

# TRANSGENDER Community News

A publication of the Renaissance Transgender Association, Inc.

## Dr. Whittle on The 3rd Congress

In 1994 Dr. James Elias and Doctors Vern and Bonnie Bullough of the Center for Sex Research at California State University Northridge proposed holding an International Congress on Crossdressing Sex and Gender. It was to be a coming together of sexuality and gender experts from around the world. The three doctors pursued their vision and the event, originally visualized as a one time thing, happened in 1995 at a Best Western Hotel in Northridge, California.

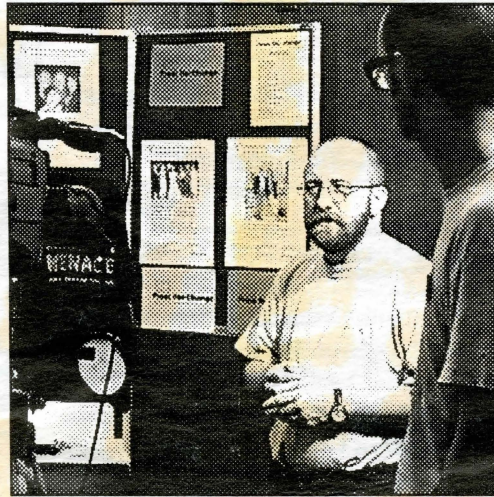
JoAnn Roberts of Renaissance attended the event and was inspired by the exchange of information on many aspects of sexuality and gender studies which occurred among the attendees, and returned to the East Coast determined that The Renaissance Education Association, Inc. (now The Renaissance Transgender Association, Inc.) should sponsor another Congress. Roberts brought her proposal to the Renaissance board and The Board agreed that the event

should happen again.

The hosts of the original Congress gave their blessing and after a year of planning Renaissance hosted the 2nd Congress in June of 1997. The 2nd Congress brought even more people from around the world, including a larger number of transgendered people, to attend presentations and panels on sex and gender issues for three information packed days. Renaissance took the opportunity to use the last night of the Congress to present its 10th Anniversary Party.

Dr. Stephen Whittle, who had been a delegate at the original Congress, came from England to attend the 2nd Congress in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania and, like JoAnn Roberts, was inspired to organize yet another Congress in his own country.

With the blessing and cooperation of the organizers of



**Dr. Stephen Whittle, organizer of the 3rd Congress is interviewed by the media.**

*continued on page 6*

## Editor Shows Remorse

Here it is, January 1999, and this thing isn't a magazine yet. It's all my fault. As a perfectionist I feel we should get the damn thing done right.

We had decided to run the article on the 3rd International Congress (which you see above) and then we got side tracked into considering another piece as our cover story. Well the sidetrack turned into a dead end and we had to backpedal to the Congress story. When we finally took a close look at the photos we had available, they just weren't good enough in the quality department. The photographer had taken them with a digital camera having only planned to display them on the Internet. Photos on the Net are lower quality than those that are used for print, and when we started to blow them up for the cover they just stretched too thin.

So, I made an executive decision. The new magazine format will cost us \$1400 per issue. This is a gamble for Renaissance, since we have to get more people paying for it, either through the mail

or off the newsstand, and it will take us three to four months to start to see any increased revenue. Rather than spend \$1400 on an issue that might not make it as the best example of our publication, I decided to keep it in the bank and do one more newsletter issue.

You will see the new format in the February issue. The February cover story will be a couples theme. Either one or both partners in the featured couples will be transgendered. Historically, February is our Swimsuit Issue and this one will not be an exception. We have some fabulous swimsuit shots lined up and with the new, slick paper it should be the best one yet.

Fortunately egg facials are good for your skin, since I have had yolk mingling with my foundation for a month or so over this new magazine deal. Bear with us. It'll be here soon and it will be worth the wait.



# Chapter & Affiliate Information

## Chapters

### Delaware

Wilmington, Delaware: meets second Saturday of each month. Write for info to: PO Box 5656, Wilmington, DE 19808. Phone: 302-376-1990 or email to: <sadeCD@aol.com>.

### Pennsylvania

Greater Philadelphia: Write Renaissance GPC, 987 Old Eagle School Rd., Suite 719, Wayne, PA 19087. Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia. Doors open at 8 pm all year 'round, Call 610-975-9119 for information.

Lehigh Valley/Pocono area: Renaissance Lehigh Valley, PO Box 3624, Allentown, PA 18106. Meetings on the second Saturday of the month in the Allentown area. Call for directions and more information, 610-821-2955, or email to <RenLV@ren.org>.

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Write Renaissance LSV, PO Box 2122, Harrisburg, PA 17105. Meets on the first Saturday of the month. Call 717-780-1LSV (780-1578) or send email to: <lsv@ren.org>.

## Affiliates

### California

Orange County: Powder Puffs of California, PO Box 1088, Yorba Linda, CA 92686, or email to <ppoc@aol.com>

### Connecticut

Bridgeport/New Haven: connecticutView, c/o Denise Mason, PO Box 2281, Devon, CT 06460. Monthly newsletter and activities.

### Georgia

Atlanta: The American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033-0724 or call 770-939-0244, or email to <aegis@mindspring.com>. Information resources & referrals.

Atlanta: Atlanta Gender Explorations (A.G.E.), PO Box 77562, Atlanta, GA 30357, 770-939-2128.

### Illinois

Chicago: The Chicago Gender Society, PO Box 578005, Chicago, IL 60657, 708-863-7714.

### Louisiana

New Orleans: The Gulf Gender Alliance, PO Box 56836, New Orleans, LA 70156-6836, 504-833-3046. Website: <www.gga.org>. Email: <info@gga.org> or <contact@gga.org>.

### Missouri

St. Louis Gender Foundation, P.O. Box 9433, St. Louis, MO 63117. Phone: 314-367-4128, email: <stlgf@aol.com>.

### New Jersey

N. Central Jersey: Monmouth/Ocean Trans Gender, (MOTG), write PO Box 2972, Princeton, NJ 08543-2972. Call 732-219-9094. Email: <vikkimotg@aol.com>.

Western Central New Jersey: New Jersey Support, call Susan at 973-334-0416 or Dorothy at 215-744-4746 (weekends only). Write PO Box 0034, Montville, NJ 07045 for information. Email: Susanw@aol.com. Meetings are the first Saturday of the month at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington Crossing.

### New York

Manhattan: Metropolitan Gender Network (MGN), 561 Hudson Street, Box 45, New York, NY 10014. Call 201-794-1665, ext. 332. Email, <uravampire@mindspring.com>.

Long Island: Long Island Femme Expression (LIFE), PO Box 1311, Water Mill, NY 11976-1311. Phone 516-283-1333. email to <brenvee2@aol.com>.

### Oklahoma

Central Oklahoma: Sooner Diversity, part of the Central Oklahoma Transgender Alliance (COTA). Write to P.O. Box 60354, Oklahoma City, OK 73146. Email to <cota@transfemme.com>, website: <www.transfemme.com/cota>

## TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY News

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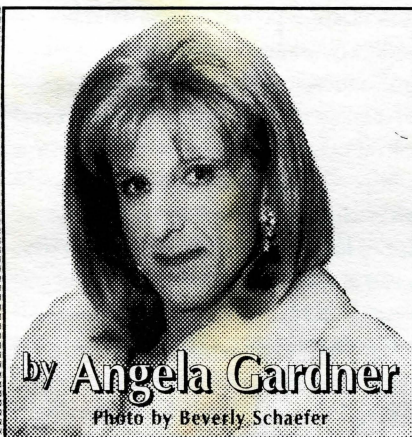
Articles, opinion pieces, and letters to the editor are always welcome. Ideas for articles and opinion pieces should be sent to the National Office marked Attention: Editor. Or by email to <editor@ren.org>. Complimentary and irate letters to the editor may be sent to the same address.

Renaissance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing education and support to the transgender community and the general public. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation, make your check or M.O., payable to Renaissance and send it to our National office. Your contributions will help us continue our efforts to provide education about transgender issues. Donations can also be made through your local United Way agency.

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# News Beat & Reminder



I already told you why this isn't in the bright and shiny, new magazine format yet, so let's not beat a dead tube of mascara. It'll be in your mailbox next month, promise.

And now, the news...

## Do The Name Geraldine Ring A Bell?

It seems I always end up reporting on some tragic loss around the holiday season. Last year it was a personal loss. This year it's the loss of one of the funniest men on the planet, and one of the funniest men in a dress since **Milton Berle**. (Somebody check on Uncle Miltie. He better be with us for a while, yet.)

**Flip Wilson** passed away after a fight with (you just know I'm gonna type it): cancer. He was far too young for the big sleep and he will be missed. Flip was one of the first comics that I can recall doing drag in the Sixties. Berle had done it since the 40s (or earlier) and made it a trademark, but as far as any regular drag character, there wasn't one till Geraldine showed up.

The great thing about Geraldine was, she was a complete character. It wasn't just Flip in a dress getting a laugh because he juxtaposed glamour and a missing tooth. (Like Uncle Miltie would do.) Flip was portraying a female character of his experience and doing a pretty good job of it, too. Long before the male actresses of today, such as those mentioned in last month's column, Flip Wilson was doing comedy skits in a mini dress and playing the character as a female.

The humor wasn't at the expense of the dressing, it didn't laugh at Geraldine. As a kid I watched with an appreciation of the comedy and a fascination that a man could actually be the star of his own television show and get paid to wear a wig and dress.

Flip Wilson broke a lot of ground for crossdressers, and for African Americans. I can imagine that he did a whole lot for African American crossdressers. God bless you Flip. We're gonna miss you.

## Say What?

Speaking of people who have benefited from the ground breaking of Flip Wilson ... I came home from an immense Thanksgiving dinner (I'm no fool, I wore the skirt with the elastic waist) and turned on the television to find **Miss RuPaul Charles** on *Hollywood Squares*. Now twenty years ago the only drag queen who might have shown up on Hollywood Squares would have been Geraldine. I gotta type it again, "the times they are a changin'."

While Ru looked stunning (well her wig line was a little obvious, but hey...) on the Thanksgiving show the poor thing didn't get that much activity from the contestants. They picked squares all around her and she just got to do reaction shots to the other square's hilarious adlibs. Oh well, she's always good as decoration.

Have you noticed her song "You Better Work" as the background music to a camera commercial on TV? A middle-aged woman goes pose crazy in a fountain as her significant other snaps away. I don't think Geraldine had any dance tracks of her's get used in a TV spot.

