-haired siren? I have. Getting the red hair was no problem, it was the green eyes. Tinted or colored contacts with my myopic prescription were too expensive. So, now there's "Fresh Look" daily disposable contact lenses from Wesley-Jessen. The contacts come in four colors: violet, blue, green and hazel. A set for one month is \$20, a six month supply of all four colors is \$80. Check with your local optometrist or ophthalmologist.

•••••

I've been mentioning various vendors in this column and I want to make note of a long-time supporter of the community, Lydia's TV Fashions in Sherman Oaks, Calif. Lydia has been around quite sometime and has a great selection of

HOT•BUZZ

breastforms, false nails, wigs, cosmetics, and more. Give her a call at 818-995-7195, or write her at 13837 Ventura Blvd., Suite 2, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423.



Six Fashion Truths: (1) Contrast creates style. Mix old with new, black with white, expensive with cheap. (2) Monochromatic is slimming. A single color makes you look pounds lighter. (3) The fastest way to get ready is put on a dress. Slip it on and go! (4) Black looks expensive. Why ask why? It just does. (5) A good jacket is worth any price. It's a real investment. (6) Personal style is the freedom to choose. If you like it, wear it.



Kevin Aucoin, makeup artist and makeup consultant for *Allure*, has a new book out called *The Art of Makeup* (HarperCollins). Here are his list of makeup mistakes: Not Blending—makeup is all about blending. Without it you have a face full of blobs of color. Misusing Bright Colors—Bright colors are difficult to blend and can make you look washed out. Wrong Foundation—mismatched foundation makes you look like you're wearing a mask. Clumpy Mascara—Wipe the mascara wand before using. Most women don't. Color on Bare Skin—Shadows and blush need something to which they can adhere, like foundation or powder.



WIRED magazine went into the black on its third issue. Most magazines don't get out of the red for three years! If you have a SLIP or PPP connection (don't worry, if you don't know what those mean, you don't got one) and have a graphical Web browser try this URL address, <http://www.wired.com>.



The World Wide Web, or WWW as it is called, is the paradigm for the Information Superhighway. The Web permits users to connect worldwide and see integrated text, graphics, as well as play sounds and video clips. To get started on the Web you need a SLIP or PPP connection to the Internet via a service provider, your computer must have TCP/IP,

a fast (14.4 or better) modem, and a Web browser like Mosaic. Mosaic works on Macs, PCs, and UNIX machines.



I lifted this note from the net about a new counseling service: Transgender Counseling and Research Center, 4545 Park Boulevard, Suite 207, San Diego, CA 92166. Jan Eder, Psy.D., Psychologist, Educator and Research Director, 619-542-0088 ext 1. Anyone with additional info, drop me a line.



This was also picked off the net: "I am in the preparation committee together with several others. Unfortunately Eurofantasia will not be held [in 1995]. Jenny [Sand], the main organizer from Norway will not be able to do the main part of the work to organize this event. So we have decided to pause for a year. But ideas for the program are welcome. Feel free to send your ideas. The address is: Eurofantasia, Box 442, N-4301 Sandnes, Norway. —Claudia."



And this: There was an excellent article about intersexuality in *The Sciences*, a journal published by the New York Academy of Sciences, March/April, 1993. The article is "The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female Are Not Enough". The author, Anne Fausto-Sterling states that John Money estimates that as many as four percent of people may be born intersexed to some degree, and most of these are "corrected" surgically and/or by hormone therapy. Not all of these people would have abnormal chromosomes. The Fausto-Sterling article is definitely worth reading. She writes: "But if the state and legal system have an interest in maintaining a two-party sexual system, they are in defiance of nature. For biologically speaking, there are many gradations running from female to male; and depending on how one calls the shots, one can argue that along that spectrum lie at least 5 sexes—and perhaps even more. I would argue further that sex is a vast, infinitely malleable continuum that defies the constraints of even 5 categories."



What's the HOT BUZZ for eye makeup? here's the drill: Heighten the browline into a noticeable arch. Darken the crease

on the upper lid. Put pale highlighter up near the arch. Line top and bottom lids. Use lots of mascara. Wing eyeshadow out and up from outer corner. Of course, this scheme is not for running to the 7-Eleven for a carton of milk.



The word is in, October was a good month for the transgender community. Outreach Institute's Fantasia Fair was a howling success by any measure of performance. And, see Ms. Gardner's article this issue on the National Association of Social Workers conference where Renaissance, AEGIS, Tri-Ess, Outreach Institute and IFGE worked cooperatively for the first time. Next year's NASW conference is in Philadelphia. It would be a great idea to have something about transgendered people on the program as well as in the exhibit hall. I've spoken with a local social worker about getting into the 1995 program and she thinks it's feasible. We'll let you know what develops.



With the five groups mentioned above finally working together on a single project, there is hope for this community. Over the last few months, there has been quiet discussion among some of the board chairs about more cooperative efforts like the NASW conference. The solution that kept popping up was an alliance of the national organizations, with each group providing skills within its area of expertise to help define and develop national policies and needed programs on transgender issues. I commend Renaissance for taking steps toward making the Transgender Alliance for Community a reality (see article this issue). The alliance will bring diverse interests together at one table with the goal of working on broad issues in unity. At the heart of the Alliance is a deep respect for the diversity of the people making up the community. Both the Outreach Institute and AEGIS are considering endorsement of the Alliance this month, and a Tri-Ess national officer has expressed positive support for the idea.



© 1994 by Creative Design Services. All rights reserved. Opinions expressed are those of the author. If you don't like them, go write your own column.

