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News & views

Vision • Integrity • Quality

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Philadelphia Police Commissioner Issues Bias Crime Policy

At a May 1998 Task Force convened public interest meeting with Philadelphia Police Commissioner John Timoney, a diverse range of community-based leaders asked the Commissioner to agree to biannual meetings (a second meeting to be scheduled in November 1998) which would focus on the Department's response to and/or implementation of a wide range of public policy recommendations to enhance effective and humane law enforcement, and to issue, immediately, a policy on the matter of "reporting and investigating bias crime incidents" to guide all police (cited below).

In an October 21, 1998 letter to Task Force Executive Director Rita Addessa, Timoney informed Addessa that he had issued the Bias Crime policy as requested, excluding, however, the category "gender identity," which will

remain a matter for further discussion with the Commissioner.

In a late afternoon conversation on October 23, 1998 with John Gallagher, Esq., assistant to Commissioner Timoney, asserted that he believed that gender or "perceived" sexual orientation would adequately cover people who are transgendered and that, in addition, the Commissioner could not be a "trailblazer" on this issue.

Philadelphia Police Department Bias Crime Policy

It is the policy of the Philadelphia Police Department to ensure that rights guaranteed by federal, state and local laws are protected for all citizens regardless of their race or ethnicity.

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Let's Support Ourselves

by Penni Ashe

Recently, I have had some conversations with the president of the glbt employee resource group (ERG) to which I belong and am active. At his request, I gave him contact information for a well-known transgender organization that is a 501(c)3 corporation. [Ed. Note: Renaissance is a 501(c)3 corporation.] The ERG president mentioned the desire to have someone from the ERG "on site" at beneficiaries of our corporate giving, to be sure that the funds were well-spent. The remark prompted me to mention to him that trans organizations today are where glb organizations were in the sixties and seventies: fighting for survival. The remark was well received, and may lead to some additional fundraising activities.

But I don't want to leave that remark there. It doesn't have to be this way: these organizations need not be fighting for their survival. I'm often amazed at how many transgenders I meet who "happen" to

work with computers or in some other high-tech field. This is a field that does not pay poorly! There is a lot of money in the transgender community, and our social service organizations can do a much better job of serving us if they're moved beyond mere "fighting for survival."

I give to my favorite organization through my United Way contributions — which my company matches. My company also provides financial contributions which "match" employees' volunteer activities at registered 501(c)3 corporations, and I've availed myself of that means of helping out, as well. Many corporations have matching gift programs for employees who make contributions to 501(c)3 educational organizations. Restrictions vary from employer to employer, but these restrictions are always on the nature of the educational services provided, never on

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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: [REDACTED]@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 717-780-1158 (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: [REDACTED]@aol.com>.

Western Central New Jersey: New Jersey Support, call Susan at 973-[REDACTED] or Dorothy at 215-[REDACTED] (weekends only). Write PO Box 0034, Montville, NJ 07045 for information. Email: [REDACTED]@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, [REDACTED]@mindspring.com>.

Long Island: Long Island Femme Expression (LIFE), PO Box 1311, Water Mill, NY 11976-1311. Phone 516-283-1333. Email to [REDACTED]@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 News & COMMUNITY Views

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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

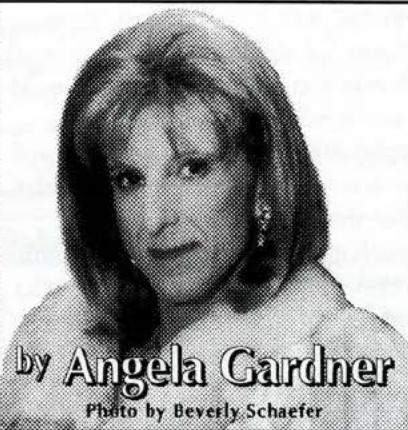
Before I go any further, let me apologize for the late arrival of this issue. We just stopped for a bite or two of Thanksgiving turkey and the next thing we knew we missed our deadline at the printer. Sorry.

This is the last issue of News & Views. Next month you'll get the first issue of *TG Community News*. It's the end of one era and the beginning of a new one. I hope the staff and I will be able to carry out some of the ideas we have, and I hope that you, the readers, will find the changes to be exciting.

Several years ago, when I first took over editing *Renaissance News*, I found myself typing up text in columns on my old Brother word processor, running down to the office store to make reduced size copies, and then cutting them up with an Exacto knife and pasting them into some semblance of a newsletter. At the time I was the Managing Director of Renaissance and it was my intention to find an editor to take over the News. A couple of months went by and I found that I enjoyed being the editor.

Eventually I talked JoAnn Roberts into doing the layout again so I no longer needed to use sharp instruments. The two of us worked hard to make News & Views the best newsletter in the community. Every so often Jo would say, "We ought to make this into a magazine." Then we'd look at each other and, in unison, say, "Nah, that's real work."

Real work is what it takes to make a difference in this world. Presenting the facts takes time and effort. I think



that we have assembled a team that can do the basic work of producing the new magazine. But, in order to go the extra step, to provide a really quality publication, we will need your help. First, we need your input. If you are an officer of a chapter or affiliate around the country tell us about what is going on in your area.

If you are the editor of your local newsletter please share any good stories that you have published. We may not run your story, but ask you to provide contact info so that we can cover the issue in more depth. We will be running pictures to illustrate stories. If you send a story, please send a picture if one is available. Photos of community events are what we're after, not pictures of you in front of the hotel curtains... as pretty as you may be.

Lastly, you can help us continue to present a quality publication and make it better with each issue if you can make a financial contribution. Member contributions are the heart of any non-profit organization. Last year we raised much-needed funds through our fund raising campaign. This year we have been too tied up with the magazine changes and advance work on the upcoming **4th Congress** in 2000 to give fund raising as much attention as we should. If you have saved some money up by bargain shopping and want to do something to help the girls who are still in the closet to become a participating member of our community, send a contribution to Renaissance and do your part. Hey, it's tax

deductible too. (Look for the notice in this issue on how you can contribute to Renaissance through your company giving plan.)

And now, the fun stuff.

Ain't Technology Grand?

New technology is changing our world. Just recently New Jersey started using the Easy Pass system on the Atlantic City Expressway. This is a boon for the many gamblers who need to get to the casinos as quickly as possible so they can feed all their money into those other high tech marvels - the modern day slot machine. Now they no longer need to stop, or have any human contact from the time they leave their house until they're broke. Oops, I mean "big winners."