## Return With Us Now To The Garden State

Last month I mentioned how NJ has no law against surveillance cameras in dressing rooms. This month I am able to tell you they do have a law against TVs in public restrooms. Before you go to powder

your nose in the Garden State, call your legal counsel.

It seems that a Jersey girl in Fairfield was using the ladies' room in a hotel when she was cuffed and taken downtown. I hope she had time to finish fixing her lips. It seems the poor thing had violated NJ State Statute 2C-18-3b. She was hauled before a judge and convicted. Some New Jersey gender activists are up in arms about the arrest and are threatening to organize the simultaneous flushing of all the public toilets in the state by way of protest.

OK, I'm kidding. But before we go off the handle... the flush handle, let's take a closer look at the statute in question. (Hey, ain't that where the Statute of Liberty is?)

After consulting with my crack legal team I got the actual law on my monitor. It's available at the New Jersey Law Network (<http://www.njlawnet.com/index.html>) website for those who enjoy finely crafted legalese. The part that concerns us, the part that the TV in the WC was convicted of, states:

2C:18-3. Unlicensed entry of structures; defiant trespasser; peering into dwelling places; defenses

b. Defiant trespasser. A person commits a petty disorderly persons offense if, knowing that he is not licensed or privileged to do so, he enters or remains in any place as to which notice against trespass is given by:

- (1) Actual communication to the actor; or
- (2) Posting in a manner prescribed by law or reasonably likely to come to the attention of intruders; or
- (3) Fencing or other enclosure manifestly designed to exclude intruders.

c. Peering into windows or other openings of dwelling places. A person commits a crime of the fourth degree if, knowing that he is not licensed or privileged to do so, he peers into a window or other opening of a dwelling or other structure adapted for overnight accommodation for the purpose of invading the privacy of another person and under circumstances in which a reasonable person in the dwelling or other structure would not expect to be observed.

## News Beat...

Try a cup of hot tea. That usually unfreezes my brain after I read something legal. But seriously, I don't see anything specific there about men in the ladies room, do you? It's pretty reasonable to want a law to keep people from peering in the window late at night while you're sacked out in a hotel. Particularly if you have been out crossdressed all night in New York, and are trying to get a little rest in your slinky charmeuse teddy before you start that long drive home.

Nope, we need a law against peepers for sure. How about that "defiant trespasser" thing. That sounds like it might be useful for getting rid of unwanted guests, like the hopped up crackhead who has kicked in your door and won't leave your bathroom. This one would be good to use on relatives who just won't go home, too. To get you on this section of the law there really must be a notice that you're not allowed to come in.

Perhaps that little icon on the door is enough of a warning that men aren't allowed, but then again, we only know it's a female cause it's got that little skirt. I know plenty of guys who wear skirts. Wearing a skirt is not a proof that you're female. Call the ACLU, I bet we can beat this one.

My guess is, and it's only a guess mind you - albeit an informed one - is that the CD in question panicked and refused to leave the john when the cops showed up. That would leave her open to a charge of "defiant trespass." That may be the reason for the conviction.

In any event, remember girls - it doesn't matter what law they use, if you are acting weird, (refusing to leave the ladies room, acting like a nervous wreck in the middle of a department store, masturbating under the cape while you get a makeover, going to the mall in a too-small mini dress that's designed for someone thirty years younger than you... who doesn't have hairy legs) then you can expect the long arm of the law to reach out and touch you.

They will come up with some statute that they can use to haul you in. They do this because the behavior of many cross-

dressers scares people. Unless the transgender community makes an effort to do some outreach to law enforcement, cops will have no clue why that man in a dress took off in his car and forced them into a high-speed chase. They don't know why we do what we do, so all they can do is treat us like they treat the crack addict who kicked in your door, they subdue the offender and get 'em off the street.

Use your heads as more than wig stands. If your presence anywhere seems to offend anyone, it might be a good idea to do the feminine thing and go somewhere else. This is not to say you shouldn't go where you want. You should dress and go anywhere you like as long as you aren't entering nuclear plants or other places that actually have "no trespassing" signs. But, if you are out in public and you seem to be causing a stir it might be best to not loiter.

You can tell, if you walk into a restroom and a woman at the mirror suddenly eats her lipstick and runs out, that it might not be healthy to stand around in there for too long. Common sense will keep you out of court, out of jail, and off of *Cops*. OK, that's it. Let's get going, and remember, let's be careful out there.

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### What a Cissy

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*Dateline* ran a piece on December first about a crossdressing male from America's heartland, actually from the birthplace of that all American critter, the Jackolope (half rabbit, half antelope... not real) a small town in Wyoming that I can't recall at the moment. My dears, you can't expect me to keep track of all the picky little details.

It seems that for many years now a man named Cissy has been wearing women's clothing 24/7. He wears them to work (although he finally relented and agreed to wear women's slacks at the power plant. He still wears the tacky ruffled tops and carries a purse) and he wears them to local eateries... and everywhere else.

One scene from the show followed Cissy and his family into the local diner for breakfast. He was ignored by some and greeted by others. Kind of like going into the local diner dressed in men's clothes. Some of the townsfolk say they think he's cracked, but it's his life so what the hey. Others, not interviewed in the piece, have

stated their bias against Cissy's sartorial habits in more violent ways.

His teeth were kicked in once by a couple of roughnecks while his young son watched. He has been beaten other times and had his property defaced. If it's different it must be a personal affront. We better kill it. Cissy's wife and children have had to endure more subtle forms of oppression than a boot in the groin. They have had to interact with the other folks in that town and act as if the man in the family wasn't walking around the K Mart in a ruffled dress that might look OK on a 13 year old. I say "might" because even Cissy admits she has no taste in clothes.

She is the type of dresser who has no sense of style and she doesn't even make a remote attempt to pass as a woman. There are men who are not crossdressers who are far more likely to pass as female before Cissy would.

Why does she do it? Not for the same reason that most of us crossdress. In an attempt to shed light on why Cissy does what she does, Stone Phillips interviewed the eminent researcher on transgender issues, Dr. Richard Docter. While Dr. Docter made many good points about crossdressing, and helped to provide some understanding of why most of us do it, Cissy came off as a loon.

As England has its loads of eccentrics waddling around the landscape in various strange getups, Cissy seemed like our own American nut bucket. The average viewer probably said, "That poor man. Why can't they give him some medication or something? His poor family!"

The report brought out the information that Cissy was abused as a child. It isn't hard, although I'm only a columnist and not a licensed psychologist, to make the connection between the abuse and the dressing. When Cissy was a little boy he stole his sister's clothes and hid them in the barn. When he was sent out to do his chores he would put on the clothes and escape from the abuse in another persona ... Cissy.

This is similar to stories of split personalities, the abused individual splits into another persona that can deal with the abuse. For Cissy a day without women's

## News Beat...

clothing is like a day of torture. While I may miss my Enzo pumps, charcoal tights, tight mini, and chenille sweater. I can dress in men's clothes for work and other activities without having a nervous breakdown.

Why just this week I went without crossdressing for several days. Hold it a minute ... gotta take this pill. There, that's better. I'm much calmer now. Hand's not shaking at all.

Cissy, on the other hand, can't go without women's clothing. A psychologist who treated him said that Cissy could not function without crossdressing. That makes Cissy's crossdressing a mental problem. Sadly, it reflects on all of us. Not that Cissy isn't somewhat courageous for doing what she must do. I admit it is less costly to treat your symptoms with cheap ruffles from Walmart than it is to go after the deep, painful root reasons with expensive psycho therapy, but Mr. and Mrs. Average American are going to say that we all must be like that.

Meanwhile, while the media flurry has been hovering around Cissy, he has been elected to the National Board of Veterans for Peace. That is a real honor and it shows that some folks can get beyond how a person dresses.

### Hedwig & The Angry Angela

A few months ago I was idly thumbing through the casting notices in *Backstage* magazine when the word "drag" caught my eye. I homed in like a hawk and read the whole listing. They were looking for a drag artist to portray a transsexual rock singer

named Hedwig.

I was interested since I do sing and drag is never a problem, but it was for an off Broadway stage production. Unlike some actors, I don't have a little place in Manhattan where I can relax while working in the city. I thought, "I could go to the audition and just give it a shot. If they happen to offer me the part I'll figure something out." But in the end I decided to not go. It was so much simpler to go shopping and have a cocktail or two.

I have since come to regret that decision. Whatever it was I bought on that shopping trip is already lost in the bottom of that pile of hand laundry I remind myself to deal with every morning and then never get around to, and the cocktails probably gave me a sore brain the next morning. The show however has become an off Broadway smash.

The original star, John Cameron Mitchell, who created the punk rocker TS, Hedwig, has decided to leave the role and the guy who had the brains to go to that audition, Michael Cerveris, has stepped into the wig. Cerveris is best know for his roles in *The Who's Tommy* and *Titanic* on Broadway. I've seen pictures of "the new girl" and he's extremely sexy. The bastard.

In other Hedwig news, Newline Cinema is in final talks with Hedwig creator, Mitchell to write and star in a film based on the musical. And Atlantic Records is releasing a concept album based on the musical that will contain new Hedwig tunes not performed in the stage show. The show's name, *Hedwig and The Angry Inch*, is a reference to the botched SRS that leaves Hedwig with "an angry inch" of member.

### What A Dame

Dame Edna is preparing a new assault on the Colonies. While the character has had huge success in England, Barry Humphries' Australian housewife turned snob hasn't caught on with the commoners in the States. She's had some PBS play and a few specials on network TV, but nowhere near her success in England and Europe.

Now Dame Edna Everage is attacking what may be the best possible place to start a planned drag takeover of the country, San Francisco. Her stage show is booked into the Theatre on the Square through the end of January. It's her first appearance in an American theater since the ill-fated show, "Housewife/Superstar," in 1977. Apparently it's going a little smoother this time since San Fran named November 26th "Dame Edna Day." Let's see how she goes over in Wyoming.

Congrats to Edna and her creator, Barry Humphries. Edna's sharp tongue and biting humor have served as a role model for me. Edna once said of her sense of humor, "Oh, but I'm a lucky, lucky woman because I was born with a priceless gift ... the ability to laugh at the misfortunes of others."

So, at the end of this month's, as Edna herself would say, "Good night possums!" See ya with a new format next month.




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## Dr. Whittle...

both previous events The Third International Congress on Sex and Gender took place at Exeter College of Oxford University in September of this year. The Third Congress was hosted by the U.K. gender activist organization Press For Change. They made an even greater effort to boost attendance at the Congress by transgendered people.