News Beat...

yard and hid himself in the huddle of bodies by the fence. Another associate had opened a hole in the fence with wire snips. After putting on the wig and clothes Gonzalez slipped through the fence and the waiting women put on his make up and jewelry. Talk about poor changing facilities! When the women left the prison Gonzalez was one of them, waving goodbye and blowing kisses. He only stayed free for 72 hours and had to come up with another ruse that didn't involve crossdressing to get out the second time. He doesn't say what he did for the seventy two hours of freedom but I hope he stopped in somewhere for a manicure and pedicure. Prison can be so hard on your nails.

The second story about a man doing what a man's gotta do comes from one of those British tabloids. (My pal Jayne gave it to me but she forgot to tell me what paper it came from.) The story is

called, "I'm Only Doing This For You, Son." Yeah, right. It seems out-of-work Tony Turner found out his girlfriend was pregnant. That was just the culmination of a patch of bad luck that saw them both lose their jobs and have to move into inferior housing.

Then Tony went to a stag party and saw a drag queen called Penny Change do her act. She pulled him up on stage and soon Tony was getting into the spirit of things by wiggling his hips and putting a bit. Penny was so impressed Tony says, "He said I was so good I should consider a career as a drag artist." Penny further offered to help Tony out if he decided to try a new career. Soon Tony had begun his transformation and the work started pouring in.

Now, hold it a minute. In the article Tony casually says, "I had a bright red catsuit made with false boobs sewn into it." I don't know if you've ever had anything like that made for you, but it ain't cheap. I spent \$200 on a chorus girl costume once and that was with a price break from the seamstress. Tony

did say Penny lent him wigs and jewelry but still, starting a drag career can't be done that cheaply.

Anyhow, the kid was born and Tony is working regularly making ninety pounds a week. Tony says, "I really enjoy what I'm doing... it's the best job I ever had." Of course right after that his main squeeze Pauline has to say, "... I can assure you he's 100 per cent masculine." They always have to put that kind of disclaimer in these articles don't they? Too bad Tony can't just enjoy himself and not have to care about what people think.

KEEPING YOUR PRESS AGENT BUSY?

Carol Beecroft must have hired a new one (press agent, that is) since an article titled "A Better Man For Being A Woman," all about her, went out on the Associated Press newswire. It was picked up in my neck of the woods by the *Philadelphia Gay News*.

Like the previous two stories in this column, this article tells the story of a man who did what he had to do. In Joe



Vernon's TV/TS Professionals

YOU ARE NOT ALONE!
Retail and Mail Order Specialists - Spanning the Globe

- Clothing - Regular & Full Figure to Sz: 52
- Leather & Latex Clothing & Accessories
- Cosmetics & Professional Make-up Lessons
- Shoes & Boots - Size 4 -14WW/Heels to 6"
- Men's Swimwear, Workout Gear, Resort Wear
- Basics to Exotic Lingerie for Women & Men
- Corsetry-Wigs-Jewelry-Hosiery-Breast Forms
- Videos, Books, Magazine, Marital Aids/Novelties

Specify Areas of Interest

We stock everything you need to create the ultimate in femininity. Your one-stop place to shop. By mail or in person.

Catering To All Lifestyles

Send \$20.00 (U.S. Funds) for latest Catalogs & Newsletters
Visa, Mastercard, Postal & Bank Money Orders accepted.
Private Mail Boxes are available for your convenience.

Mon: 10am-3pm Tues & Thurs: 10am-6pm
Wed & Fri: Noon - 8pm Sat: 10am-5pm
Special Assistance & Private Appointments - Anytime

386-RN Moody St., Waltham, MA
02154-5260 (617) 894-1744

For Visa & Master Card Orders only
call 1 - 800 - 227 - 0605

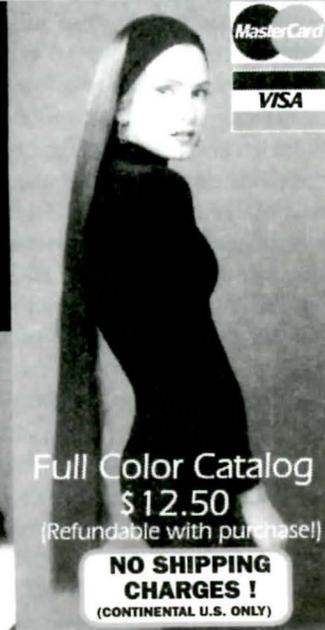
Transgraph Enterprises

Fine Quality

Wigs & Wig Care Products

Call for a
Free Brochure
(24 hours)
Leave a message
request either a
return call
(giving date and
time you want
your call returned)
or a
brochure
(609) 227-5845




Full Color Catalog
\$12.50
(Refundable with purchase!)

NO SHIPPING CHARGES!
(CONTINENTAL U.S. ONLY)

Beecroft's case (as the article points out, an assumed name for security purposes. Hey... so's mine!) that meant co-founding Tri-Ess in 1976 and running a crossdresser oriented publishing company, Chevalier Publications.

As Carol, she does college talks on crossdressing and appears on talk shows to try and explain us to the general public. Of course, Tri-Ess doesn't like the word "transvestite" and it doesn't appear in this piece except in the following quote from Sallie Hunt, a therapist who counsels crossdressers and their wives. "Unlike men who wear women's clothes for sexual pleasure, commonly called transvestites, crossdressers can't help dressing like women. Those who try to stop usually can't."