What's Easy Pass got to do with us TG types? Well, it should get a lot of more novice crossdressers down to the shore. I remember, just a few years back, having a nervous breakdown when I realized that I would have to stop to pay a toll while traveling in drag. I know one girl who used to actually turn away from the toll taker and hold the money out as far as possible when she paid. It was kind of like an offering to the gods, "Please don't destroy me oh mighty Toll Man." Like that attracted less attention than just handing over the cash in a matter of fact manner. Anyhow, with electronic toll collecting the nervous crossdresser doesn't have to worry about human interaction while heading down to Atlantic City for a night of gambling, or to catch an appearance by Englebert. Of course Easy Pass can't do anything for you once you get to the shore. If your skirt is short enough maybe you'll find a high roller to make an easy pass at you, but you're on your own... we can't recommend any high tech help for that situation.

Here's Looking at You, Kid

Another high tech thing you may run into in New Jersey is a surveillance camera. Now they're always a good idea around your property, to make sure no crooks can sneak up on

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you, and they have been useful to America's Most Wanted when a grainy black and white shot of a perpetrator robbing a convenience store is needed, but the cameras I'm talking about are placed where no transvestite would really want to find one.

It seems that in New Jersey there is no law against having a hidden camera in the dressing room of a store. So, if you have been trying on things in New Jersey stores I hope you have gone the extra mile and shaved that hard to reach spot in the middle of your back. "Hey Harry, would ya look at this patch a fur on dis broad? That's pretty gross, ain't it?"

Oh no! I just remembered that I tried on lingerie in Macy's a couple of weeks ago... and the store was in New Jersey. Oh well, at least I am a professional entertainer. If anyone got any fun out of me slipping into that bustier they had better call my agent and pay my fee.

But, never fear girls. A senator in the Garden State is working to get a bill passed to either stop the practice all together, or at least follow in the footsteps of Pennsylvania and require the stores to post a sign saying you may be starring in a video if you go into the dressing room. There is another solution to this problem. We have to get all those people who feel stopping at the sales desk is just too time consuming, to **STOP STEALING!**

The clothes aren't free ya know. Every bit of "shrinkage" gets figured into the retail price which means we're paying the freight for the girl in the hot, I mean really hot, dress. Why can't we all just be honest? Oh, did I mention I have some wigs that "fell off a truck?" My cousin Vinnie gets 'em for me. They're all brand new. Give me a call if ya want one doll. Cheap. I'm making nothing on the deal.

A Net Search Exclusive

For a bit of fun I decided to do an

Internet search on the term "cross-dresser." I always spell it as one word, crossdresser, but the rest of the world is not as advanced and continue to hyphenate. With that in mind I typed the term into my browser and hit the "Go" button. Within seconds the search engine had traversed the entire WWW (I am cruising the net at 56K) and returned many pages of information on files containing the term "cross-dresser."

Most of the URLs also mentioned sex of one kind or another and many used the word "anal." Mixed in among the commercial sex sites for she-males there were a few real web resources for crossdressers. There were a few support groups, and then there was a high school kid's home page. It got included 'cause its text included "cross-dressers."

I clicked on the link and found a picture of a high school choir from St. Cloud, Minnesota in the middle of a performance. "Cross-dressers" had appeared in the text of this lad's page because he was describing the picture. His brother is performing with the choir and he, as well as a couple of other boys, are crossdressed. (His brother was kind of cute. He wore a long dress with an empire waist, and his wig was nicer than that worn by the other crossdressed singers.)

Now, in this day of crossdressing kids being tossed out of high school (like that little sweetie Alex McClendon from down in Georgia) it's refreshing to find a school in the American Heartland that seems to be perfectly all right with a few cross-dressed singers in the choir. Then again, maybe the boys in dresses are really, really good sopranos. In any event, I find it encouraging... and intriguing. Perhaps The News will have to go undercover for an investigative report on school sanctioned teen crossdressing in Minnesota. Good morning class. I'm your substitute teacher, Miss Gardner. Now how many of you boys are shaving your legs? How many would like to?

Speaking of Young Alex...

CNN's website had a story about Alex that was brought to my attention by Miss Michelle [REDACTED]. It, like the story in *Time Magazine* on the ninth of the month, covered how Alex has been attending a private school in Georgia as a female.

She has been living as a female for the past two years and thought that she could get an education at the school. She got an education all right, on the subjects of fear and intolerance. It wasn't her fellow students who were upset. After their initial reactions of, "Wow, ya mean the chick's a dude" they settled down and accepted her as another girl in the class.

It was the parents who complained that Alex was negatively influencing their children, which caused the board of trustees to ask her to leave. Many of her classmates, including many of the boys, donned hair bows in protest. Alex has decided that home schooling may be the best bet for her.

I think this kind of thing shows that the younger generation is often better able to accept gender difference. What kind of bad influence did the parents think Alex represented? Would their sons all decide to take a lot of home economics courses, want to wear a dress to the prom, and maybe develop a love of show tunes just because a classmate is transgendered?

This type of fear from the parents is not based on fear of transgendered people, this is plain old homophobia. What if my son wants to date this girl who is really a boy? That's the question they ask themselves, and it's the same concern parents had back in the '60s when boys started to grow long hair. Because they had long hair like a girl, what if they attracted men sexually?

Until this kind of thinking is adjusted by the application of real knowledge about human sexuality and gender expression we have little hope of making any advances for transgender rights. Hey, now there's a good reason why the TG rights and gay

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rights groups should work together. In the meantime, all we have to console us is the fact that Alex's fellow students supported her. That, and maybe that choir from St. Cloud.

The "Official" Gender Identity Page

At the bottom of the CNN story on Alex they included three links to TG related sites. One was to a support group for CDs in Canada, one was to a Rabbi (http://www.aristotle.net/~domiller/deut22_5.html) who has a good article on Crossdressing and Deuteronomy on his site, and the other was a link to, "The Official Gender Identity Support Page." (<http://www.innerdiscovery.org/gender/index.html>)

Now I'm always a little bit suspicious of anything on the web (and most anywhere else) that calls itself "official." To me that's like an official decoder ring. What if you have an unofficial ring that still translates the code? I just had to click on that link. It takes you to a church of some kind, all though that's hard to figure out, and their text, while it does include links to the Standards of Care for Transsexuals, and some other useful stuff, also goes on about "alternative" treatment methods for gender dysphoria. Quick, everybody run! It's sites like this that are the most insidious. They contain information that makes sense and they profess love and

caring for the poor victims of gender dysphoria ... but they think they can "cure" you. They might as well try curing heterosexuality.

It ain't gonna happen. And besides, who's a victim, anyway?

Wake Up Call To Activists

Recently community activists have been going on and on about an ad in a computer magazine that uses the old your-bride-is-really-a-guy gag to sell their product. Some activists have put the company that ran the ad in the same category as Adolph Hitler and other hate mongers 'cause they dared to use a TS reference that was less than positive in their ad.