Even before the Third Congress happened Renaissance decided that they would bring the event back to the U.S. in the year 2000. Planning is now under way for the 4th International Congress in the spring of 2000. This time the venue will be The Warwick Hotel in downtown Philadelphia. While the Third Congress was underway a group of Australians gave way to inspiration and decided to host the Fifth Congress in 2001. An International Steering Committee has been established to assist in the continuation of the Congress into the next century.

After the conclusion of the Third Congress the organizer, Dr. Stephen Whittle spoke with our Managing Editor, Miranda Wright. Dr. Stephen Whittle is Senior Lecturer in Law at Manchester Metropolitan University in Manchester, United Kingdom. He is one of the founders of Press For Change, the U.K. lobbying group for transsexual rights and coordinator of the U.K. FTM network, now an international organization. He took time out from his busy schedule to provide this interview for *Transgender Community News*. He is a female to male transsexual, a "trans man" and has devoted what could be considered a record amount of time to support groups throughout his life.

Q: Dr. Whittle, please accept our congratulations on a successful Congress and our thanks for the opportunity to get to know you. Please tell us, how did you become

involved with the trans community?

A: I would say it started 25 years ago. In 1973 I joined the Campaign for Homosexual Equality and tried hard to be a good lesbian. In 1974 I co-founded the Manchester Lesbian Collective a radical group which was involved in setting up the first Manchester Women's Refuge. I announced that I was a man shortly afterwards and with the group's support contacted the trans scene. We started the very first support group in the UK for transsexuals and transvestites, which initially met in the appropriately named "Camp Street." The group was instrumental in the setting up of the Manchester Gay Switchboard.

Q: As I think back to my college days, there were very few resources available in the U.S. in the early '70s. Was it the same in the U.K.?

A: There were no transsexual groups at that time. There was the Beaumont Society, a group that was ostensibly a heterosexual male transvestite organization. I joined the organization as a trans man in 1975 and became the co-editor of the *Beaumont News*. It was not until 1979 that we founded SHAFT, the Self Help Association for Transsexuals. It was the first UK self help group for transsexuals with a most unfortunate name (but that's another story). In 1990 I founded the FTM Network, a self-help group for trans men. We now have over 700 members in the UK, and members from another 20 countries. My early 1970s background with the Gay Liberation Front and the Women's Movement has led me to increasingly feel that we must bring politics back into the transgendered community.

Q: And you pursued the Law as a means to that end?

A: I decided to do law in 1985 after being sacked from two jobs. I

obtained my degree in evening classes, then continued to a Masters and PhD.

Q: Does your practice involve only transgender issues?

A: I am not a practicing attorney per se, but rather an academic lawyer. I do pro bono work for TG and TS people at employment tribunals, but my primary employment is as a lecturer at Manchester. I became an academic relatively late in life but I have had the opportunity, over the last few years, to participate in developing wide ranging new theoretical approaches to the paradigms of gender, sex and sexuality, alongside the few other scholars who are currently working in this field.

Q: How did "Press For Change" come about?

A: For most of that time I had been "out" and had been actively campaigning for respect and equality for ALL of the trans community. I recognized that getting inside and using the law was the only way forward after seeing the publicity surrounding Mark Rees's application to the European Court of Human Rights in the early 1980s. Mark asked me to attend a meeting with the then Liberal Member of Parliament, Alex Carlile in 1992. That meeting was to lead to the founding of PFC.

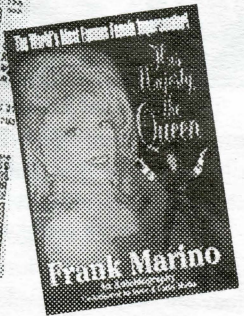
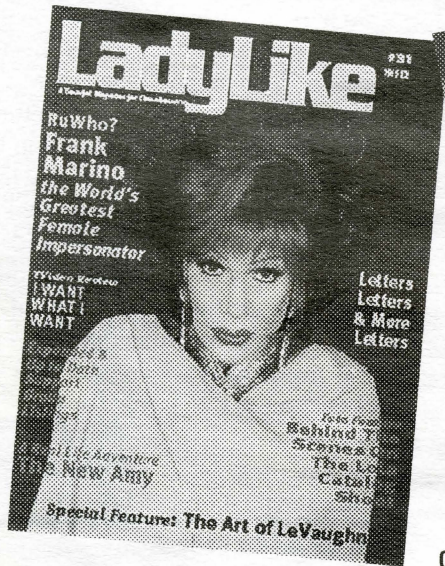
Q: As the force behind the Third International Congress, Press for Change assumed a role much like Renaissance and the Second Congress. We have heard nothing but praise for PFC and the Congress. As its organizer and coordinator were you happy with the results?

A: The Third International Congress on Sex and Gender was held at Exeter College, Oxford University

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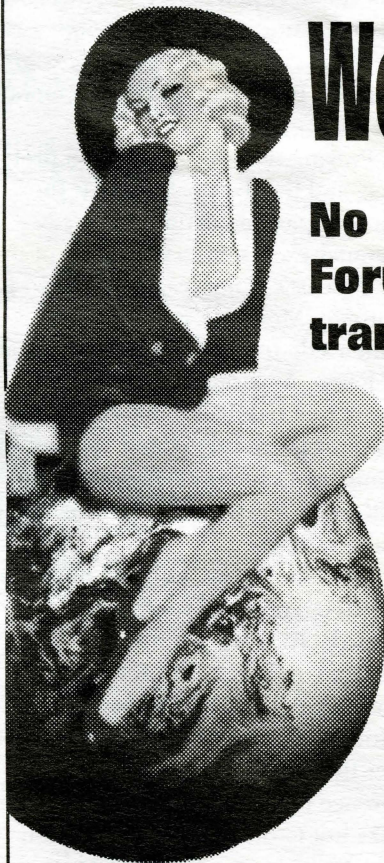
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There should be a new photo of yours truly accompanying this first column in our new magazine format. ("Next month, already!")

What you're not going to see, however, is a really deep valley of cleavage, which our editor Angela decided to crop out of the final version. I tried to cajole her into showing the whole magilla by advising her to use as her own column photo one of herself as the wild blonde vixen in vinyl she has favored us with on occasion. But no go, apparently.

Who wants to see only "Amberle's waves of grain" when you could also see my "pumped-up mountains majesty"? Write a letter to the editor, for crissakes. Think Dolly Parton. Okay, think Pamela Anderson. Well, would you believe Ellen DeGeneres in a WonderBra?

### **KOOKY KROSSDRESSED KIDS KAUSE KONTROVERSY**

School officials of a private high school in Carrollton, Georgia asked one of their fifteen year old male students to stop dressing like a girl after parents of other students complained. Matthew "Alex" McLendon refused and after being sent home, and a meeting with his father present in support of his son's crossdressing, withdrew from the Georgian Country Day School.

According to a report by Dan Sewell of the Associated Press, most of the students supported Alex and did not find his presence or the way he dressed a distraction. In fact, some students were not even aware that the slight, blonde-haired Alex was a boy at all until the controversy surfaced. As a show of support, "most of Alex' class-

mates, including some boys, wore bows in their hair, until ordered by the principal to remove them." A few of the students pointed out that the school's handbook "urges acceptance of diversity in opinion, culture, ideas, and behavioral characteristics." So much for school credos.

In the body of the article, a mother of one of Alex's girlfriends said that her daughter and Alex would often sit and talk about "girl" things, doing their hair and painting nails. After observing Alex, she thought to herself, "This is a girl" although she knew that biologically Alex was a young male. A photo accompanying the article showed Alex as a pretty androgynous with long blonde hair and soft feminine features. It was apparent by some of the male students' reactions to Alex that they thought of him as a girl, and there was no mention of any of the negative, teasing reactions one might expect from adolescent students. If only the majority of adults could have been so open-minded, Alex would still be enrolled in a school where he had apparently found happiness.

Meanwhile, in Madison, Wisconsin, an eighteen year old crossdresser attending a rally for slain gay student Matthew Shepherd was himself attacked and stabbed with a broken beer bottle by an unknown assailant. The hospital treating the young crossdresser notified police of "a female victim who had been stabbed."

Only later did the hospital learn that the victim was in fact a young male in women's clothing. At first the victim gave a fake name, but then later provided his real name, after

which he fled the hospital. Police later learned that the victim was wanted on outstanding traffic violations and now there is a bulletin out for both the victim of the attack and the attacker. Police "have tentatively labeled the attack a hate crime because the victim was a man dressed in women's clothing" according to the AP story.

So here is a case of an attack on a crossdressed individual that has been labeled a "hate crime", which may make some of the activists feel better about their efforts for TG inclusion in those types of bills. I don't know what good it did for the victim - who took 50 to 60 stitches to close his wounds - and now finds himself a fugitive from a traffic citation for his pain and suffering. It's a damn shame that the relatively peaceful attack on poor Alex McLendon can't be labeled a "hate crime" because it seems almost as harsh and every bit as scarring as being cut with a broken beer bottle.

### **SUGAR AND SPICE**

The recently renamed TGSF group in San Francisco, California publishes *The Channel* newsletter and it carried an interesting article by member Erin DeSouza titled, "Gender Skybox; My Baseball Road Trip" in the November '98 issue.

Proving that she is not just a pretty face, and that baseball really is the national pastime, Erin recounts her summer excursion to visit some of the East Coast's major league stadiums in Toronto, Montreal, and Baltimore, with a side trip to Cooperstown's Hall of Fame. Apparently, this was not Erin's first baseball-themed road trip. She had previously visited some of the Southern California ballyards along with some towns in the Arizona spring training league.

Traveling by air, rail, and bus to get across country and south from Canada, Erin has a pretty grueling itinerary to follow. For the border check with Canadian customs, she brought along a copy of a letter from her therapist to account for the difference in appearance from her male ID's but Customs did not question her. In each city, she saw a game and



also the sights of the cities she visited. Keeping the baseball theme intact, she dropped into the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York and Babe Ruth's birthplace in Baltimore. Erin gives some interesting anecdotes about each stadium and the games she saw, as well as some of the other local highlights of her stops along the way. After her return to San Francisco, she has enough time to catch a Giants day game and an Oakland A's night game, which shows a certain devotion to baseball that seems almost quaint in this day and age.

Far more interesting to me in Erin's lively trip was the subtext of a transgender person who is proud to be a sports fan. Nowhere in her lengthy article was there one mention of shopping or (thankfully) what she wore each day. This is a much different piece than anything I've read in TG support group newsletters and shows that we can be interested in - and interested about - something other than women's garments. It's refreshing to see that someone isn't afraid to acknowledge that you can't take the boy out of the girl... and you can take the girl out to the ballgame.