I think it's time for a little honesty. (Uh oh, she's climbing up on that soap box. Hope she doesn't get a heel caught and break a leg.) There **is** an element of erotic satisfaction in crossdressing. No one can tell me they have the urge to dress up and don't get a thrill out of it. Carol Beecroft herself says, "I like to feel pretty. I like pretty jewelry, pretty shoes, pretty hair. Nothing makes me feel better than when someone says, "My, Carol, you're pretty. That makes me glow. It gives me a lift." That glow and lift are an erotic thrill. Being turned on by crossdressing doesn't mean you have to be a slobbering, horny lust-beast. Erotic response varies individually and what might make one person into a hot-to-trot lust beast might just give someone else a little "glow."

When I speak at college classes sometimes the students ask about the erotic element in crossdressing. I truthfully tell them that at that moment I'm not turned on. I also tell them that when I feel like I **can** be turned on by crossdressing or thinking about it. For me, the sexual thrill of dressing has receded, for the most part to a glow or lift, since I can and do dress anytime I like.

We're all transvestites. Crossdresser is just the English translation. How we deal with our transvestism is what causes the distinctions between the

fetishistic transvestite, the crossdresser and the transgenderist. Find out where you are by asking yourself questions about what you need to be comfortable and then make a place for crossdressing in your life. You'll be happier, and, like some of the crossdressers I know, you may be able to take a sabbatical from dressing to do other things, like raise your kids.

The article closed by saying Carol is reconciling with her wife of thirty five years after a separation. Good luck Carol and thanks for all your work for the transgender community

LOOK THAT UP IN YOUR FUNK & WAGNALS

Actually you should check your Random House. They've put out a *Historical Dictionary of American Slang*. So far they only have "A" through "G" covered but, right there in the "D" section is the important word for girls like us: DRAG. The dictionary was reviewed in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* by Howard Shapiro and he says that *drag* is his favorite word, too.

Standard dictionaries credit *drag* as emanating from Middle English but before the year 900 it was only used in reference to carrying things. *The Random House Historical Dictionary of Slang* lists over fifty slang senses for the word. It has been used as a noun, a verb and an adjective. Some of the meanings are definitely not in use any more. When was the last time you heard it used to describe a dancing party or a young woman?

Of course, we've all heard it used in expressions like *the main drag*. That usage started in 1851. Using it to describe men in women's clothing started in 1875, although some say it dates back to Shakespeare's days. According to that legend it was used as a shorthand in casting shows where boys played the female roles. It was supposed to mean DRessedAs Girl. It was used to mean something was tiresome starting in 1863 and became a deep inhalation of smoke in 1904.

Howard praises *drag* as a workhorse of a word that brings a little electricity to our language. It certainly has brought a little spark to my life. Ah

well, this column is starting to you-know-what. Back to the clippings.

TURNABOUT

We all know crossdressers who think they have to take estrogen to be more feminine. In a clipping from the *Kuwait Times* sent in by Billie Jaye West comes the story of a group of San Francisco lesbian and bi-women who are taking testosterone to be more masculine. Some say they are interested in creating an entirely new sex.

By injecting between 100 ml to 200 ml of synthetic testosterone every two weeks, the women are changing the feminine bodies that male crossdressers covet, into more manly shapes. It's a little unfair. Male CDs have to work very hard if they want to mimic a feminine voice, even if they are taking female hormones, but all the woman who wants to be masculine has to do is take the hormones. They make her voice drop an octave and all she has to do is put up with that horrible puberty cracking voice for a little while.

The women also get clitoral enlargement, more developed biceps, thicker waists, facial hair and an increased sex drive. One of the women said, "I'm a feminist, but I can really understand and empathize with teenage boys and crazy things they do, like drive fast and rape girls." If any boy tries to rape one of these "girls" he's in for big trouble.

Dr. Barry Zevin runs a free clinic in San Francisco that treats transsexuals. He estimates that for every 100 patients who come in for hormone treatment there are ten who are not intending to have any surgery but are taking testosterone to achieve varying degrees of masculinity. Dr. Zevin supplies these women with hormones since he knows they will get them on the black market if he doesn't. Black market hormones are most often taken in pill form which can cause liver damage. Dr. Zevin is cheaper than the black market quacks and he monitors the women's health while he supplies them with safer alternatives.

The women report that among the mental benefits of taking testosterone

continued on next page

News Beat...

is a "high." One of them says, "Colors are brighter, things are more three-dimensional. I feel more in the world than I used to." Did you feel like that as a testosterone-soaked teen?

One of the ironies of the article is a photo of one of the women shaving. She went through all that hormone therapy to grow a beard and then she shaves it? Isn't that like growing your own breasts and then never wearing anything low cut?

ENVIRONMENTAL FEMINIZING

Don't bother taking female hormones girls. It seems that some scientists are worried about chemicals loose in our environment that mimic the activity of feminizing hormones or block the absorption of testosterone. Diane Franklin has brought to our attention an article from the July 1994 issue of *Science News*. The article, titled "That Feminine Touch" warns that pesticides and other pollutants that mimic female hormones (molecular female impersonators?) are turning our environment into a "sea of estrogens" that we all bathe in every day. Heavens to Betsy, it's here, it's there, there's estrogen in the air!

Unfortunately, all the effects of this estrogen soup are not nice. It may be causing an increase in testicular cancer, a larger incidence of undescended testes in newborn males, congenital abnormalities of the urinary tract, low sperm count, and abnormal sperm production. Low sperm production could lead to a dangerously low birth rate and that could lead to a condition the dinosaurs became very familiar with: extinction. While some of us go to great lengths to learn how to shove our testes inside our bodies for the perfect tuck, we shouldn't wish it on newborns who don't even know if they're crossdressers yet.

