

# THE INGERSOLL MESSAGE

July 1998

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## T-Prideful June

By Sandra Donnelan

It was a typical gray Seattle evening with clouds scudding across the sky threatening rain. But in this year of El Nino there was no rain, not here on this event, the Seattle T Rally.

It was held across the street from the Seattle Central Community College. The crowd was middle-sized (about 150 - 175 people at any one point) but spirits were high. And of course all there were in any and all modes of dress, makeup and glitter each of us showing ourselves off as we chose. We were enjoying being out, celebrating, meeting people and listening to the great speeches and entertainment from various members from our own "T" Community.

Most of all there was Pride—Pride among ourselves, Pride about what had been accomplished by ourselves as individuals, Pride in our standing in the great city of Seattle and PRIDE within the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Community. It seemed to illuminate the dimming sky, allowing each of the participants to tell their story, or sing their song in the clear bright light; proud, growing as individuals and experiencing life greater and greater with each passing day. There were people there that I had never known, nor seen before, but there were far more people that I have come to know and love over the years. Some I

hadn't seen for years, others I see at least three or four times each week. It was a true pleasure to see my brothers and sisters enjoying themselves as they were. There's no doubt at all that our community is growing more with each passing year. And, with this growth, there are more of us reaching out to other organizations that need some help or support.

While there were songs sung on the stage, there was a song being sung among the group. You couldn't hear it with your ears, and each individual's version of that song was unique. But the harmonies of the different songs together announced, for all the world to

## There was a song being sung....

hear, the beautiful aria of our Prideful get-together.

## PRIDE PHOTOS ARE ON THE INTERNET

set your dial at <http://www.seattlealias.com/cgi-bin/image/image.cgi>

(thanks to Loree Thomas for the heads-up)

## From the Founder

The heart of Ingersoll is the Support Group. From one group a week in 1977, to four every week (plus specialty groups) today, we have carried forward the dream of success through helping ourselves.

Each of our groups have Facilitators who train for the job. These are people with both the skill and the passion to do the long-term job of assisting group discussion. By "long-term" I mean the ability to transcend individual desires and look to the good of all participants over time—not just for a month or two, but for years.

Perhaps you have been to a support group. What were your responses and feelings? We know we can't meet every need, and we know that each support group is different. Our Friday Group has met every Friday for over 1,200 weeks. And each week has been different.

Since the Friday Group is open to any and all, one week might be the most sublime conversation you have ever joined, the next week might be far less. Our Facilitators know that

## The Ingersoll Message

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## My Own Experience

by Nate (continued from June)

When I was going through the period of transition, my uncle, who has been gay all of his life, took me out to dinner at a gay men's restaurant. I started observing all these young men waiters swishing around and the most overwhelming desire came over me to f--- one or all of them. This had never occurred to me before but I was in a time where many desires which had been carefully suppressed, were now surfacing. I leaned over and whispered

to my uncle what was going through my head—that I did not have anything to do it with—and he just roared. This was not the last time this would happen. I discovered I was very sexually attracted to little Asian men. I was dancing with one, one night at a gay bar, and he asked, "Do you have a lover yet? No? Don't worry, you will." He did not know I was a TG and I would never get to experience this. So I am a bisexual, but only in fantasy. I have not the slightest desire to play the woman's part with a heterosexual male. One of my gay buddies showed me around to the gay bars one night, introducing me to his gay friends. On the way home he said, "You're a neat guy. It's a shame you don't have the right plumbing."

So I have come to realize, that for me, at least, sex that is really great, is as much as where my head is, as it is in my genitals. I am so grateful I was able to experience this.

After twenty-two years of a rocky marriage I allowed myself to fall head over heels in love with a lesbian. She was a school teacher like myself, and she was very intelligent. It was she who recognized that I was a TG and that I

could receive help at the Seattle Counseling Service for Sexual Minorities. I went through six months of individual counseling and a year of group therapy. This was, without a doubt, the most painful year of my life. My ego split in two, each demanding its rights. Natalie did not want to give up her friends, children, job and who knows what else. Nate wanted what he had never had—his identity. Royal battles ensued. My lesbian lover assured me she would leave me the minute I started through the transition. What to do?