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#### **WHAT'S THE GOOD WORD?**

Melanie Yarborough wrote an interesting article for the November '98 issue of the *Reflections* newsletter of the Neutral Corner group in San Diego, California, titled "Who Speaks for Crossdressers?"

Melanie begins by asking a provocative question: "Do transsexuals get all the front page news at the expense of crossdressers?" She goes on with her thesis thusly: "As I cruise the Internet, I see lots of pages devoted to hormones, document changes, and the intricacies of cosmetic feminization and SRS. I see less references to things like wig care, wardrobe color analysis, or jewelry coordination. I see a great many on the front lines are full-time pre-op or post-op. Fewer of them are closeted crossdressers."

In a nutshell, Melanie is calling for a greater participation by crossdressers in publishing articles that

deal with our own issues, which although not as dramatic as life transitions for transsexuals, can be nonetheless as interesting and appealing to a wide audience. She also makes a very interesting observation that is very apropos for Internet publication. "In our community, our more fetishistic members are made invisible. There's somehow an unspoken law in our community that 'good' transgendered people seek to be active and in public. The 'weird' transgendered are into it for their own kinky sexual desires." She calls for recognition of all crossdressers - of whatever stripe - as members of our community. "No one person or subgroup represents us all. We are for transgender rights for ALL people."

This is akin to an observation I made in this column last year. There are hundreds of personal web pages, and many more hundreds (if not thousands) of screen identities of people identifying themselves as crossdressers, who are not members of any active TG organization. Many of those screen identities and web personas are crossdressers who could be identified as "fetishists" who may not have any interest in serious TG topics, maybe not even the types of harmless topics about which Melanie speaks.

It could very well be that they are turned off by the workaday discussions of most crossdressing topics. Put bluntly, they want action, oftentimes not even live action, but something to stimulate them, if you will, as they browse around the web. The group that can appeal to that segment of the market, can retain their interest, and attract the hundreds or thousands more that have yet to be found, will rule the TG world. Would it harm us irreparably to set aside some space for discussion and photos of fetish clothing, bondage, or the kinkier aspects of transvestism? I think not. And as Melanie Yarborough points out, "We need only respond that we are a rainbow of many kinds of people." Amen, sister.

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#### **DON'T TALK WHILE I'M INTERRUPTING**

The *Gemini Journal* newsletter of the Gemini Gender Group in Milwaukee, Wisconsin reprinted an article titled, "Language and Gender Differences" by Richard Morey that appeared in the Sydney (Australia) *Morning Herald* newspaper. The article dealt with language differences between men and women studied by a researcher at the University of Queensland.

Dr. Jennifer Peck taped conversations in public places, offices, and homes for six years and found that men and women have "fundamentally different ways of talking." The main difference is that women interrupt each other and often talk at the same time in their conversations. "Men, on the other hand, resented such interruptions."

Dr. Peck continued, "Men and women not only talk about different things, there is a fundamental difference in the way men and women talk. Women are more about sharing experiences. What's more important for a man is expressing yourself as an individual." By studying her 30 hours of taped conversations, she noticed that women didn't seem to mind being interrupted, or to have their sentences finished by their partner, even if the statements were incorrect. Women will simply concur and later make the correction as they continue their conversation.

Men will express annoyance if the conclusion is incorrect and make the correction immediately. Further, when women speak with men, they adapt to the male style and often seem uncomfortable with the competitiveness of the conversation. The conversation style differences led to inevitable communication problems. "In a way, it isolates men," presumably because they do not share conversational topics as much as espouse them," Dr. Peck concluded. I know what we can learn from this study but I have a feeling that no amount of women's clothing is going to change what appear to be instinctual conversation patterns for male crossdressers.

*continued on page 14*



## Gender Reflections

by *Barbara F. Anderson*  
*M.S.W., Ph.D.*

### The Plight of the Crossdresser's Wife

The lot of the crossdresser's wife is not an easy one, so I'm told by my clients. In either couple-counseling or individual treatment with the spouse alone, complaints include: using her clothing and make-up without permission; impulsive spending on impractical items; self-centeredness bordering on narcissism; a lack of caution and respect for her wish to keep his behavior secret; alternatively, secretiveness approaching paranoia; competitiveness and even gloating when (on rare occasions) he looks better than she; lack of interest in learning skills essential to dressing and making-up such as mending and removing make-up stains; entering a period of age-regression immediately upon dressing; and selecting friends in the gender community based on appearance.

As you can imagine some of these issues engender (no pun intended) laughter despite the pain that provokes the complaint. Here is how I attempt to help a couple or an individual deal with the above issues.

Using other's property without their permission is rude and presumptuous. If this is permitted with other than gender-related property, it will be more difficult to correct. After all, if she has been using his razor and he her deodorant without incident, a pattern has been established which gives rise to the current complaint. I ask couples to look at their boundaries and think about why are some infringements OK and others not. If this only occurs with gender-related property, issues of inexperience and embarrassment may be inhibiting the crossdresser from purchasing what he needs. Education and reassurance can go far to reestablish boundaries.

Complaints about impulsive spending for impractical items may be motivated by the couple's limited finances; unfair division of discretionary income; neurosis on either (or both) part(s); lack of information about where to shop reasonably or inexperience in what items are usable; or the CDer being an impulsive or impractical individual. A frank discussion of this complaint with both individuals will reveal the underlying cause and ultimately the best therapeutic approach.

Self-centeredness is a very common behavior of crossdressers—whether they are new at it or old hands. I think for many it is the attempt to deal with insecurity by an over-attentiveness to appearance. On the other hand a narcissistic individual will be a narcissistic crossdresser as well. The therapeutic stance is to assess whether the behavior is situational or endemic to his personality. In the former case, education and reassurance can be helpful. In the latter, it will be useless. In such a situation the big guns are necessary in the form of individual, intensive psychotherapy.

Extreme attitudes concerning caution or its absence regarding non-conventional gender behavior can cause great difficulty within a couple. Of course "extreme" is in the eye of the beholder. Rather than getting caught up in who is right or wrong, the importance of agreeing on what level of discretion is appropriate is the key. Therapy can be helpful in facilitating a discussion that is rational and respectful and leads to negotiating an agreement each can live with.

Competitiveness, although stressful, is natural among CDers. Their spouses are their models and for many men

represent the ideal of femininity. However, their wives need to deflect their partners' preoccupation with comparing their appearances. Assuming this is not an acting-out of marital dissatisfaction, I encourage wives not to fall into the competitive pattern but rather, set an example, by behaving collaboratively and cooperatively and giving many complements. The objective voice of the therapist can help to make the CDer aware of the unattractive and distancing behavior in which he is engaging.

With regard to his refusal to learn the less glamorous skills essential to a good presentation, the spouse must be firm in insisting that he take responsibility for these as well. This means facilitating his learning them and not doing them for him. This brings me to the next complaint.—age regression with dressing. I think that this is a real phenomenon explained by the CDer not having enjoyed an adolescence in which dressing was supported or encouraged. If the wife can tolerate the immaturity that sometimes marks this period and behave firmly and with a sense of humor, this too will pass.

Lastly, he is said to select his friends in the gender community on a different, and more shallow basis. This includes attractiveness, skill in dressing, and knowledge and resources. Again, this seems reasonable since often the CDer's only common ground with his gender friends is their CDing behavior. However, his wife may find it tedious to socialize with people whose interests seem limited to clothing and make-up. She may also be distressed to see him reject someone who is more interesting as a person but less skilled in presentation. Again negotiation and compromise can go a long way to resolving this issue.

In summary, it is not easy to be in a relationship that presents the aforementioned challenges. If you have attempted resolution by traditional approaches, consider a period of brief counseling where you can learn some useful strategies and get support and clarification from an objective person.



## Dr. Whittle...

in September. It was attended by an international collection of over 170 academics, medical practitioners and community leaders working in the field of transsexual and transgender studies. New partnership links were created as well as proposals for the development of a new archival approach to trans studies and theory. I believe it was a resounding success.

Q: Our research has shown you are a prolific writer, including such titles as *Legislating for Transgender Rights*, *Legal Issues in Gender Dysphoria* and *The Criminalisation of the Transsexual*. In fact a list of your publications would take much of the remainder of this publication. What are your latest works?

A: I have just completed editing a book on Trans-theory studies for Cassell's which is due out in May 1999 entitled *Reclaiming Genders: Essays on Transsexual Grammars at the End of the Millenium*. I also have several chapters in other publications and we are currently revising the third edition of *Transvestism, Transsexualism and the Law*.

Q: Do you ever wish that you were not transgendered?

A: I've often been asked that question. My answer is "No." I have been able to be at the forefront of a new political movement that is really challenging the issues of body fascism. If we can win the one about trans bodies, then we can win in all the other battle grounds surrounding the body whether to do with people being fat

or thin, abled or disabled, black or brown, male or female. Mostly though, being trans has been a privilege because I have met wonderful people, done wonderful things, been to wonderful places - all in all had a wonderful life.

Dr. Stephen Whittle's work has obtained high international and national interdisciplinary respect as being at the forefront of transgender theory and studies as evidenced by the volume of invited publications and conference presentations. *Transgender Community News* is grateful for the opportunity to present our readers with profiles of such leaders. He and others like him allow us all to share this "wonderful life."



# \$2.8 Million Awarded in Tyra Hunter Wrongful Death Suit

On August 7, 1995, Tyra Hunter, a preoperative transsexual woman and highly successful hair stylist, was critically wounded in an automobile accident when a motorist ran a stop sign and broadsided her car. When three D.C. Fire Department Emergency Medical Technicians removed Ms. Hunter's slacks to assess her bleeding at the 1995 accident scene, they discovered her male genitalia.

One of them exclaimed, "This ain't no bitch ... He's got a [phallus] and balls." Treatment was immediately discontinued. The EMTs ridiculed the still-conscious Ms. Hunter, allowing her to bleed profusely on the pavement while horrified onlookers begged them to render aid. Treatment was resumed only after Fire Chief Otis Latin arrived at the scene.

Still conscious upon her arrival at DC General Hospital, Ms. Hunter was given a medication to paralyze

her. She died about an hour later from loss of blood. According to expert testimony, Ms. Hunter would have experienced "sheer terror" from feelings of intense suffocation. That, combined with drug-induced paralysis and the probable memory of the EMTs hateful remarks, paints a macabre picture of Ms. Hunter's final moments.