What are the chemical culprits? PCBs, DDT and other pesticides like dieldrin, toxaphene and endosulfan, and the breakdown products of certain

detergents. (My clothes got white and I grew these great breasts!) The article calls for testing to find the chemicals that are loose in our environment and to start cleaning them up. Society's preoccupation with cancer has led to many regulations regarding cancer causing chemicals but it has led attention away from the problems caused by the estrogen mimicking and testosterone blocking chemicals. Sure it would be great to tell your family the breasts you grew were not your fault but, with all the adverse effects, maybe it's time we did something about cleaning up these molecular FIs.

DELAWARE RENAISSANCE CHAPTER LOOKS SOUTH

The Delaware Chapter has been having meetings in Baltimore, Md., at the Gay and Lesbian Community Center on Chase Street and it looks like the response from the transgendered legions of that city has been positive. So positive that early next year the Baltimore group will most likely petition for chapter status.

Thanks to the outreach efforts of the Delaware Chapter, ads placed in Baltimore papers, in addition to attracting potential members got the attention of the editorial staffs who assigned writers to cover the story. As a result, the newly organized Baltimore group has been getting more publicity and reaching more folks in need.

In other Delaware related news, the chapter has decided to start a **Needy Family Fund** for the holidays. Members will make donations and a week before Christmas the Fund will be given to a needy family. If you'd like to help the Delaware girls spread a little holiday cheer, send them a few dollars for the Needy Family fund. Mail you contributions to the Renaissance Delaware Chapter, PO Box 5656, Wilmington, DE 19808.

IDENTITY CRISIS ON THE INTERNET

Stella Bamvil, a well read woman, sent a clipping from *John Hopkins Magazine's* November issue about a Dean's Teaching Fellow in the English department at that prestigious institu-

tion who has set up a class on the Internet. Tyler Stevens said he is using the Internet to allow his class to examine issues of gender and identity. He points out that because of the Internet, "We're starting to lose the idea that we have definite identities." (Well, I know who **I** am. **Mistress Andromeda of the Lesser Magellanic Cloud. On your knees mortals!** What? Oh, sorry about that. I usually don't let her out when I'm writing my column.)

Since anyone can pass themselves off as anything on the net it should cast a new light on how his students look at gender. The article didn't give any information on how we could log on and audit his class, but I'm sure some transgendered hacker out there will probably stumble into it soon enough and then we'll all be back in school as sexy coeds. I've got a kilt and fuzzy sweater. Can I be a BTOC? (Big Tran On Campus.)

BIG MATTE FINISH

Well kittens, that's it for another year. Have a Happy Holiday Season and a Great New Year. Don't take any wooden panty hose and keep your mascara clean. Here's a closing quote from Louisa May Alcott that was sent in by Danille Lynn; "I am not afraid of storms for I am learning how to sail my ship." Let's all keep our ships afloat and on course in 1995. Big kiss! 

GET IN THE SWIM

Time is rapidly approaching for the layout of the big February Swimsuit issue. It's your chance to show off your fabulous bod in skimpy beach attire to all the subscribers of *News & Views*. The rules are simple: send us a photo of you in a bathing suit. We would prefer that you be outside at the beach or by the pool but if all you have is an indoor shot we'll reluctantly print it.

Write your name and where the picture was taken on the back of the photo. Send it to Swimsuit Issue, c/o Renaissance, PO Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020. The deadline for photo submissions is December 31, 1994. No prizes will be awarded and as David Letterman says, "No wagering."

Vis-a-Vis...

loaded from Compuserve. Melanie Anne wrote a fairly comprehensive guide to developing the feminine voice. One of the major sections of her treatise was headed as 'Annunciation.' But when I read it, there was no reference to the Blessed Virgin Mary and that is when I realized that it was not 'annunciation' but 'enunciation' that Melanie was talking about. The same mis-usage was carried on throughout the article.

A few short days later, Bobbi Lamb wrote me a letter in which she suggested that I address the sorry state of proofreading and editing skills in the transgender press. Bobbi's point was that we are doing ourselves a disservice by publishing poorly edited newsletters. Inasmuch as our newsletters should be our intellectual calling cards, those that are filled with misspellings, mis-usages, and sloppy typography, give our groups negative images to

outsiders and prospective members.

I see a lot of group newsletters each month and many of them need to be proofread more carefully than is currently the case. Every author hits a few clunkers every so often, but editors should be savvy enough to fix those mistakes before they get in print.

A NEW YEAR'S WISH

Alison Lang, one the grande dames of Renaissance, has a great line about crossdressing: "If God didn't have a sense of humor, he wouldn't have created porcupines, giraffes, or transvestites."

Okay, so now we know God has a sense of humor. Maybe the rest of us can remember to lighten up about the transgendered lifestyle. We can still be serious about ourselves without being humorless, which is a problem some in our community seem to suffer from.

(Editor's note: never, ever end a sentence with a preposition, but you know what she means.)

Keep smilin' — or start smilin' — in 1995.



Election Result Tidbits

Some initiatives defeated in the last election:

Colorado – Voters defeated the initiative to expand the definition of pronography as reported last issue.

Idaho – Voters narrowly defeated an anti-gay rights amendment.

Oregon – Republican Bill Witt lost a bid for a House seat partly due to his connection with the Oregon Citizens Alliance (OCA) which sponsored an anti-gay amendment last year.

Wyoming – Voters decided against a measure that would have made anyone who performs abortions (except for rape and incest) a felon.