Admittedly, the ad is not in the best interest of the TG community since it equates the bride's TS status with some kind of deception, but it's not quite as bad as genocide. A few letters and some nice informational pamphlets should take care of the ad men who came up with it, and the activists should save the really big guns for sites like the Official Gender Identity Support Page. It's sitting out there on the Net, ready to suck in transgendered people who are looking for real information, and maybe real support. I think I'm going to start an official movement to quash this kind of disinformation and ... oh, right. Well, maybe just an unofficial movement.

Show Biz Buzz: He's Really A She!

I don't know what to say, I just found out on the *Entertainment Tonight* show that ran on November

10th that, that lovely actress **Karen Dior** who's been on *Veronica's Closet* and *Xena* is really a man. Oh my, and to think I thought she was attractive. I must be ... oh, I can't even go there.

But seriously, ET's Cover Story was about Karen Dior and **Jazmyn**, two male actresses who have been doing quite well in Hollywood playing drag roles. Keep up the good work girls and thanks to ET for presenting them as role models. And from looking at the photos of Dior as a man, you can see how a little makeup and hair can work wonders. She looks like a Marine in boy guise.

In other entertainment news, two episodes of *Just Shoot Me* had some gender role lessons. The network ran two episodes on one night. In the first one **George Segal**'s character makes a bet with Donald Trump concerning weight loss. The loser has to play a round of golf in a dress. Not full drag, just a frock. Of course Segal loses the bet by actually gaining weight and has to wear the dress.

With the weight gain it was tough to find him a nice dress that fit, but he did and we're treated to some shots of him on the course in a floral print shirt waist. He accessorized with golf shoes and a cigar. While it's played for laughs he tells his daughter that he felt great and played a great game of golf. The fact that he was in a dress made all his usual golf course worries seem less important and he got a better score. And, a nice man bought him a drink back at the clubhouse.

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In the second episode the three male leads are all watching a manly, but emotional movie on TV. After it's over they're all crying and trying to pass it off as allergy attacks when they suddenly just stop the male BS. They admit that they have emotions and that society is wrong to so sharply define how men can express their emotions. Then one of the guys says, "Yeah, sometimes I wish I was a woman."

He is quickly left alone in the room and for the rest of the show the other two pick on him about being a girl. At

the end of the show he is asking a model out to dinner and David Spade's character, Finch, tries to embarrass him in front of her by telling her that the guy hitting on her wants to be a woman. She finds that refreshing and consents to the dinner date. Two episodes with two good examples of how to educate about gender roles and still get a laugh.

Look for a couple of movies with TG stuff in the script. Coming in January is *The Adventures of Sebastian Cole*. Sebastian is a boy who is being raised by a pre-op TS dad, named Henrietta. The reviews indicate that while it's a comedy, Henrietta is not treated in a negative

manner. Keep your eyes on the movie listings for that one.

For FtMs there is a film coming about the life of **Brandon Teena**. It stars **Hillary Swank**, who played the female Karate Kid and has a following on television's *90210*. The film is titled *Take It Like A Man* and is loosely based on the Brandon Teena story. Filming just started on this flick so it may not be out for a few months. If I learn more I'll let you know.

See you next month in a new format. Many thanks to all of the staff who have made *News & Views* the best newsletter around.



Police Policy...

gender (gender identity was excluded from the policy), sexual orientation or marital status, age or disability, religion or economic status. When such rights are infringed upon by violence, threats or other harassment, the Department will use every necessary resource to rapidly and decisively identify the perpetrators, arrest them, and bring them before the Court. All acts of violence or threats, including bias-related incidents, will be viewed as serious, and the investigations will be given priority attention. Such acts generate fear and concern among victims and result in loss of public confidence.

Police Addition to proposed and now issued policy.

Commanding officers will ensure that all personnel under their command receive a copy of this change by having the officer sign their training material receipt/record from 75-578. In addition, the district/unit reference file will reflect this change. To be read at all roll calls for three (3) consecutive days

Let's Support...

the nature of the community served.

I know that the company I work for isn't the only company that has such programs. Really, such programs have nothing to do with ideology or "doing the right thing." Simply put, it's good business. Corporate giving is a form of marketing

Making a move like this takes a fair amount of courage. But it doesn't demand that you "out" yourself. If you're closeted, you need not leave that closet in order to get your employer to help out financially. Most of the time, the employers don't notice the nature of the organization. And should they recognize that you're donating to a transgender social service organization, that doesn't mean that "you" are transgender. It means only that you recognize that rightfully this is a worthy cause.

I encourage all readers who work for companies that have employee-directed giving programs to avail themselves of those programs in order to help out our struggling transgender education organizations. And in the meantime, pass this little missive along to your friends. Together, we can help our transgender education organizations help us!

The author is the editor of Gender Advocacy Internet News. Used with permission

(Find the United Way donor number for Renaissance on page 16)

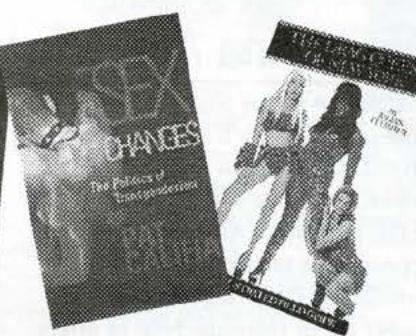
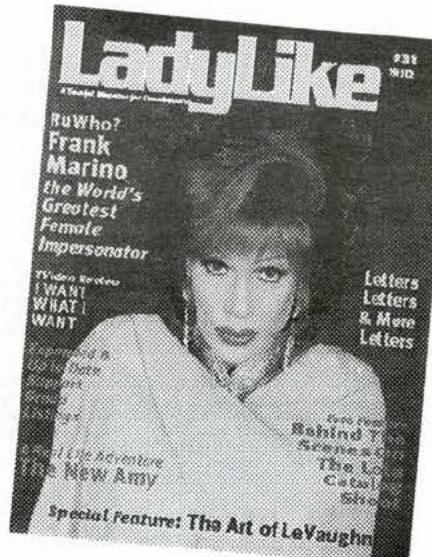


WHAT'S UP, DOC?
Who's that bunny with Alan Thicke? It's Greater Philly member, Amy! It just goes to prove that Renaissance girls, at least those in Bunny outfits, move in lofty circles.