Finding that she died in part because of negligence by the District of Columbia Fire Department and malpractice by the D.C. General Hospital, a jury awarded \$2.8 million in damages to Margie Hunter, Tyra's mother.

A deposition by attending physician Joseph Bastian states that while Ms. Hunter lay dying in the ER, the EMTs continued ridiculing her in a nearby visiting area. They became so disruptive that the hospital staff reported them to the police.

The jury attributed Ms. Hunter's

death in part to the EMTs' refusal to administer critical first aid and in part to the malpractice of Dr. Bastian. According to expert testimony, Ms. Hunter would have had a 71-88% chance of survival with prompt, competent attention.

Although it is disappointing that criminal action was not taken and that the offending EMTs were neither disciplined nor reprimanded despite widespread complaint from Washington citizens, the victory today is a milestone. Today a jury ruled that a transgendered person's life is worth protecting. Today the transgendered population became a bit more human in the eyes of the public.



# Hot • Buzz

JoAnn Roberts • Cyber Queen



Happy New Year! We're gonna party like it's 1999. Oh, it *is* 1999. Most people seemed to have liked my format last month, so I will repeat it this month with a request for feedback. Do you like the fashion news first or last? Do you want all fashion news, all political commentary, or keep the mix as is? I really want to know what you want.

I picked up a really nice booklet while shopping for makeup. The book is called *Star Beauty – Secrets of a Hollywood Makeup Artist* and is published by **Max Factor**. The booklet came with three samples of Max Factor's **Lasting Performance** makeup. The booklet itself is a fabulous primer on making up. Best of all the booklet was less than \$5. Pick one up if you see it. And, by the way, Lasting Performance is the foundation that Max Factor recommends to replace its **Active Protection** foundation which is no longer available.

**Revlon** has released four hot new colors for Winter. These new colors are all in the deep chocolate brown family and look just luscious. Check out **Mochaccino**, **Chocolate Bar**, **Hot Cocoa**, or **Cocoa Bean**. The company is offering the colors in both Super Lustrous lipstick and nail enamel. Many fashion magazines have a coupon for \$1.50 off any of the new items.

January is usually a good time for sales. Now, for example is a good time to buy Christmas cards for next year. And, if you stop by an **Estée Lauder** counter in January, you can get some freebies if you're willing to sit through a consultation (and spend some money). You can opt for skin-care advice or eye makeup advice. If you pick skin-care, you'll receive **Fruition Extra Multi Complex** (whatever that is!), **Advanced Night Repaid Protective Recovery Complex** (do they have politicians make up these names?), and **Diminish Retinol Treatment**. Pick eye makeup and receive **Lip and Eye Makeup Remover**, and **Pure Velvet Dramatic Volume Mascara**. I'd go just to hear the counter clerk spit out all those names.

Also look for two-for-one sales of **lingerie** in January. Times they are a-changing and a **good bra** these days sells for \$25 to \$30, so anything less than that in a brand name is a bargain. **Panties** cost between \$5 and \$10 each.

Two for one is also the message of a new line of dresses from **BCBG Max Azira**. These stretchy dresses are **basic black** on one side and completely reversible to show a **bright color** on the other side. No one will know it's the same dress. The dress is about \$120 (that's \$60 a side, remember). Call 1-888-636-2224 to find out where to get one near you.

Of course, since we're now officially into Winter, we should be looking at **Spring fashions**. This Spring the buzz is about **neutrals** and **pastels**. The neutrals this seasons are shades of gray from light, almost **silvery gray** to **charcoal**. The pastels include **ivory**, **pinks**, and **baby blues**. But be smart, don't pair gray with more than one pastel shade at a time.

**Racquel Welch** was in New York some time ago hawking her new line of signature wigs. The actress, famous for *One Million B.C.* and *Myra Breckenridge*, has launched the line of 22 contemporary, stylish wigs. The cost is "...less than a pair of shoes." Yeah, well if you like **Bally** or **Manolo Blanik**, that's \$300.

It started with **Michael Jackson**, and continues now with the advent "whitening masks." Several cosmetics companies have introduced **skin bleaching** products claiming they reduce discolorations, freckles, age spots, and dark patches. Most contain hydroquinone that blocks the formation of pigment. If you have spots you want to erase, you might want to check out **She Uemura** Whitening Lotion or **Chanel** Whitening Mask.

Looking for that "perfect" **undergarment**? You know, the one like **mom** used to wear. The one you started wearing when she was out of the house. Well, if that's your "thing," then you want to visit **Crepe Suzette Vintage Undergarments** <[www.crepe-suzette.com](http://www.crepe-suzette.com)>. They have vintage and vintage-looking undergarments including long-line bras, braselettes, bustiers and girdles.

If more contemporary lingerie is your thing (and who among us doesn't crave sexy lingerie?), then you must visit the new **Victoria's Secret** web site at <<http://www.VictoriasSecret.com/vsc/>>. Almost everything you'd find in the catalog is there online and ready to be ordered. If you're one of those shy people who doesn't want to talk to a sales clerk, this site may be your answer. Personally, I like it because I can order VS pantyhose which I love.

Some time ago, I mentioned an ad I saw online for a corset kit and gave an email

address. Several people told me they sent mail but had not received a reply and asked for a snail mail address. Well, I saw the product mentioned again and this time I received a response: "The reduction at the waist is around 4"... they are no-busk, slip on cinchers that lace up in the back... start at \$89US (s/h incl) for a basic cincher (no trims/garters/ruffle lace).... for a cincher with 4 garters, simple lace and trim, it would be around 160. Decorative trims and laces make for a higher priced garment, as in the picture, the red one is \$US225, with 12 garters, ruffled lace top/bottom, and woven trim motif on the stays." More info on the corsets are available from <leedpro@cadvision.com>, Leeds Productions, d-207 Rundlevue Dr. N.E. Calgary, Alberta, Canada T1Y 1H7.



And now for the news and commentary... *"The quality of an organization can never exceed the quality of the minds that make it up."*

— Harold R. McAlindon

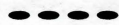


The online community was taken aback by a widely distributed message in mid-December that alleged the **American Psychiatric Association** had rejected **Gender Identity Disorder** as a legitimate diagnosis. The message stated that, "...the diagnosis itself is harmful because it implies people have a disease and that in and of itself can cause depression, anxiety and self destructive behavior." The message was hailed as a victory by not a few people. The only problem is the message **wasn't real**. According to **TranZGrilla, Suzy Cooke**, who created the message, "A TranZGrilla performance art piece called 'IF?' was started today, Monday December 14, 1998 at approximately 10:00 am, California time. It is meant as a holiday gift. As performance art the participation of the audience is welcomed. I took an announcement which was a Saturday AP release and altered it..." Apparently, Cooke never expected anyone to take it seriously or for it to spread as quickly as it did. By Tuesday afternoon the whole net was abuzz with the news.



Earlier in the month the **Human Rights Campaign** released this news; "The

Human Rights Campaign strongly supports public and private initiatives to counter discrimination based on **real or perceived gender identity**. We acknowledge the extraordinary work of **transgender organizations and leaders** and view them as important **friends** and **powerful allies**. The Human Rights Campaign is committed to a **mutually beneficial relationship** with the **transgender community**. It is our hope that such a relationship will help inform and craft a shared vision of a world that honors and respects all people regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity." **Candy Marcum**, Board of Directors Co-Chair, said, "We hope to work closely with the transgender community in finding the right solutions." Well here's hoping that HRC and Ms. Marcum put their words into actions. The "transgender community" goes far beyond the boundaries of such focus-limited organizations as **GenderPAC**. The HRC needs to meet with and talk to the **real** transgender leadership, those who work and toil in the offices of our community-supported organizations, not a self-appointed demagogue. Send a strong message to the HRC <hrc@hrc.org> and let them know that you want your community-chosen leaders to meet with their leadership and that you are willing to work for transgender inclusion in the **Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA)**.



**Urvashi Vaid**, one of the most respected voices in the GLB community wrote in the December 8th issue of the **Advocate**: "... Will everyone in our very diverse community ever **unite** behind one set of ideological politics? No, we will not. But should GLBT Progressives just abandon the movement to people who **sacrifice principle for politics**? No way. We need to speak out more than ever. If we do not create a movement brave enough to stand for basic human rights, then we **deserve the movement we have**, which harbors a valueless politics that hurts the prospect of equality for GLBT people..." Why do I bring this up? Because Ms. Vaid addresses precisely the issues I believe has hurt our community the most in the last two years, i.e., selling out principle for political gain. I have been sharply criticized for my comments on **GenderPAC** in

the last issue of this column. Ms. **Riki Wilchins**, GPAC Executive Director, emailed me and asked why I was so upset with her "...all of a sudden." **Alison Laing** declared to me that the **International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE)** supports GPAC and is still working with them. She cited an example where, apparently, GPAC took a booth at last November's **National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) Creating Change Conference** and the booth cost was shared by IFGE, BiNet, and other so-called member organizations of GPAC's board. So let me start with Ms. Wilchins' question. Riki, it's not "all of a sudden," it's **still**. Yes, two years later (hey, I hold a grudge a long time; it's a very feminine thing), I'm still very upset over the way Wilchins manipulated board members and, with the help of carefully selected supporters, orchestrated an end-run around the duly elected officers of the GPAC board. Ms. Wilchins chose politics over principle in her bid for the power and control of GPAC. Ms. Laing and others chose politics over principle when they supported Ms. Wilchins in that power bid. In making that choice two years ago, the community was robbed of the opportunity to debate and discuss issues of national importance and robbed of the chance to help set national policy. Instead what we have is an oligarchy known as GenderPAC that defines our issues, sets our policy and then tells us about it after the fact. I am not so much concerned about what GPAC has or has not accomplished as how they have accomplished it... at the expense of our right to self-determine our national voice. Now, there are those who say I am way off-base in my opinion about GPAC and Ms. Wilchins, and that I am doing harm. What do you think? Let me know, please. And, please send email to Ms. Wilchins at <riki@gpac.org> and let her know if you agree with her or with me, as well.



So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? I refuse to have a battle of wits with people so clearly unarmed. Comments? Write me care of this publication or send email to the <CyberQueen@cldspub.com>. © 1999 by Creative Design Services.

## Vis A Vis...

I just don't think we'll get the same feminine thrill from interrupting and being interrupted in our chitchats as we do from wearing high heels and foundation garments.

### CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Dallas Denny, the TG activist from Atlanta Georgia, wrote an article that appeared in the November/December '98 *Crystal Chronicle* published by the Crystal Club of Columbus, Ohio. The piece was titled "Imprisoned Florida Pre-Op TS Sues for Hormone Treatment" and recounted the suit brought by Dennis Smith against the Florida Department of Corrections.

Smith is serving a 10 year sentence for aggravated battery. Prior to his conviction, Smith had changed his name to Rhonda and began taking estrogen and had hip and bust implants for a more feminine appearance. In 1992, the Florida correctional authorities had stopped providing

hormone therapy for transsexuals because it was not "medically necessary." Smith's suit alleges that they are refusing to treat "serious medical needs" in not prescribing the estrogen, thereby "violating his constitutional protection from cruel and unusual punishment. Along with the restoration of the hormone therapy, he (which is the pronoun used by the author of the original article) is also suing for \$100,000 in compensatory and punitive damages.

I'm beginning to sound like Pat Buchanan with some of my views on transgendered criminals lately but I just don't agree with Mr./Ms. Smith's position on this issue. Maybe they should just let him/her have the estrogen and be thankful she isn't suing for a cool million instead of a measly hundred grand.

Do you have something that you'd like to share?

**Transgender Community News** is a two way process.

If an article or opinion provokes a reaction in you, whether positive or negative, don't go unheard. Send your opinions and comments in a letter to the Editor.

Send letters to:  
Editor, c/o Renaissance,  
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HARVEY W. BROOKMAN, M.D.

## Favorable Decision in Cyber-Censorship Case

[Alexandria, VA, November 23, 1998]

For the first time in America's legal history a court has applied First Amendment principals to Internet access at public libraries. The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia ruling states that forcing adults to use blocking software in public libraries "offends the guarantee of free speech," and permanently blocked government officials in Loudoun County, Virginia from unconstitutionally restricting online access.

In this landmark case the American Civil Liberties Union had acted as "intervenor" on behalf of The Renaissance Transgender Association, Inc., and seven other diverse groups who charged that the Loudoun County Library's "Policy on Internet Sexual Harassment" violated their First Amendment rights. The Library's poli-

cy, established on October 20, 1997, included the use of Internet blocking software to deny access to websites the library deemed pornographic.

Blocked were the Renaissance website (<http://www.ren.org>), The Safer Sex Page, and the Books for Gay and Lesbian Teens/Youth page despite the defendant's concession that these sites did not violate their policy.

Federal district court Judge Leonie M. Brinkema, a former librarian, presided over this case, in which Renaissance Executive Director, Angela Gardner testified in July. The judge concluded that "although defendant is under no obligation to provide Internet access to its patrons, it has chosen to do so and is therefore restricted by the First Amendment in the limitations it is allowed to place on patron access." Further, restricting "the access of adult patrons to protected material just because the mate-

rial is unfit for minors" is unconstitutional.

The ACLU has recommended alternatives to the "unconstitutional use of mandatory blocking software" including placing privacy screens around terminals, establishing Internet use policies, and allowing optional filtering on terminals used by children.

It is yet unclear whether Loudoun County will appeal this decision.



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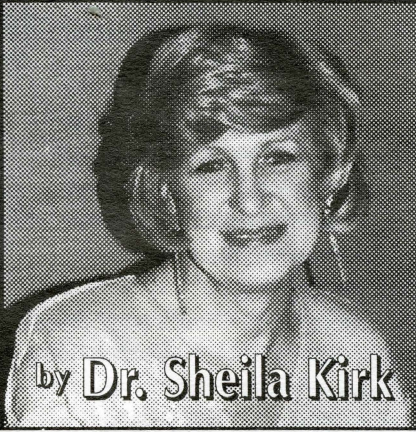
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Ms. Lynda

# Trans Health Matters



by Dr. Sheila Kirk

## Feminizing the Face - Soft Tissue Techniques

Plastic and Reconstructive surgeons have such capacity to project, to plan, to revise and to remodel. With such talent available to assist our community and with such gratifying and successful results for our people, it's no wonder many are considering this surgical approach early in transition before moving toward genital reassignment. As much as I understand the need for some to have anatomic congruity with one's mind, to have gender and body become one, the plan to have facial and skull cosmetic surgery before undertaking genital change can still be a good investment. I also endorse facial feminization and body contouring for those of you who never will seek GRS.

In this second of three articles dealing with facial feminization, I want to concentrate on soft tissue procedures and save discussion of bone alterations until my February column. I don't want you to think that bone and soft tissue procedures are not

often combined. They certainly are and have to be to accomplish the plan designed for each individual. And keep in mind my last remark. In the consultation visit, a plan should be formulated by you and your plastic surgeon to reach a satisfying and successful set of results.

To feminize, not just to demasculinize you, is the plan and to accomplish this feminization by making you unique - not like the other Transwoman before you or the one the surgeon does after you. A "tranny" face should NOT be the result of your surgery experience. In that I mean, you should not receive an obviously sculptured face that is as likely to draw as much negative attention as one who has never had facial feminization surgery.

I am afraid we have all seen examples of what I am talking about. Please be cautious of those surgeons who push a "cookie-cutter" approach and supply you with the same standard list of procedures that they supply to your friends. This "laundry list"

approach with no consideration to the uniqueness of your face (or your friend's for that matter) is not in your best interest and frankly, in my opinion, is adopted by surgeons who have become complacent and have more interest in their bottom line than supplying you with what is best for you.

When evaluating the face, it helps to divide it into three segments, upper, middle and lower. In that division, however, it is most vital to project how changes in the upper third will affect the rest of the face and how changes in the lower third will have influence on decisions about alterations of the rest of the facial structures-and so on. Changes in soft tissue can be somewhat extensive - for example, face and neck lifts. But subtle and simple procedures such as accentuation of cheek pads or elevation of the upper lip are important considerations as well. After healing, those subtle changes can have powerful effect - even more than extensive alteration.

Let's look at some of these soft tissue remolding procedures. The eyes are the very first structures that people focus on in looking at you. Procedures to "open" the eyes change their shape and erase wrinkles, and fat collections around them are often utilized. Blephosoplasty or surgical change in the eyelids, upper and lower, is a procedure that must be very carefully carried out so as not to produce too wide an appearance or too restricted lid activity.

Often one can spot the person who has too vigorous an approach to the



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eyes. Their eyes look unnatural and not a part of their face. Delicate liposuction can take away the bulge appearance in the lower lid and slight elevation of the outer position of the eyes, the lateral canthus, can change the shape. The result is the almond shape eye we see in many of the most beautiful models.

In conjunction with those approaches to the eyes, one can soften greatly the ridges of bone above the eyes that are so thick and prominent in men. By making a small incision within the hairline of either side of the head, the surgeon can dissect down beneath the forehead tissue to expose these heavy bone ridges and allow for high-speed instrumentation to be applied to shave down the bone.

The overall effect is two-fold. One, to soften these structures to appear as they are in genetic females and two, to de-emphasize the concave appearance of the forehead as it is characteristically in men. With this approach often there is no need to actively correct the concave appearance although when that concavity is marked it will need special attention. We will deal with that technique in the next article.

When we consider bone-shaving methods, another very simple technique is to make an incision inside the lower lip and, with dissection down to the chin bone, a burr revolving at high speed can smooth down the bone thickness and prominences to make a female chin shape. While other bone removing methods are employed to soften and thin the jaw line, this very efficient surgery in particular is highly

useful to feminize. Pain afterwards is minimal and ability to function fully including eating in a day or so is the usual.

Much is spoken of in ways to emphasize the cheekbones. The most prominent bone in this area, the zygoma, can be augmented with malar implants placed through the mouth into the cheek and this is a common approach. Often, however, the cheek pad can be emphasized to accomplish a very female appearance and this may be a very worthwhile approach without placing a foreign body. A non-absorbed suture is placed in a very clever manner in the circumference of the cheek pad to elevate this structure. It is then attached to the scalp tissue above the hairline - simple and effective. When there are depressions in the temple area on each side, various substances can be placed to fill and soften those depressions.

An area that is commonly considered is the middle third of the face, particularly the nose. Surgical techniques to remove the dorsal hump and change shape are utilized. The nasal openings can be made smaller and softened and a very important feature of the nose, the tip, can be fashioned to be petite and with a slight elevation as is fitting for the individual's whole face. In men the lips are frequently thin and in a straight line—the upper lip in particular. A very imperceptible incision made just beneath the nose, through which precise suturing is done will raise the upper lip to reveal more of the vermillion, and it can be shaped as

well to have more contour. This lends allure and femininity to the mouth. Liposuction techniques to the chin, the neck, as well as to the tissues under the eyes are exceedingly valuable. Removal of small deposits of fat can enhance other features to make for a most beautiful appearance.

When considering much more extensive procedures, one that comes to mind is when hairlines are changed with deliberate and involved surgery. The frontal hairline in women is much closer to the eyebrows than in men. The forehead is not as broad or extensive in women. Placement of an expander through two less-than-one-inch incisions within the hairline on either side of the head allows for stretching the hair bearing scalp. This is done under IV sedation and after 8-10 weeks of periodic injection of sterile saline into the expander by the patient, the stretched segment can be mobilized into a flap.

This flap will be so placed with appropriate incision and suturing that the hairline is natural, lower, and the hair is growing in the proper direction. This technique is used to create parietal or side of the head flaps as well to eliminate male pattern baldness and other types of hair loss. This technique is very specialized and not utilized by many who work with various hair transplant operations. My partner, Dr. Ernest Manders, has refined this procedure with pioneering techniques that produce excellent results.

*continued on page 20*



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# Making Sense of It All

by Lee Ann Etscovitz, Ed.D.

## YES

Self-affirmation and self-belief have been easy for me to preach but difficult to achieve. I have found it easier to fight the forces which have been a threat to my existence than to create an existence which is meaningful and fulfilling. I have developed some personal boundaries but have not fully lived within those boundaries. The task of being true to myself has been a challenge, to say the least. Yet if I do not start saying "yes" to my sense of self rather than focussing on saying "no" to the threats to my still undeveloped self, then what do I really have of substance in my life? Who am I besides a fighter for personal freedom? What am I free for?

I have written a poem which attempts to express the meaning of saying "yes," that is, the meaning of self-affirmation. The poem is called, of course, "Yes:"

Yes  
is painful  
if at any cost  
you simply agree.

Yes  
is difficult  
if you are lost  
and you cannot see.

Yes  
is natural  
if you have a goal  
and you are free.

Yes  
is alive

if you own your soul  
and you choose to be.