*"... Electrolysis. I've been through it.
I can help you through it."*

Jenell A. Ashlie
Professional Electrolysis

Chester, Pa. 19013 610•872•2091

Appointment Only

E. Stroudsburg, PA

Electrolysis by Lisa
PERMANENT HAIR REMOVAL
DISPOSABLE PROBES

FREE CONSULTATION
SAMPLE TREATMENT

LISA M. CAPORASO
717-223-9321

Services in the Lehigh Valley
Sexuality, Gender Issues, Addictions,
Family Conflicts, Adolescent Issues

P K Consulting Associates
Patricia Klein, M.S.

Box 3624
Allentown, PA 18106 215-967-5082

TELEPHONE (215) 547-9417

RONALD GOLDSTEIN, PH.D.
LICENSED PSYCHOLOGIST

BUCKS MEDICAL CENTER
SUITE 12
OFFICE HOURS 1723 WOODBOURNE ROAD
BY APPOINTMENT LEVITTOWN, PA 19057

NOW NJ Supports TG Rights

by Terry McCorkell

The New Jersey Chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) is the first known state chapter to adopt a policy that supports "the lives and identities of Transgendered and Transsexual people." A resolution that linked gender discrimination faced by the transgender community with the same system that oppresses **all** women was introduced, discussed and overwhelmingly adopted by NOW-NJ delegates at their recent state conference.

Wendy Berger, Chair of the

NOW-NJ Lesbian Rights Task Force authored and introduced this historic resolution. The effort and input from the transgendered community was led by Rikki Anne Wilchins, co-founder of New York's Transsexual Menace and by Terry Mc Corkell, co-founder of Renaissance affiliate MOTG. Additional support was provided by Gina Reiss of the NOW-NJ Lesbian Rights Task Force, as well as from MOTG and NOW-NJ members Katherine Miller and Elaine Monroe.

Wilchins initiated this action as part of her effort to gain NOW support for

Transgender and Transsexual Health Care and Civil Rights. Wilchins hopes to have a similar resolution adopted by NOW-NY when their state convention meets and at the NOW National Conference when it convenes in July, 1995. In fact, the NJ resolution will be introduced at the national conference and may well be the first step in obtaining the endorsement of transgender rights by a major, mainstream human rights organization.



Dear Doctor

Dr. William R. Stayton answers your questions in a monthly column.

Send questions to PO Box 530, Bensalem, Pa. 19020

Dear Dr. Bill,

I am a 46 year old crossdresser. I am comfortable with this side of myself but I am also into bondage. As long as I have been attracted to wearing women's clothing, I have enjoyed being confined by tight, restrictive garments or restraints. I am ok with that too. In fact I often enjoy both of my pleasures at the same time by wearing a very tight corset.

My question is, is there a connection between my crossdressing and my bondage? I have spoken to other crossdressers who don't enjoy bondage and to B & D people who wouldn't think of crossdressing.

Tied up in Central PA

Dear Tied Up,

There may or may not be a connection between your interests in crossdressing and in bondage. If you feel guilty about your crossdressing interest and at some emotional level feel you

should be punished, then there may be a relationship between the two interests. One way to know, is if the bondage is too serious rather than pleasurable or fun and increases low self-esteem, then it probably is not healthy. However, it is likely that they are just two separate interests and pleasures.

It is my belief that we humans have the potential of getting erotically turned on by many things and people. In fact, the more erotic interests a person has, the better. Actually bondage is a very common interest of many people and as long as it does not cause harm or damage and is fun as well as pleasurable, then it should be considered acceptable and normal. Hopefully, if you have a partner, he/she will enjoy the pleasures of bondage and accept your crossdressing as well.

Dear Doctor Bill,

I am a thirty two year old crossdresser who has been dressing actively since the age of twenty six. One of the

first things people get around to asking me when they realize I am a man, is "Are you gay?" I admit I have had a real interest in having a male escort take me out for the evening but when I really think about it the idea of being intimate with one of my "dates" is not that thrilling. I am not turned on by other male's genitalia.

Since I find the attentions of men to be exciting though, does that make me "gay?"

Janet

Dear Janet,

Because crossdressing is creating an "illusion", it would be normal to enjoy being out with a male date, because it enhances the illusion. The fact that you do not want to have sex with your date seems to indicate that you are not interested sexually in your own gender, thus you cannot be classified as "gay".

It would not be surprising, however, that other crossdressers might have an interest or fantasy of what it would be like to be sexually with a man while crossdressed. We are born with a bisexual potential, but because of our homophobic society and a possible commitment to monogamy, the majority of men do no more than fantasize about having sex with a member of their own gender.



Text of the NOW-NJ Transgender Support Resolution

Whereas, gender discrimination is at the heart of Feminist politics;

Whereas the Transgendered and Transsexual Communities confront the same gender system that oppresses women and therefore are the target of marginalization, loss of medical care and economic and civil rights;

Whereas, there is a lack of understanding and information on the issue;

Therefore let it be resolved that NOW-NJ adopt a policy that supports the lives and identities of Transgendered and Transsexual people;

Let it further be resolved that NOW-NJ chapters examine current policies and practices that discriminate against Transgendered and Transsexual Communities;

Let it also be recommended that this resolution be submitted to the National NOW Conference in 1995.

*Adopted by NOW-NJ,
October 29, 1994.*



**Letter
to the
Editor**

Dear Angela,

I am writing to thank you and the entire Renaissance family for all the support given to my wife and I. Attending my first monthly meeting is something I will never forget. Although I was nervous, I realized everyone was compassionate and caring. I cannot express to you what a relief meeting other crossdressers has been. Finally, after twenty some years of confusion, pain and denial, I can begin to accept myself and realize that I am not alone. I cannot thank you enough for giving me the courage to find myself.