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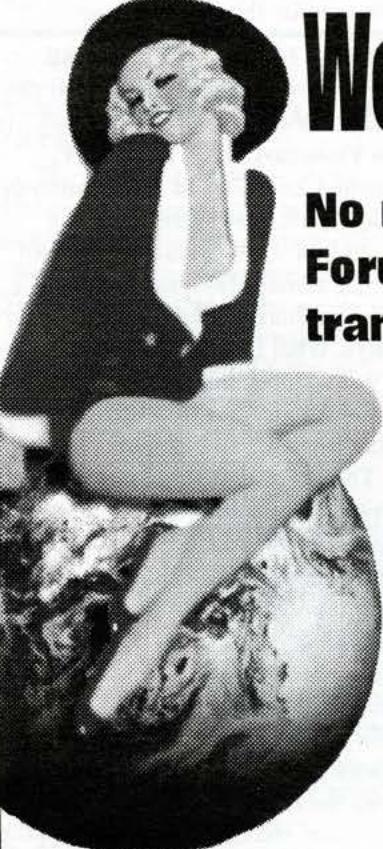
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by Dina Amberle

As you've probably read elsewhere in this newsletter, this is the last edition of the "old" *News & Views*. Our next issue will be a glossy magazine format that will put us in the august company of other publications such as *Collier's*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, and *Mechanix Illustrated*. Okay, we hope that we will have more staying power than some of the titles that come and go in the razor's edge world of magazine publishing.

There are a few things we will probably have to do if we are to be successful in this new venture. The first thing they teach in magazine school is to load your publication with "drop-in" cards. Those are the annoying subscription offers that "drop-in" your lap whenever you open a big time magazine. And subscribers should start to receive renewal notices after the second issue, with regular weekly follow-ups and phone solicitations for the rest of your subscription period, climaxed with the "This Will Be Your Final Issue" notice if we haven't heard from you by month eleven. Another hallmark of our magazine will be introductory "sniff" ads for new perfumes like Calvin Klein's "Transvestition" and Elizabeth Taylor's "Faux Diamonds", featuring alluring photos of transgendered models with vacant looks and eating disorders. This, of course, is an attempt at humor - because you know there aren't any really thin crossdressers out there.

Those of us on the writing staff are very excited about the future. A lot of really famous writers got their start in magazines, so we all smell book deals, even stronger than the heady aroma

wafting out of the pages from the horrible perfumes we'll be advertising. Myself, I've been in magazines before, so I have a more realistic view of the prospects. After countless appearances in *Drag Times*, *TV's on Parade* and *Guys Will Be Girls*, I expect about the same type of offers to come over the transom. Except this time I'll also be receiving my renewal notices like everyone else.

SAN DIEGO STRIKES A BLOW

The *Reflections* newsletter of the Neutral Corner group in San Diego, California published a cover story about that city's repeal of the ordinance that banned crossdressing in public. Caroline Joy [REDACTED], the author of the cover article, noted that "the ordinance that defined crossdressing as a crime was significantly overturned by the City Council" on a seven-to-one vote on July 21, 1998.

We've read about these outdated laws against crossdressing in certain municipalities and they always stick in the craw of the transgender community. But like most of these laws, the San Diego ordinance was explicit in defining when crossdressing was a criminal act. In the wording of the overturned ordinance, it was rather clear that crossdressing in public was not in itself unlawful, except in the event an individual had, "the intent to deceive another person for the purpose of committing an unlawful act."

In the immediate case of San Diego, the origin of the law was to protect the sailors stationed at the large San Diego base against transvestite hookers working the streets. The subtext is that some TV hookers had overpowered and robbed some of the

military men who may have been fooled by their appearance. I guess anything is possible, particularly if the image of sailors on a drunken shore leave is true to form.

The problem with having a law like that on the books is that it can give an officer the excuse to detain a transgender person, even if the probable cause is false or trumped up. And apparently this did happen to some transgendered persons, at times, in San Diego. So the transgender community can applaud this repeal of the crossdressing ordinance.

But the fact remains that crossdressing ordinance or not, in any jurisdiction, an officer can hassle a transgender person with innumerable viable ordinances if he is wont to do so, much as racial minorities claim happens to them on a regular basis in certain areas, notwithstanding all the laws against racial discrimination.

If you know in your heart you aren't doing anything wrong, you have no more to fear than any other citizen. I don't know if that will help you sleep better tonight, but it's not any better than it was while those laws remained on the books, either.

WHAT'S IN A NAME? \$2000!

One of the best TG groups in the nation - or on planet Earth, really - is San Francisco's Educational TV Channel, or ETVC as it is commonly called. Well, they were shopping around for a new name for the past several months because it seemed a little cumbersome and unclear to outsiders. What they finally came down to was a choice between the old name, ETVC, or a new name, TransGender San Francisco, or TGSF.

The ballot that appeared in the September issue of their newsletter, *The Channel*, was illustrated with a photo clipping of a dominatrix spanking a bare fanny, with a caption reminding everyone to vote on the name change issue. The thing you have to like about the San Francisco girls is that they have a sense of humor and like to stir the pot. Aside from the inherent controversy over the name change, the photo clipping

also generated a little heat from some demure quarters in the organization.

Making the issue a little more interesting was one of the members, Janet Bowman, offering a \$2000 donation to the group, provided that the name was changed to TGSF. Some saw this as a "bribe" designed to get the name changed to Janet's choice. There were some concerns raised about the implications of someone offering a large donation if a particular course of action was taken by the group on some future, more important, issue.

Even to a strong organization like ETVC/TGSF, a \$2000 donation is a "large chunk of change", as one writer put it. When the votes were tallied, the TransGender San Francisco name won 75% of the vote. One supposes that there was a strong sentiment that would have changed the name anyway, but the \$2000 was a little extra incentive for anyone sitting on the fence and thinking of the group's financial security. Interestingly, only 32% of the membership bothered to vote on the issue, which goes to show that even in a great TG support and social group like TGSF, apathy is always the landslide favorite.

THE DEFENSE SHOULD DEFINITELY REST

The August 1998 issue of our Delaware Renaissance group's newsletter included an article titled "Rehoboth Police Use Questionable Tactics." According to the article (whose author was not credited on the piece), the Rehoboth, Delaware police department busted two gay men for public sex near the boardwalk at 3AM.

As per the department's policy, they issued a press release naming the two men, which was also sent to the local Maryland papers where the men reside. *The Washington Blade*, a gay publication, interviewed the Rehoboth police chief about the press policy. The chief said that they have arrested heterosexual couples for public lewdness as well as gay persons. The Blade could not determine at their deadline whether public notices

were sent out against heterosexual offenders in the same manner as they were in the case of the two gay men.

During the November ratings "sweeps" period, Philadelphia's NBC outlet, Channel 10, did an investigative piece on public restrooms and found several instances of public lewdness in men's rooms in shopping centers and malls. Although the piece was done in the type of sensational reporting seen often during ratings sweeps periods, the message of the report was that these restroom facilities used by innocent adults and children alike were not as safe as most citizens might think.

The hidden camera caught men masturbating and exposing themselves to anyone who walked into some restrooms in well-known shopping centers and department stores in the Philadelphia area. The only criticism of the report came from certain members of the gay community who saw the tone of the piece as anti-gay, because it caught men committing tasteless and lewd acts in public places. As in the Rehoboth Beach case, the gay concern is that publicizing improper behavior in public places is somehow an attack on the gay lifestyle.