What I have just described in poetic form are four stages, if you will, of saying "yes" to one's sense of self. I would like to comment on each stage, not in terms of the wider human struggle in which all of us are engaged, but rather in terms of the gender struggle which some of us happen to face in the midst of that wider struggle.

For most of my life I have known pain and difficulty in terms of my gender struggle. As I look back, I can see that I agreed to a great deal which was not really a reflection of my inner truth. I buried whatever feelings and desires were expressive of my transgender wishes. It is true that I did not really have a name for my feelings, but the feelings themselves, even if not labeled, were real. Outside my most private moments, I acted as if my wishes did not exist. I was agreeable at any cost, if only to be loved and included. But I was not being loved for being myself. I was loved for being what others wanted me to be.

Saying "yes" in that way was extremely painful, especially as I emerged from childhood. Saying "yes" that way was even more painful as I grew into adulthood. As an adolescent I began to feel lost, not just like adolescents tend to feel, but even more so as I sexualized my transgender feelings. I felt I did not belong anywhere, that I was strangely different, even though, as I have said, I could not identify that difference. I just knew I did not fit into the usual categories of boys and girls. I was torn between liking the girls on the one hand and being like them on the other. I did not really get along with the other boys. So I was a loner, an isolate. The problem was that I was lost. I did not know who I was, and I could not see where I was going or if I was going anywhere at all.

I wandered for many years in terms of my transgender feelings, not knowing exactly what they were, and not knowing what to do with them.

The erotic and secret crossdressing with lingerie in the privacy of my bedroom was maddening at the same time that it was necessary and pleasurable. The thought of anyone ever finding out was also embarrassing. Saying "yes" to oneself is truly difficult if you are not sure of what or who you are. Saying "yes" to a sense of confusion, even an inescapable confusion, is far from satisfying.

When, as an adult, I was finally able to face and to identify my transgender feelings and wishes, I joined the Renaissance Transgender Association. My membership in that organization felt natural. It felt right to be with other transgendered persons. I was not alone anymore, and I was free to begin to express my feelings, both verbally and in my appearance. I felt free at last, free to be feminine in the way I had always imagined, at least for one evening a month. But that was one evening more than I had ever experienced.

I was also free to pursue therapy, free to explore those feelings and wishes which I had carried around inside of myself for so long but which I had never allowed to become part of my sense of self. The "yes" which I was then able to pursue was the affirmation of my soul and the choosing of my very being. Such a choice is far from easy, but it is a choice worth the effort. Choosing to be oneself is painful, but the pain is different from the agony of the self-sabotage with which my "yes" journey began. Painful effort is effort in the service of personal goals, goals which are the beginning of personal freedom.

Though I do not claim to have all the answers about myself, I somehow no longer feel lost. I am beginning to agree to those things which enhance and fulfill, rather than diminish and destroy, my life as a whole and my transgendered life in particular. No longer do I simply agree. Rather, I am beginning to choose my life, and in that choosing I am beginning to feel truly alive, alive as a woman, alive as a person.



## Is It Just the Clothes?

by Denise Mason,  
connecticuTView

Every month I receive about 10 different TV Clubs newsletters, and over the years, I can remember almost each and every club saying..."our club is going downhill, unless you help." I can say that I often question, "How is our club going?" to myself, as I see successes ... but also disappointments. And I question, why?

Yes, we have produced a successful Female Impersonator Show and raised \$3125 for Pediatric AIDS, but NOT EVEN 25% of the club attended the show. Yes, we have monthly meetings and some great parties, but the same six to twelve members attend. What about the other 50? My wife has attended more club parties than 95% of the members.

We probably have one of the very best newsletters in the East, jammed full of information, local and national news, and I don't receive an average of one article a month contributed from the members.

But remember what I said in the first sentence: "all clubs are having the same problem," and all clubs are so disgusted that when that pressure cooker explodes, they put it in print to their membership. Why isn't there ...support? I feel that it's the nature of the transvestite. First, last and foremost, they are male. As males, how many on their own will send a Thank You card or Get Well card to a friend?

You would think that because they have a feminine side that it would be second nature to do things like that. If they were more women-like, it would be a natural reaction to wipe the dishes, or on a club level, to pitch in and run a club meeting or party.

If they were more women-like, possibly they would send a letter to their friend in California, just telling them that they missed them, or at the club level, maybe they could write an article for the newsletter. God only knows, I ask!

If they were more woman-like, would they jump at the chance to go to bingo with the girls, or play bridge, or have a Tupperware party ... or make an attempt to attend their TV club's monthly meeting?

If they were more woman-like, they would comment to their relatives or friends about how nice it was to hear from them, or see them at the last reunion or picnic, and how nice it is to receive the e-mail messages from all their cousins all over Connecticut, instead of just belonging to a club where no one ever hears from them during their 12 months of membership. Thank God, when dues are due, I at least know they are alive as I get a check (but with no note).

Success, isn't just the club prospering, it's the members of the club prospering. If they are getting something out of the club, if they are growing, if they contact their feminine side, then one gets a sense of accomplishment.

But when a TV hasn't learned one iota about what it is to be feminine or female, then I think it's just a big waste of time.

Unfortunately, many of the clubs around the country have the same problem. Our women are really still men. We have failed, for if we succeeded, we would have tiny dinner parties, craft classes, or clothing parties to show how to use a scarf. We would have letters to the editor sharing how they became a TV, and how important that side of them is.

What great news it would be for a TV to share how close he had gotten to his spouse once he shared his crossdressing secret with her. If their feminine side were really there, we would be exchanging cards for Xmas, Get Well cards for the ill, Birthday notes to those older than 39, and silly and sexy cards for almost any reason. But we don't.

Because ... most of us are still men. And Rangers watching, beer slurping, tee-shirt wearing men just don't do those things. Sad, because this is happening in every club, all around the country. I guess TV is only ... cross-dressing.

To contact connecticuTView write to:

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*"I have been there."*

**Lee Ann Etscovitz, Ed.D.**  
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## Dr. Kirk...

Sometimes to accomplish the most ideal results, various surgical procedures are staged. A certain few are done first. Then others are combined in a second stage to complete the plan after appropriate time has elapsed and healing has taken place. Not always is it possible to put too much together and at times it's inadvisable because in a second stage there could be the possibility that one technique can be eliminated or another one added or modified to accomplish a better result. Keep in mind, you also have an

input to the plan to surgically alter the face and skull. Don't believe it is all the decision of the plastic surgeon. Very often what you desire is very easily implemented into the surgical plan. Still I caution you, sometimes it is not and while marvelous changes are possible some unrealistic approaches may never be a consideration for you.

There is much to consider and to discuss when considering face and skull remodeling. Keep an open mind. Evaluate techniques, surgeon's philosophies and their costs and compare, compare, compare! Once again, please don't accept a set of proce-

dures pushed by some surgeons as the only way to feminize a T face. It's a cop-out on the surgeon's part. A surgeon should always keep your individualism in mind and work with you to improve and enhance your best traits while feminizing you. Your face is often the first physical impression of yourself seen by others. Consider carefully what you want and who you want to help you "put your best face forward."

Next month, I will concentrate on the bone (osteotomy) operations for the face and skull and some of the body contouring operations available to you.



## TG Doctor Fired For Transitioning On Job

Dr. Carla Enriquez, a pediatrician, has filed a suit against West Jersey Health System (WJHS) of New Jersey alleging that they failed to renew her contract last year because she was transitioning from male to female. Enriquez, a trustee of The College of New Jersey since 1984, was terminated on October 22, 1997. Her attorney, Lee Fiederer stated, "We brought the case under the New Jersey law against discrimination which protects individuals from discrimination based on sexual orientation or affectation."

The suit alleges that officials at WJHS were openly critical of Enriquez throughout her transition, and that WJHS denied her employment based on their disapproval, rather than any measure of performance. She began transitioning in

September 1996. At that time she legally changed her name from Carlos to Carla and made the change in her physical appearance from male to female over the next several months.

The complaint further alleges that in 1997 Dr. John Cossa, Vice President of WJHS, told her to "stop all this and go back to your previous appearance." After Enriquez refused to comply with these demands, WJHS took action to deny her employment. "We have a brilliant doctor, recognized nationally in her field, who was terminated solely based on her sexual affectation and orientation," said Fiederer.

Riki Anne Wilchins, Executive Director of GenderPAC, commenting on Court TV said, "That such blatant discrimination can happen to a fine

doctor emphasizes the urgent need for employment protection at the local and state level and especially within the context of ENDA. The experience of this woman is echoed in the scores of responses we are receiving from people across the country to our National Survey on Gender and Sexual Orientation in the Workplace."



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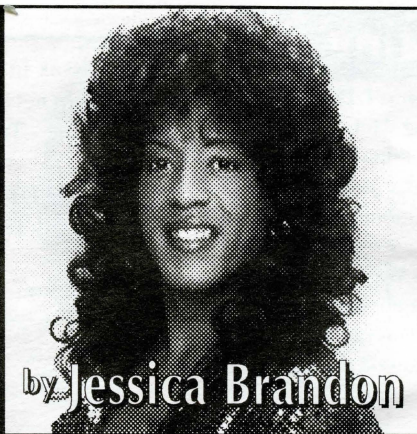
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# Shopping With Jessica



Greetings, girlfriends! Welcome to the last year of the 20th century! I don't know about you, but I'm excited like you wouldn't believe to be closing in on the new millennium, something that doesn't happen every day, Y2K be damned! And since I don't figure on being around in 2099, I mean to enjoy this event! You should too! I'm sure it'll be great!

Now, on to shopping stuff. Every now and then, I get email from folks who ask about places to shop for the taller girl. As you well know from past rants, the majority of clothes on the market today are tailored for women no taller than five foot seven, leaving tall women (and tall crossdressers) pretty much out in the cold. However, that trend has changed of late as designers have come to realize that women are taller and have demanded clothes that will fit them.

And that's the crux of this month's column. I've done some searching around, mainly online, and have come up with some resources for the vertically overabundant. Of course, **Penney's** is at the top of my list. For years, it has been, and continues to be, my primary resource for clothing which is both stylish and functional. They have a specific catalog just for tall (1-800-322-1189) that has a large selection of dresses, suits, pants, jeans, blazers, and coats.

Next is **Extreme Lengths** out of Babylon, New York (1-800-291-6604 or [www.extremelengths.com](http://www.extremelengths.com)) which features a very nice collection of trendy dresses, jackets, pants, and jeans with inseams up to 36 inches, tops, sweaters (both with longer

sleeves and bodices) and swimsuits in sizes from 6 to 22. The company has decent prices, offers gift certificates and has secure online ordering, along with mail, phone and fax. They accept Mastercard, Visa, Discover and Amex.