Sincerely,
Jennifer



**Sandi's
Hair,
Nail &
Body
Salon**

8006 Veree Rd.
Philadelphia, PA 19111

215-722-0282
Beeper 618-4918

Private Appointments Available

**PERMANENT
PROFESSIONAL
HAIR
REMOVAL**

**...because this
unwanted problem
could unnecessarily
last forever**

**JOAN BENCAN
ELECTROLYSIS**

408 New Rd. (Rt. 9), Northfield

609-645-8618

FREE INITIAL CONSULTATION

CLASSIFIEDS

Classified Ads are \$3.00 for 3 lines for 3 months.

Private, professional counseling for drug, alcohol, gambling, sex & food addictions. Insurance accepted. Mary Reynolds DDV, CAC 215-744-4777.

Furniture, Appliances, Household goods, Records, Antiques, Toy trains and other goodies - Bought and Sold - Beth Marshall: 610-259-4945 - Leave a message

Hsemate needed, Wilmington, DE, Kirkwood Highway and Limestone Rd area. TV or TS only. 302-994-2593.

FREE information and sample biweekly newsletter for the Casual Gourmet. 24 Carrot News, PO Box 238, Scotland, PA 17254-023

Rideshare from Quakertown to RenGPC meeting. Write: Marilyn Johnson, PO Box 592, Emmaus, Pa 18049.

Lehigh Valley tour for TV sending with dinner at Diamondz Club. Changing rooms available. Lisa M. Gunod, PO Box 22131, Lehigh Valley, PA 18002.

Ladies garments and lingerie for sale. Reasonable prices. Call Terri for details. 215-232-7551.

Nowhere to change before going out? I've got the same problem. Solution: let's get together on an apartment. Terri 215-232-7551.

Debra's Closet

Fashionable Consignments

• Also •

New Designer Fashions

Layaways

VISA • MasterCard • Discover Card
& AMEX Accepted

**609
486-9636**

Hargrove Plaza
2673 Haddonfield Road
Pennsauken, NJ 08110

CROSSDRESSERS

Discount Mail Order Specialists

Experience the difference!
Affordable prices and reliable,
caring service.



- Exotic lingerie & hosiery, through 4X and Tall.
- Corsets & Foundations.
- Cosmetics - Beard Cover
- Wigs & Breast Forms
- Maid Uniforms
- Bondage Gear
- Latex - Fetish Items
- Videos, storybooks, and magazines
- All novelty products, and much more!

Send \$12.00 for catalog A to:

BEST VALUE PRODUCTS

PO Box 156

Wyncote, PA 19095-0156

Catalog mailed discreetly!

Tough Gender Questions

1. Are you on a trip, a journey, or a quest?
2. How does your inner life fit into your outer life?
3. Do you feel lonely, ashamed, or guilty?
4. How secretive do you have to be?
5. Do you like your situation?

These tough gender questions and many more can be explored through individual and small group sessions with Dr. Lee Etscovitz, Director of Human Dimensions, an organization specializing in gender education. Dr. Etscovitz is also the Renaissance National Librarian and a former Professor of Human Behavior at Drexel University.

Further information, including fees and scheduling, is available upon request. Write: Human Dimensions, PO Box 471, Willow Grove, PA 19090. Or leave a private message at 215•657•1560.

Confidentiality Assured

Romania's Lingerie

3715 West Chester Pike

Newtown Square, PA

19073

(610) 325-0177

Call to be form fitted and measured for undergarments and lingerie...

Bras • Panties

Girdles • Slips

Waist Cinchers

All in One

Beautiful Lingerie

etc.

Sizes: Small to Queen 4X

Bras: 32 to 52



Home and Office Parties Available



Film Project: Update

The producer/directors of The Community Film Project, Terri Randall and Jeff Tuckman, have picked a provocative title for their film and written a marketing proposal that is now being shopped around. The title of the proposed film is "Is She Or Isn't She?" and response from the cable networks is positive.

In October, Terri and Jeff sent the finished, highly polished proposal to **HBO** and **SHOWTIME**. They decided to start with these cable networks since they are more open-minded and more likely to be interested in the subject matter than domestic broadcast networks. After reading the proposal, **SHOWTIME** expressed interest in learning more about the project. Terri and Jeff will have met with them by the time you read this article.

Also in October, a representative of

the Community Film Project presented the idea at MIPCOM, the international television market in Europe. Most foreign broadcasters attend MIPCOM looking for programs and films to run. Some foreign broadcasters said they would be interested in funding the film in exchange for the right to run the final product in their markets, but word is still out on any firm commitments. The same goes for discussions underway with a theatrical distributor in L.A.

Terri and Jeff, along with the Film Project Steering Committee, feel the community has resources to offer to this project in addition to direct cash donations. If you personally know a member of our community who is also part of the broadcasting or film production business, please ask them to contact us at the Renaissance National Office. One contact with a

transgendered broadcast executive could result in a firm date to start the cameras rolling.

Another way to participate in this project is to allow yourself to be filmed. When the funds are in our Film Project bank account we will need people in the community who are willing to open their private lives to the camera. Terri and Jeff would like to follow several individuals through several days of crossdressed and non-crossdressed activity. If you are willing to come out and help the whole transgender community, let us know.