Several months ago, I wrote a piece in this column about a TG person criticizing a television show that portrayed reckless and dangerous car chases involving crossdressed drivers. That person saw the show as an attack on the crossdressers involved. Supporting people - whether transgendered, gay or bisexual - who are involved in clear-cut cases of lawlessness is not a defensible position. In fact, it does more to harm our public images than anything the police or a television station might do in reporting the bad behavior in the first place. Let's spend our activist and editorial efforts on positive issues that help those of us who obey the law.

I TOLD YOU SO - WELL, ALMOST

In last month's column, I wrote about the murder-suicide of a San Diego gender therapist and her young

transsexual client. I surmised that there would be a lot of sympathetic reporting of the tragedy in our community literature. Well, not quite of the kind I had predicted, although all the reporting hasn't yet come through, I'm sure.

One article by Katrina C. Rose that appeared in the newsletter of the Texas Association for TS Support in Houston, was titled "Does the Media Have Genital Identity Disorder?" Ms. Rose's piece dealt with the sensationalistic reporting of the event, particularly in how the transsexual was identified. The phrases "man dressed as woman", "man dressed in women's clothing" and "in drag" all apparently found their way into some of the reports in local papers and wire stories. Katrina feels that the use of such phrases to describe the person who committed the murder and then took her own life is unnecessary when the word "transsexual" sums it all up neatly and less sensationalistically. I agree with that assessment.

An interesting viewpoint came from Gwen Smith, identified as a transgender activist on the West Coast, who said that she "fears the media coverage [of the therapist's refusal to approve SRS for her client] could obscure other possible reasons for the violence. It is quite possible that Julia [the TS] was being held back due to reasons unrelated to her gender dysphoria, and that those reasons - not the gender reasons - made her willing and able to pull that trigger." I think it's a good point to raise, but the tragedy was obviously prompted by the young TS's struggles with her gender identity and thwarted desire for SRS.

Dr. Kurt Buis, a gender counselor in San Diego is quoted as saying that, "this is completely unheard of within the transgender community." As we here in the Philadelphia area know, transgender violence is not unheard of, as the Leslie Nelson case proved.

Katrina also makes the point that the "Springer-esque" reporting (her phrase) about the transsexual angle to

continued on page 14



Gender Reflections

by **Barbara F. Anderson**
M.S.W., PhD.

Being Honest With Your Therapist

The ability to be honest with one's therapist is related to a number of factors. Trust is a major issue for clients and directly affects how open and forthcoming s/he will be. While time is a great help in the establishment of trust, these days of managed care often make long-term treatment a luxury. Often people cannot afford either the time or the money to engage in a lengthy therapeutic alliance.

While trust cannot be rushed, it can be facilitated. In our first meeting I describe to clients the limitations of confidentiality, not risking the possibility that they may confide some piece of information (usually relating to harming self or other) that I must by law reveal. I also tell them how I work, assure them that they can discontinue at anytime, and suggest that we set goals to be reached and assess periodically how we are doing.

Another factor impinging on clients' honesty is whether they want something from the therapist. Within the gender community, the common-

est example of an expectation is the endorsement letter for hormones or surgery. Clients, seeing the therapist as having the power to withhold access to the desired service, may censor the information they give in order to conform to the "party line."

Some are reluctant to reveal anything that does not mirror a textbook description of a TS seeking sex reassignment — "I knew I wanted to be a girl since I was 3 years old." They will also withhold information such as symptoms of a mental disorder or substance abuse, as they fear these will be used against them. Therapy with these individuals takes on an artificial and stilted quality which is ultimately a disservice to such clients who may get the letter they want, but not the therapy they need.

Other clients are determined to be "good" clients. They present themselves as extremely compliant, follow every suggestion made by their therapist, describe diminishing symptoms and are always pleasant, agreeable

and cooperative. They subsume their natural resistance to another person's suggestions that their ideas, values, attitudes or behavior could be improved and instead trade the opportunity to have an honest exchange for the therapist's approval.

Ironically, the resistant client also has difficulty being honest. This individual is often in therapy unwillingly. Unlike the client who wants his/her endorsement letter, the resistant client wants nothing from the therapist. Often coerced into therapy by a spouse or parent, this person is determined to maintain a neutral and unyielding facade until the therapist declares the experience futile and terminates therapy.

The guilt-ridden client encounters many obstacles in being honest in therapy. S/he has such difficulty with shame that the risk of being open is too great to contemplate. These clients need to address their shame-based existence with their counselor before they can work on the specific issues that brought them into therapy.

If you are thinking about entering therapy, consider the importance of being honest and open in revealing personal information, opinions and attitudes. Assess your counselor for trustworthiness and once satisfied in this area, tell all. You will have a far more successful therapeutic outcome.



What Have I Gotten Myself Into?----One Year Later

by **Jessica Brandon**

Well, here I am, one year removed from having taken over the awesome responsibility of doing the layouts on THE best transgender newsletter in the business. And I'm here to report that, for the most part, I'm still relatively sane. Fancy that.

I don't mind telling you I was nervous as sin when I put together my first issue with then Editor, Lee Etscovitz. After all, I was still pretty much a rookie at this sort of thing, as all my training in the field of desktop publishing was self-taught. Like I said

a year ago, I learned just enough about this sort of thing to be dangerous. However, after twelve months of hard work in the trenches, folks in our community haven't called for my head because someone other than JoAnn Roberts was putting *News & Views* together. I guess that means I've done a good job. Proof positive that the blind squirrel can indeed find the occasional acorn.

As I'm sure you all know by now, this issue marks the last as a newsletter as we become a full fledged magazine next month. And since I'm at the

center of N & V's transformation, my responsibility for doing the best possible work I can on this publication has just increased. But hey, I don't mind. I'm just doing my part for our community, and that's reward enough for me... at least until I actually get paid for working on this rag!!! (Just kidding, Angel!)

So, as I begin my second year as N & V's layout goddess, keep on reading, the best is yet to come! I mean, sooner or later, I might actually figure out just what the hell I'm doing!



Bea's Pants - A Reply to Jessica Brandon on Religion

by Jennifer Mae [REDACTED]

Given the short space Angela granted me for this reply, I shall present my views in the form of theses upon each of which I could frankly write as an article. My motives for replying are twofold. First, practically, Renaissance can offer as many meetings as it does thanks to the grace of the Unitarian Church [Ed. note, the NJ Support group and the DE Chapter meet in Unitarian Churches. NJ Support pays rent to the church.] Secondly, while what Jessica wrote is true, without additional considerations, it could work against us.