One interesting company I recently found online is **The Long Tall Clothing Company** ([www.longtall-clothing.com.au/index.htm](http://www.longtall-clothing.com.au/index.htm)) out of Australia. Founded by a six foot two GG named Sue, Long Tall carries a wide variety of clothing for tall girls from 5-9 to an astonishing 6-9, with converted U.S. sizes from 4 to 22, featuring pants with inseams from 36 to 40 inches. They also offer sizing charts and free postage to anywhere in the world.

Long Tall offers stylish clothing for casual wear, the office and evenings out and has a rather interesting online catalog, similar to their hard copy version, but if you click on the selected garment, you get a larger, higher resolution pic of the item in question along with all the pertinent info (colors, sizes, price) on said item. The company has secure online ordering with Mastercard, Visa and Amex, and purchases get you 12 months worth of new catalogs.

As I've mentioned here several times before, **Sears** (1-800-944-3671) offers a fair selection of tall clothing; mainly suits, pants, jeans, blazers, and three piece wardrobers. Other companies I've found for tall clothing that currently don't have websites are **Long Elegant Legs** (1-800-344-2235), **Tall Classics** (1-800-345-1958) and **The Height of Fashion** (1-800-888-6HEIGHT). Call and ask for cat-

alogs from these companies so you can see what they have to offer.

Also, a good idea would be to check the Women's Apparel section of your local Yellow Pages for shops that specialize in tall clothing. While they're not exactly prolific (Case in point: in the Philly area, there are only three such shops listed in the phone book) since clothing is still tailored mainly for women no taller than 5-7, I'm sure there's bound to be at least one of two tall woman shops or boutiques in your area. So, let your fingers do the walking.

Lastly, here's an interesting tidbit for you to digest. In the November 1998 issue of *Cosmopolitan*, there was a little piece about the latest innovation in hosiery, called "hosiery that heals." What I'm talking about here is pantyhose from **Linda Allard/Ellen Tracy** (Satin Microfiber, \$13.50), **Hanes** (Smooth Illusions Revitalizing, \$9.95), **No Nonsense** (Renew, \$4.49) and **Victoria's Secret** (Pulse Points, \$12-14) that claims to jump-start circulation, cure leg fatigue and promote general well being.

In that very same issue, there was a full page ad from Hanes on their "prescription pantyhose" which were designed with the help of a medical expert to promote daily leg health and wellness, protect against swelling, enhance skin tone and deliver a refreshing, massaging effect. Since Hanes is my hosiery brand of choice, I'll buy a pair to try, even though ten bucks is a bit much to shell out for hosiery. I'll try 'em out and give you a full report next month or so.

Well, that's it for now. I'll have lots of good stuff to share with you in the months to come as we close in on the year 2000. As always, my electronic mailbox is open for your comments, tips and opinions at [tree-top@voicenet.com](mailto:tree-top@voicenet.com), or by snail mail to the Renaissance National office (address on page two). Until next month, be smart, buy smart and look smart! Happy shopping, sisters!



## Organization Listing

• **Transgender Health Action Coalition (T-HAC):** The Transgender Information and Peer Counseling Hotline is now helping to serve the needs of the greater Philadelphia Transgender community. The hotline operates every Monday and Thursday from 6 to 10 p.m. Call: (215) 732-1207. Organizational meetings of the are held on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month from 8 to 9:30 p.m. on the fourth floor of the Washington West Offices, 1201 Locust St. Phila. PA. All are welcome to attend.

• **ActionAIDS:** Support groups and information for HIV+ people in the Philadelphia area. 215-981-0088 for general information. Sponsor Passages, a support group for gender variant people. Call 215-981-3349 for Passages information.

• **William Way Lesbian, Gay, Bi, TG Community Center:** Many programs and diversions for the LGBT community in Philadelphia. For info on upcoming events call 215-732-2220.

• **Community Alliance of Transsexuals (CATS):** TS support group that meets in Burlington County, New Jersey. 215-536-1209

• **The Attic:** Center for gay, lesbian, bisexual and TG youth ages 12 to 23 in Philadelphia. 215-545-4331.

• **Phila. TS Support Group:** 4 p. m. the first Saturday every month at 1201 Locust Street 215-483-7647.

• **Intersexed Issues:** Raven Kaldera, Amboyz Intersexed Liason, Cauldron Farm, 12 Simond Hill Road, Hubbardston, MA, 01452, 978-928-4198, cauldron@net1plus.com

• **FTM and SOFFA Issues (including Intersex):** Gary Bowen, Coordinator-in-chief, P O Box 1118, Elkton, MD, 21922-1118, 410-392-3640, transman@netgsi.com, URL:<http://www.netgsi.com/~listwangler>

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# TG Community Calendar

## LOCAL RENAISSANCE CHAPTERS/AFFILIATES- JANUARY

- 2: Lower Susquehanna Valley, New Jersey Support
- 9: Lehigh Valley, Delaware
- 16: Greater Philadelphia
- 23: Monmouth/Ocean Trans Gender

## JANUARY 1999

15 -17: The 2nd Regional Organizing Conference devoted to the concerns of the Latino/a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community. Hostos Community College, New York City. For more information, call: 212 614-2949 or email us at: <pafuera-pal@aol.com>.

21- 24: First Event, hosted by the Tiffany Club of New England, Inc. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Woburn, Massachusetts. Contact: Telephone: 781-891-9325, (answered live Tuesdays 7-10 PM), or by e-mail at <firstevent99@tcne.org>.

24: Christian Retreat at First Event. This retreat is being coordinated by Ms. Diane Zahn and Ms. Jennifer Jones of the Tiffany Club of New England. Space for only about 20 people is available. Contact: Diane Zahn, <damz@sprynet>, or Jennifer Jones <jennyj@concentric.net>.

## FEBRUARY 1999

13: Max Bell of the A.C.L.U. will speak at the Renaissance Delaware chapter on the law and how it deals with transgendered people. Contact Renaissance Delaware at 302-376-1990 or by email to <sadeCD@aol.com>.

## MARCH 1999

3-16: Dignity Cruise XI on the Marco Polo from Sydney, Australia to Cairns. Contact Cruises Inc.: Barbara Arendt at 800- 621-6699 or Mike Sinn at 800-818-7830.

5 - 7: Constructing Q-munities: The 1999 Southeastern Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender College Conference at Duke University. Date: March 5-7, 1999. Site: Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy, Duke University.

17-21: IFGE Convention, "Standing United", 13th Annual Convention and TG Health & Wellness Conference, hosted by The Blue Grass Belles, Cioe Enterprises, P.O. Box 61, Easton, PA 18044-0061. Phone: 610-759-2347, email: <Skristinej@aol.com>.

## APRIL 1999

8-10: Pride and prejudice: The 5th Annual Symposium on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues, University of Rhode Island. Inquiries can be made by phone at 401-874-2101, or

email at <silvadel@aol.com>.

## MAY 1999

13-15: Trans-America Transgender Conference, Charlotte, North Carolina. Call 704-531-9988 for info.

22 - 25: California Dreamin' '99, AirTel Plaza Hotel & Conference Center in Van Nuys, CA. Contact PPOC/California Dreamin' at P.O. Box 1088, Yorba Linda, CA. Phone 714- 281-0271, (Voice Mail), 714- 281-0371 (Fax), e-mail <PPOC@aol.com> or <Dreamin96@aol.com>, or visit our web-site at <http://www.flash.net/~dhome/cadreamin>

## JUNE 1999

2-6: 17th Annual Be-All, Radisson Hotel in Cleveland, Ohio. Any question E-mail Susie Davis or phone her at 330-923-3413.

## AUGUST 1999

17-22: Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, Inc., London, England. Contact: Bean Robinson, 1300 South 2nd Street, Sst, Suite 180, Minneapolis, MN 55454. Phone: 612-625-1500 (receptionist), 612-624-8078 (voice mail), 612-626-8311 (fax) or email to <robin009@gold.tc.umn.edu>



## Greater Philadelphia Chapter Sets New Fee Schedule

As of January's meeting of the Greater Philadelphia Chapter, we need to ask our members to help support the chapter by paying an annual dues of \$20.00.

You will find the forms for this at the January meeting. If you don't find them, ask Viv or Joanne White and they will see that you get the necessary forms.

In addition, there will be a \$5.00 fee at the door for members, and a

\$10.00 fee at the door for non-members. GPC members' significant others will be admitted free, while non members' significant others will be asked to pay an additional \$5.00.

As you can easily see, it is to everyone's advantage to join the chapter. Not only will the chapter be solvent and able to pay our expenses, but, it will cost you \$40.00 less each year.

With the money we will receive from memberships and door fees, we

will be paying: the rent, buying the food for each meeting, publishing the monthly *Liberty Belles* newsletter, and providing a program for each meeting, which of course helps us all.



# Pre-Op TS Wins Right To Medicaid Funding for SRS

In what has been termed a victory for the transgender community, a pre-operative transsexual has won the right to proceed with litigation against the State of Iowa for denying Medicaid benefits for sex reassignment surgery.

District Judge Bennett held that a material question of fact exists as to whether sex reassignment surgery is a medically necessary treatment for gender dysphoria and whether the Iowa Department of Human Services made a reasonable decision in denying the benefits by relying on a report prompting it to specifically exclude such surgery from funding.

The rules governing the Iowa Medicaid program were changed in 1994 to specifically exclude sex reas-

signment surgery. In May of 1997, plaintiff John Smith sued the State of Iowa, claiming it violated the federal Medicaid statute by denying him coverage for SRS. Smith claimed the arbitrary nature of the denial violated his 14th Amendment right to due process.

In considering the merits of the case, the court examined whether there is a genuine question of fact as to whether sex reassignment surgery is a medically necessary treatment for "gender dysphoria." Iowa contended that Medicaid does not require the State to provide Smith all possible medically necessary treatments currently available, but may place appropriate limits on the type of treatments offered.

Testimony of Smith's doctor persuaded the court to find that such a question of fact exists, stating that those diagnosed with gender dysphoria, such as Smith, improve with sex reassignment surgery and not psychotherapy and that sex reassignment surgery is a medically necessary treatment for such a condition.

Although Smith is still biologically a woman, the court showed surprising support by referring to him in the masculine and by his pseudonym throughout its opinion.



## Jay Ann

### *Intimates*

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