That's it for this month's Film Project report. If you wish to donate monetarily please send your check or money order, payable to Renaissance to: 987 Old Eagle School Rd. ,Suite 719, Wayne, PA 19087.



View

because all people are special and unique we need to learn to make our own rules about behavior. In short, to give ourselves our own messages. Most of society fails to teach us how to do this. We tend to become stuck with rigid concepts and when we try to go against these concepts, we feel guilt and shame.

The social environment, in general, likes uniformity. It is more convenient for all people to behave more or less the same. But now that we are mature, it is time for us to identify and reject these shame producing messages. If our behavior does not hurt anyone (ourselves included) or infringe on the rights of others, then we need not feel shame because of our behavior. In fact we should be proud of who and what we are. Coming out of the closet involves the process of doing away with old rules and messages, redefining those that do not apply and making new rules for ourselves.

Our culture is now going through the process of redefining almost all of the old concepts having to do with gender. Just look at the headlines; almost daily there is a story having to do with a gender issue. It may be sexual harassment, gays in the military, women and men's rights, etc. In time, all of these issues will be behind us. Have you noticed sitcoms lately? When a social behavior becomes the subject of public satire it is a sign of acceptance on the part of society. I believe that soon no one will care what people wear or why. After all it is the inside of a person that counts not their clothing. Sisters, we are in the forefront of this gender movement. We are the ones who are redefining the concepts of gender. We should take pride in what we are, form groups and alliances with other gender relative organizations. **WE ARE NORMAL, HEALTHY, RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE WHO HAVE A RIGHT TO EXPRESS OURSELVES IN OUR OWN WAY.**

If your need to cross dress is disturbing to you, or if you want a better understanding of it, come to a support group. Come out of the closet cautiously, slowly...but do come out. Come dressed or not. To spouses: you are invited to come to a meeting, to learn more about cross dressing to help your loved one or yourself. At a Renaissance meeting you will meet others who share the same feelings, and have had many of the same experiences. If you are already out of the closet and feel comfortable and secure cross dressing then your presence and support is greatly needed to help your sisters who are less experienced.

I am always interested in the opinions of my sisters. Please write to me directly: Stephanie Potter, P.O. Box 9700, Newark, DE 19714-9700 *Reprinted with permission from the Renaissance Delaware Chapter newsletter.*



Shopping With Jackie

by Jackie Thomas

A chill is in the air girls. Put away those summer things and get out the sale items you bought last year. You did buy some—didn't you?

Well don't make the same mistake this year. Sales of summer and fall things are happening in every store right now. Spend \$20 now and save \$50 next year, and remember, your best buys are always in your local ladies departments.

I read somewhere..."clothes don't have gender only people do". It makes sense to me. Many things are unisex styled and can be worn by either gender. The thought here is that you can expand your wardrobe if you can wear things in whatever gender you happen to be expressing. Many shorts, jeans, sweaters, t-tops, turtle necks, and even some blouses will work in

both worlds. Something to think about when you make those purchases.

Catalog Heaven.

Yes, they do exchange their mailing lists. I have discovered, since I started this column, that once you get on a few mailing lists, you end up on a bunch...especially if you buy some things from them. I seem to get 2 or 3 catalogs in the mail every day. Make sure you shop them for price and quality...many of them charge too much. "Ain't no such thing as a free lunch."

One catalog you should have is *L.L. Bean*. Great things in solid basic styles (for both men and women) that will be stylish in the future and will probably never wear out. For a catalog call 1-800-221-4221.

My favorite place for wigs is the

Paula Young Catalog. They have a sale going on with wigs from \$34.00. If you want a catalog call 1-800-343-9695.

If you have a *Hill's Department Store* in your area, check it out. They have upgraded their apparel and the prices are right. As always, shop carefully. I caught a sale there and got a rayon top and skort, brushed denim jeans, a pair of shorts, a cute top; and got change from a \$20.00 bill. Great prices, and some nice things.

I want to wish you all "Seasons Greetings". Its been another fun year writing this column and as always I look forward to hearing from you with your favorite places and ideas. Our exchange of information is of great interest to many of our members, especially to those who are just finding themselves in this world.

As always, drop me a line in care of the Editor. Fill me in on your favorite after Christmas sales. Until next time...HAPPY SHOPPING.

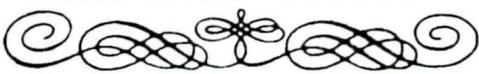


P.O. Box 30372 • Philadelphia, PA • 19103

*The newsletter for Philadelphia-area
bisexuals and their friends.*

For a sample issue, send us a S.A.S.E.

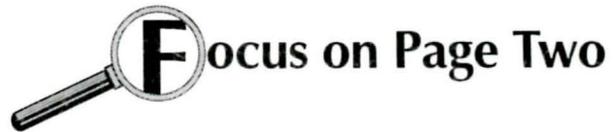
The Plus Closet



Quality Resale Boutique for
Stylish Women Size 14 and Up

602 Haddon Ave. (609) 854-8828
Collingswood, NJ 08108 Consignment By Appointment

Sandy Barletta, Proprietor



Events Calendar

Sometimes the Events Calendar on Page 2 is packed with activities going on in the transgender community. Other times, like this issue, it's a little sparse. As editors we have a lot to do to get you this newsletter every month. We don't always have time to hunt up and ferret out the dates for upcoming events about which you should know.

You can help us, as you have with clippings and articles, by providing us with information about events which may be of interest to the transgender community at large.

It doesn't matter if we get duplicate information. If you know that an event or activity is being planned anywhere in the world, we'd like to know about it, so we can tell others who may be able to attend that CD festival in New Zealand, or the transgender bobsled competition in Norway. (Hey, we just made these up. They're not real.)