Jessica says that she is bound by her senses, and thus is not interested in things religious. Empiricism does not refute religion. Empiricism has undermined rational approaches to religion, and in doing so transformed rather than eliminated it, tending to make religion more fanatical.

"Reason is, and rightly ought to be, the slave of the passions," declared empiricist philosopher David Hume, and many of the fundamentalists who reject transgenderism are prisoners of their passions. In the early history of American philosophy, thinkers like Hume were used to undermine the authority of reason to allow for the unchallenged sway of Protestantism.

Jessica objects that Christians are hypocrites in that they preach love, yet hate transgendered persons. Some (Nietzsche among them) believe that ethical teachings run a course from saying that people of a kind (often nobles) are good to saying that those who are kind are good. Fundamentalists are kind to their kind, and their kindness is used only to distinguish friend and foe.

Having said why I think Jessicas arguments only play into the hands of religious fanatics who consider the transgendered worse than criminals, I

propose we keep the following in mind in dealing with religion:

It may be a bit bold to say that transgenderism and monotheism are incompatible without a great deal of research, but transgenderism certainly seems to be a basic component of polytheism. For polytheists, the earth is bigenderal. Worshipping it requires dressing up. Hence, even if we cannot become polytheists either because we are monotheists or atheists, we should know of religious polytheism because it is part of our heritage and can serve for our defense. We should know of Athena's prophet Teresias, who was a woman for part of his life (and with whom I have found many parallels with my own situation), the Bengali Vaisnava poets who, living in an all goddess tradition (Durga and Khali), became brides of Krishna, who ministers to goddesses, the Japanese Kabuki and related Chinese traditions, and of course, native American berdaches.

Furthermore, female circumcision did not arise to promote female chastity. Rather, circumcision of both sexes arose in ancient Egypt because it was believed that all deities, god or goddesses, had the properties of both sexes. Being human means being finite, so it was necessary to use surgical means to render humans men and women.

The previous two theses indicate why some monotheists fear us transgendered worse than murderers. We seem to be harbingers of traditions that posit at least two deities, or we are divine-like for uniting both sexes. Bearing this in mind, some monotheists can never accept us. Others may come to appreciate us. Since I am largely familiar with Christian monotheism, I will deal primarily with Christians who should or might accept transgenderism.

The Roman Catholic Church, and

perhaps certain other churches of comparable antiquity, such as orthodox, Coptic or Syriac forms of Christianity, incorporated large elements of paganism. The early church would never have converted so many pagans had it not made compromises with pagan worshippers.

We transgendered should challenge the Roman Church and ask if it is better with or without its pagan borrowings, which might include Maryology as a vestige of goddess worship.

One approach is to ask in the case of a transgendered member of its flock, novelist Willa Cather, if the church is better off appreciating her novels, or condemning her transgenderism? In *My Antonia*, she writes as a man, but she is author of *Death Comes to the Archbishop*. With which is the church better off, hatred, or appreciation of the religious novel her transgenderism wrought?

But the church may be able to look aside at Willa's faults because she chose to live like a man, in its teaching the superior sex. My male half, Jay's, last teaching assignment was at a Main Line [affluent Philadelphia suburb - Ed.] Roman Catholic college. He taught Dantes love for Beatrice in *La Vita Nuova* [The New Life]. Dante saw in Beatrice an embodiment of Christ's love for humankind. Jay received a set of papers saying that Christ could not be a woman, and that Dante was a nincompoop for being such a klutz and not getting into Bea's pants.

This would be the proper way for a man to relate to a woman, not to adore her for her virtue. Jay, an atheist, admittedly for the sake of employment, sought to compromise and work within the bounds of Roman Catholic philosophy. At another Main

continued on page 15

Hot Buzz

JoAnn Roberts • CyberQueen



"In a democracy dissent is an act of faith. Like medicine, the test of its value is not in its taste, but its effects." — J. William Fulbright

So, I'm going to try a "kinder, gentler" approach to my column this month. I'll start with fashion news... Winter officially comes a-calling this month and the cold weather will bring out the **fur**, and mostly **faux fur**, we hope. You'll find fur trimmings on everything from hand-warming muffs, to gloves, sweaters, and sexy bedroom slippers. Ho, ho, ho!

The hot buzz in **jewelry** is no visible means of support. Yep, the latest rage is a small, white gold or silver charm **floating** in the hollow of your throat without a visible chain. The trick is to use extremely fine "**nylon microcord**" (a.k.a. monofilament fishing line). It's practically invisible against your skin. Want a cheaper version... attach the jewelry with eyelash glue. Zut alors!

Ya hafta wonder what these publicists get paid for. I've seen basically the same article in about four December issues of fashion magazines... **Jennifer Lopez's butt**. Yep! All four pieces mentioned what a great backside Ms. Lopez has. Wonderfull! I'm sure Ms. Lopez wants to be known as "nicest ass in town." (Hey, I held that title myself in 1970.)

Another festive look for this holiday season is **sparkly jewels** on your eyelids with frosty or **shimmery white** eyeshadows. Personally, I like the white up under the eyebrow line as it makes the browbone more prominent. The fashion mavens suggest the white shadow go on the entire lid with the tiny jewels glued to the lash line. M.A.C makes the jewels, but here's my special tip. Go to a hobby shop that sells model trains and ask for **MDC/Roundhouse** marker light jewels. You'll get a whole bag full for a helluva lot less than you'll pay at the cosmetic counter. Use that eyelash glue to hold 'em in place.

I've always said there's no substitute for great tools and that goes for **makeup brushes**. I'm nuts for brushes. I have 4 or 5 sets. It's necessary to keep brushes clean to avoid contamination with bacteria and mixing colors. You'd be amazed at how much makeup stays on a brush. I once did a demonstration of a complete makeup routine without ever touching a brush to a cosmetic. So, here's the proper way to clean those expensive brushes. First, **wipe** bristles clean with a soft tissue. Next, run the bristles under **lukewarm** water. Press bristles into a quarter-sized dot of **mild cleanser** (baby shampoo is perfect). Work the bristles into a **lather** but don't bend them. **Rinse** in clear water. Reshape bristles and **let dry**. Hang over the edge of a table so the water will not run back into the ferrule and loosen the glue that holds the bristles in place.

I've put two books about fashion on my holiday gift list. The first is titled, "**Chanel, Her Style and Her Life**," by Janet Wallach/Doubleday. It's a visual biography of one of the most celebrated, daring, and emancipated women of our times. The other book is, "**Barbie Millicent Roberts**," published by Pantheon Books. (You didn't know Barbie was part of my

family tree, did you?) This book is a photographic tour-de-force of the famous doll dressed to the nines.

Getting anxious for that great holiday party and notice there's a huge **pimple** growing in the middle of your face. Now what? You can zap that zit with a shot of **cortisone** at the doctor's office (about \$30), or you can try **eyedrops** that get the red out by shrinking blood vessels.