I finally decided it was Nate's turn to be. I went to an endocrinologist for help who turned out to be a very kind and knowledgeable doctor. In addition, to hormone therapy and his kind words of advice, he sent me to a psychiatrist for help through the transition. From the first shot of testosterone peace descended on me and it has been with me ever since. Further, I have had a complete hysterectomy and subsequently had both breasts removed. I gave the plastic surgeon a big hug. He said he wished all of his patients were that grateful.

This is not to say I accepted with grace the fact that I am a TG. I went through long periods of "Why Me." Poor, poor me. I went through asking God: "God, if you're up there, would you just perform one little miracle and let me wake up with balls and a penis?" I wanted so badly to pee standing up; the feel of balls between my legs; to have intercourse with my wife with a real penis. To feel what a man feels!

Slowly, slowly, I came to accept that I am what I am and that is all I am: I'm a TG and it's OK. I was sitting in my rocker thinking one day and out of the blue I saw Popeye on his ship saying that famous line of his: "I yam what I yam, and that's all I yam. I'm Popeye the sailor man."



## Thanks for the Memories

Since this is my last issue as acting editor for the Ingersoll Message, I just wish to say "Thank You" to those who have contributed.

I did not intend or plan to be an editor for this publication and am eager to pass it on, simply because I don't have time to do it.

However the format may change and the content may develop, it is up to a new editor. At this point we think we have one waiting in the wings for her entrance--next time.

Thank you,  
Denise Ottoson

## The Ingersoll Calendar

SUNDAY, JULY 19 - AUGUST 1 ART SHOW at Ingersoll Gender Center. Opening on the 19th at 2 p.m. Call (206)329-6651 for further details.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 16 POTLUCK PICNIC at Jose Rizal Park, just west of Pacific Medical Center. Noon-? (206)329-6651.

### REGULARLY SCHEDULED:

Wednesday Evening Group—7:30 to 9:30 p.m. folks living in crossgender situations. Referral needed.

Thursday Evening Group—7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Open drop-in group. This is a good place to contact the Ingersoll Center for the first time. All are

welcome in this facilitated/guided support group. Individual consultation is available and publications are available for purchase.

Friday Evening Group—8:00 to 10:00 p.m. Open support group for anyone with gender questions. The longest-lived group of its kind in the U.S. Structured discussion, facilitator-led.

Saturday Evening Group—7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Focus on education about personal presentation.

FtM Specialty Group one Saturday a month. Contact David for more information: (253)859-1053.

All Ingersoll groups have a suggested group fee of \$10 and \$5 minimum.

### AFFILIATED GROUPS:

Amazing Changes: Closed AA group for the T-communities. 12-Step Tradition. Mondays 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Ingersoll Center.



Founder, from page 1

**this is the way with open support groups, and they do not let any one issue or event disturb the overall work. Incidentally, by far the groups are excellent experiences. We will be there for you when you decide to visit 10 years after your transition--or whichever path your quest takes. The faces will be different, but the Ingersoll Work will be the same.**

**The groups become the stages upon which new thinking about gender and identity is played. Before they enter the articles, texts, or the general conversation, the ideas of change and experience are talked about and acted on in the groups. Long before the word Transgender was coined we saw people engaged in being Transgender in the groups.**

**As long as people want to sit down together and discuss the gender issues in their lives we will have our groups. Come, join us.**

—Marsha C. Botzer

TO BE NOBODY  
BUT YOURSELF

Almost anybody can learn to think or believe or know, but not a single human being can be taught to be. Why?

Because whenever you think or you believe or you know, you are a lot of other people; but the moment you are being, you're nobody but yourself.

To be nobody but yourself--in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else—means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight, and never stop fighting...

Does this sound dismal? It isn't. It's the most wonderful life on earth.

--c.e.cummings

SEE YOU ALL  
at  
THE PICNIC  
on  
Sunday, August 16

See  
details  
inside  
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