Please send event information to the attention of Events Calendar, *Renaissance News & Views*, PO Box 530, Bensalem, Pa. 19020.

Barbara A. Susinno R.N. CPE.

Jessica Lynn Porter CPE.

Main Street Electrology

Members and Supporters of Renaissance

Gold Disposable Probes
Open Tues thru Sunday
Day & Eves appointments
Multi-Pin Galvanic and the Blend

(908)341-7524



802 Main St # 4/A Toms River, N.J.

*For that one of a kind dress,
for the once in a while woman...*

Sewing by
The Occasional Woman
custom creations•costumes•alterations

LORRAINE ANDERSON

610•352•0248

Hidden Fantasies **Intimate Apparel**

Sizes Small to 4X

Everything from the **Romantic** to the **Erotic**

Silicone Breast Forms—\$99.95

Large Size Shoes Available!

1911 Main St.

Northampton

610-262-2814

Hours – Mon & Sat: 11 - 5; Tue - Fri: 11 - 8

♥ *Narilyn's* Wigs

Large Selection

*René of Paris, Henry Margu, Eva Gabor
and more.*

*Call for appointment
(610) 446-0799*

TV/TS? FETISH? DOMINANT/SUBMISSIVE?

Nancy Ava Miller, M. Ed.
— Sex educator/dominatrix/author —
for those with unique desires.

Support groups, literature, S&M/B&D/fetish
counseling, intelligent fantasy conversation, etc.

(908) 284-8040

Love, Nancy

Politics: Limiting Community

Opinion by JoAnn Roberts

It is often said that politics makes for strange bedfellows, but it is just as true that politics creates a great deal of dirty, nasty, scandalous behavior. Once mighty and revered political figure-heads are found to be no better than the average person and often are worse. The heady brew that is political power can twist even the most innocent of intentions into self-serving, ego-inflating special interest.

Politics is nothing if there is no money to go with it. Political power is influence and money certainly buys influence. Thus, money can buy political power. But the smell of money is hard to resist for some people, like cocaine and heroin. They become addicted to both the power and the bucks. It is a habit nearly impossible to break.

Politics, power, and greed are not common topics within the transgender community. It is so very difficult to imagine that any one of our sisters working in the community would be tempted by such things. We want to believe that every sister has our best interests at heart and would never stoop so low as to behave as scandalously as some of our national politicians do. Well, think again.

Anyone who becomes involved at the national levels of the transgender community gets an education in politics and power. They quickly learn who has the pull, the influence, and the money. Cross one of the power brokers and you'll be eaten alive, spit out and discarded. At the highest levels of transgender politics, money is the driving force.

The politics and the money are cloaked in a veneer of respectability behind organizations touting their not-for-profit purposes. Peel away the veneer and one finds the influence and money eating away at the integrity of the structure like termites.

There are several transgender organizations, all with high visibility,

where the structures are rife with power-brokers and private-interests. It doesn't take Sherlock Holmes to discover the root cause in each case — an individual who thinks the community owes them something extra. Since the community has not delivered the rewards these "special" people feel they deserve, they create organizations and events that will do it for them.

On the surface, we see activities that seem to serve the community's interest. Examined more closely, we find activities that almost always result in some personal benefit for the individual at the center. Any connection to community interest is secondary to the primary purpose of rewarding the individual.

There is nothing wrong with commerce and capitalism. Finding novel ways to make money is a great tradition in this country. Many a millionaire started with simply an idea of how to do something better, or provide a service no else provided.

But, there is something morally repugnant about those who garner their rewards through the deception of people looking for help, support, and guidance. Jim Bakker knew exactly what he was doing siphoning money from PTL for himself. No one is really surprised that Dan Rostenkowski used congressional funds for his private interests. Why, then, if these very visible public figures can succumb to the lure of power and greed, is it so hard to believe that these same situations exist within the "hallowed halls" of some transgender organizations? It isn't, if one remembers that organizations are made up of human beings, not gods.

The evidence is there should one look for it. Proof is another matter. There are always the excuses and the plausible explanations, but viewed in context over time, the conclusion is inescapable: there are a few rotten apples in the transgender barrel.

The scandalous behavior of the few are enabled by good people, mistakenly guided by a sense that unconditional forgiveness is preferable to accountability. Responsibility for one's actions is not a high-priority in this community. *Victimism* is rampant and those whose behavior is suspect are the most likely to yell "Victim" when confronted. In reality, they are not Victims, they are Abusers. They abuse our trust. They abuse our faith. They abuse our hope. They abuse our charity. People pour money into the coffers of organizations in the hope that somehow, someday, this community will become a better place for all transgendered people. What comes out the other side is a trickle compared to what goes in. They abuse our sense of community.

Who is to blame? We are. The very same people who give their unconditional trust and support are responsible for the continuation of the scandalous behavior. Trust, support, time, energy, and, most importantly, money should only be given conditionally. We, the community, should demand responsibility and accountability from our organizations. We must demand that no one involved in a not-for-profit venture derive personal benefit. We must demand that governing bodies fulfill their fiduciary responsibilities to the community. We must demand that scandalous behavior not be tolerated. We must demand that our continued support of community organizations be treated with the respect it deserves. We must demand that anyone caught with their hand in the "cookie jar" be removed from office immediately.

Someone once said, "There is no greater treason than to do the right thing for the wrong reason." We must take off the blinders and recognize the most serious limit to the growth of our community — those who serve only themselves.