Big women of the world, rejoice! Your (and our) day has come, finally. When **Camryn Manheim** won an Emmy for her role as Eleanor Frutt on the television show *The Practice*, she said she wanted to share the award with big girls everywhere. Ms. Manheim is not only a plus-size woman, but she also has her ears pierced several times which leads one to wonder if she sports piercings anywhere else. Ms. Manheim thumbed her nose at fashion tradition, too. While her Emanuel dress cost \$700, her sandals came from **Payless Shoes** and her earrings from **Target**. Regardless, it is gratifying to see a woman of size being honored in the media for her abilities.

The end result of women like Camryn receiving public kudos is that great fashions for **plus-sized women** are becoming easier and easier to find. Why, even **Fredericks of Hollywood** offers many of their clothing and lingerie in larger sizes. (I got my Halloween costume from Fredericks this year.) But there is this curious "hole" in their sizing chart. Fredericks uses mostly S-M-L-XL-1X-2X-3X sizing. Look at their ordering page where the size charts are and you will see that XL is size 12 and that 1X starts at size 16. What happened to size 14?

Fashion Trends that fizzled in 1998... Anything labeled **Face Lift In A Jar**... **Menhdi** tattoos of henna (too trendy)...

Botox injections, paralysing your wrinkle muscles with toxins — yeah, that sound smart... **Scented nail polish**, did you just peel an orange?

MacAddict magazine, in conjunction with **Eidos** and **Aspyr Media** are holding a **Lara Croft** look-alike contest. The Mythical Ms. Croft is the star of the mega-hit game **Tomb Raider**. Tomb Raider II is being released for the Mac and the contest

is PR to hype the game's release. But here's the really cool part, and I quote:

"That's right— people of **either gender** can put on their best Lara dress and win cool prizes.

The grand prize for best imposter is a Tomb Raider leather jacket valued at \$360... Have fun with this—we're not looking for Barbie (or Ken in Barbie clothes) lookalikes." But you

don't have much time since the contest closes **December 15th**. Send a photo of your best Lara impersonation to *I Want To Look Like Lara To Win Cool Stuff*, c/o MacAddict, 150 North Hill Dr., Suite 40, Brisbane, CA 94005. Good Luck! (For another, sexier, look at Lara Croft, go to <http://members.home.net/garagekit/ace/ara.jpg>)

Okay, no more Ms. Nice Girl! Here's the commentary on the news front... The **IFGE-Virginia Prince Award** flap that I mentioned last month resulted in a 3 page letter from IFGE Award's Nomination chairperson, **Winnie Brant**. Ms. Brant took my remarks as a personal attack on her integrity. That was never my intention, and my apologies go to Ms. Brant for any pain caused by my comments. For as long as I've been acquainted with Ms. Brant, I've never had cause to question either her integrity or her sincerity. My bitch is with the nomination/election process that relies so heavily on the personal integrity of its administra-

tor. There are ways to remove that burden of responsibility. My personal experience with IFGE, however, is that those in charge are resistant to change of any sort.

On Monday, November 2, 1998, the **Gender Public Advocacy Coalition** (GPAC) officially lapsed into **oblivion** two years to the day after being formed. On that day, the terms of service for all GPAC officers and appointees expired according to the By Laws signed two years earlier. GPAC was formed originally to lobby for **transgender civil rights**. Since then, the board has not reconvened face to face, although a second board meeting was planned but never executed. GPAC never incorporated as a legal organization, nor did it register as a lobbying organization with any of the states in which it operated. A memo was sent recently to all of the signatories of the original GPAC By Laws. None of the transgender organizations expressed an interest in reviving GPAC. Officially, GenderPAC is now defunct as a coalition of transgender organizations. Ms. **Riki Ann Wilhins**, former Executive Director of GPAC, will probably continue her political lobbying activities privately.

Unless you've been living in the Outback, you know that the **Republicans** were handed their hats in the last election and **Newt** is on his way out. One of the big losers in the election was New York Senator, **Al D'Amato**. (This guy made me ashamed that we share the same ethnic heritage.) Interestingly, the **Human Rights Campaign** (HRC), backed the incumbent D'Amato against challenger Chuck Schumer and not without some controversy of their own. Board member Mary Louise Oates resigned over HRC's endorsement of D'Amato. Ms. Oates felt that D'Amato supported Senator Trent Lott's anti-gay agenda and consequently, "... I simply cannot be a part of any enterprise that seeks to re-elect an anti-choice Senator with a long record of hostility and indifference to women's issues and to the fundamental issues of civil rights for African-Americans and other minorities." See what happens when politics takes precedence over principles.

In a rare move, New Jersey state **Attorney General Peter Verniero** has petitioned the U. S. Supreme Court to reinstate the death penalty for **Leslie Ann Nelson**. Nelson, a 40-year old transsexual, was sentenced to death in May 1997 for killing a Haddon Heights police officer during a 1995 siege at Nelson's home. Nelson had pleaded guilty to two counts of capital murder and a single count of aggravated assault for the April 1995 shootings. Verniero wants the U.S. Supreme Court to overrule the state Supreme Court, which reversed Nelson's death penalty on grounds that evidence was improperly held during the trial. So, I'm wondering, where have all the **activists** gone? Where's the **Transsexual Menace** contingent to picket the court? Nelson isn't exactly the kind of poster-child the activists are looking for. She's not dead... yet.

Transgender activists from just about ever major city in Texas will attend the first **Texas Transgender Lobby Day** sponsored by the **Texas Gender Advocacy and Information Network** (TGAIN). The event is scheduled for January 27, 1999. "We have a huge stake in the Texas version of the **Employment Non-Discrimination Act**," said **Sarah DePalma**, Executive Director of TGAIN. **The Lesbian Gay Rights Lobby** (LGRL) of Texas already had the language for the bill and volunteered to include transgendered people. The Texas Gender Advocacy Network was originally started in 1985 as **It's Time, Texas!** and operated as the Texas Chapter of **It's Time, America!**, a transgender rights organization. Although planning to remain affiliated with ITA, the name was changed to TGAIN in 1998 to makes its mission more clearly understood. Anyone interested in attending the lobby day should contact DePalma by email [\[REDACTED\]@flash.net](mailto:[REDACTED]@flash.net) or by phone at 713-[\[REDACTED\]](tel:[REDACTED])

So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? Comments? Write me care of this publication or send email to the [\[REDACTED\]@cdspub.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@cdspub.com).

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Vis A Vis...

the story overshadowed the tragic murder of the gender therapist, Rita Powers. One has the feeling that our community may mourn the transsexual who committed the violence more deeply than the professional who worked to help many people in the community. And that too would be a shame arising from this incident.

THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH

Since this is the last issue for 1998, I want to take a few moments to thank some of the people who had an influence on me personally and in writing this column each month.

Angela Gardner, who gave me this job five years ago, and continues to tolerate my eleventh-hour deadlines, is always due for a well-deserved "thank you." And for showing up every so often in public in some wild outfit that belies her serious responsi-

bilities as an Editor, still more "thank you's." Double tippo's to Lee Ann Etscoviz, Jessica Brandon and Randi [REDACTED] who were also involved in editing and laying out the column during part of the year.

My best friend April [REDACTED], "the straw that stirs the drink" in my cross-dressing social life, and without whom I'd be just another lonely crossdresser burning up my unlimited AOL account.

Reading dozens of newsletters each month to find material for this column, I've become friends with a few of the far-flung correspondents working for the competition. Dee [REDACTED] of Traveler's Express; Veronica [REDACTED] of TGSF; "Divinity" of Carolina TS Alliance; and Marisa Richmond of the Tennessee Vals who was once critically referred to as one of my 'partisans' in yet another publication. (Your secret decoder ring is on back-order.)

And to the editorial staffs of some

of my favorite newsletters: Emerald City in Seattle; GCTC in Houston; Beaumont Society in merrie old England; the aforementioned TGSF Channel; StLGF in St. Louis; and both Chicago groups, Chi Chapter, and CGS much deserved "thank you's."

And finally, I want to thank everyone who ever took the time to read this column, especially if you liked it and told me so (you know who you are). But also to those who read it and disagreed with all or part. If everyone agreed with me the world would be a better place to be sure... just not as interesting.



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HARVEY W. BROOKMAN, M.D.

Bea's Pants...

Line Roman college, he was advised that he should not teach the medievals or Christian existentialists, but rather selections on birth control and abortion. Rome, choose. If transgenderism cannot be an imitation of Christ, would you prefer pompous department heads to Dante?

Protestantism rejected the pagan borrowings. Some Protestant sects, instead of using kindness as a bludgeon to distinguish their kind from foes, strive to advocate tolerance and kindness. I do not know much about Unitarianism. From what some lesbians said at a Washington Crossing meeting, its purview may extend beyond Christianity. The Unitarian churches do not ask the people who use their facilities to convert. Even if we cannot convert and become modern polytheists, we can study them, and contribute something to the reli-

gious dialogue the Unitarians seek to engender.

Even if we are atheists, we will not be better than Jay's last students if we believe that getting into a woman's pants is everything. When I came to Renaissance, I thought that I would find many actors and persons interested in literature. I was surprised that most people I met at first were scientists. For some reason, more ecstatic forms of religion can survive better in a technical culture than more rational forms.

For most people, religion cannot be eliminated. It is merely transformed. At a Renaissance meeting I was once laughed at for having studied philosophy. I do not think it serves science well to eliminate literature, philosophy and the humanities and replace it with fundamentalism. Frankly, within philosophy, a lot of the hatred for traditional thinking derives from a form of Marxism which fit into conservative America after the logical

positivists were driven to this country by the Nazi Anschluss of Austria.

Transgender law and medical centers are being established. Transgendered scientists of all persons in their disciplines should be aware of the threat that driving out drama, philosophy and poetry in favor of fundamentalism can bring about. Transgenderism needs a cultural center, and tolerance and interest would permit setting it up.



**Happy
Holidays
from the staff
of News &
Views**

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Ms. Lynda

Rachel Harlow Profile

by Diane Dale

"I was there at Stonewall for you.

Now, I want you there for me!"

- Rachel Harlow, November 15, 1998

With these words, Rachel Harlow challenged her audience of over 150 to help her fight the next great battle ... that of civil rights for the transgendered. The crowd rose to its feet. The applause was deafening. The venue was the elaborately decorated Ballroom of one of Philadelphia's most venerable landmarks, The Warwick Hotel. The event was a fundraiser for the city's "40-Plus Club for Gay Men."

For those of us who have been around awhile, the name "Rachel Harlow" recalls images of one of Philadelphia's most exciting and glamorous celebrities. The star of the Cannes Film Festival's "Best Documentary" movie, *The Queen*, Rachel has owned and operated successful restaurants and night clubs, has hobnobbed with the rich and famous around the world, has been romanced by men of political power and influence, and within the last few years settled into a well earned lifestyle of serenity, dignity, love and respect. She is the embodiment of everything many women want to be.

For those who hadn't known, Rachel started out life as a boy. She is indeed, the City's best-known transsexual. In four hours that seemed like the blink of an eye, Rachel recalled her feelings as early as the age of five of being different. She spoke of the

inner turmoil, of bleeding ulcers, of being an outcast, and of coming to the realization that there were choices ... tough choices. And with the courage that is so typical of her, she elected to have the surgery that would enable her to live her life as the complete woman she was meant to be.

Rachel Harlow's Gender

Reassignment Surgery was done over 25 years ago in New York City, at a time when transsexuality was so much less accepted and understood than even today. I have the privilege of being able to call Rachel a good friend. I know her story. It is courageous, poignant, humorous, tearful, triumphant, and simply mesmerizing. Someday it will be retold completely in a book she is writing. The book would be out today were it not for the fact that Rachel's story is yet unfolding. There are more chapters to inspire, some of which will deal with her crusade for all of our rights.

One of the things that has set her apart from many is that she so completely accepts who she is. And, just as importantly, expects others to accept who she is as well. So often I hear friends saying that once they have the surgery they want to wipe the slate clean — move away, abandon family, friends, hometown, and neighborhood — start anew. For some that's the right choice.

For others it may not be, because inevitably no matter whom we are, life throws a curve every so often. And when that bump in life's journey occurs, it's essential to have that sup-

port structure that only deep-rooted, special relationships can provide. Rachel knew how important family and friends are. She came home and stayed, saying "If you have a problem with who I am, that's your problem, not mine. I am your child, your sister, your cousin, your neighbor ... I love you. I want you to continue to love me. Get over it!" And they did! She added, "That's why I stayed here in Philadelphia ... my hometown. To make you understand this is an issue that must be understood!"

Her vow is to champion the rights of the transgendered. We could not have a better representative. She's back in the spotlight, continuing to give, continuing to lead, continuing to challenge ignorance, inequity, intolerance and hatred. Despite an accident that crushed several bones in her foot, and consumed four years of recovery, Rachel Harlow hasn't missed a step.

Welcome back Harlow...we're  proud to have you on our team!

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If your employer is part of the United Way Donor Choice Program you can make a donation to Renaissance (We are registered with U.W. as the Renaissance Education Association Inc.) through that program. Get the paperwork from your employer and fill in the secret number: 07677. The United Way requires your donation to be at least \$24. Thanks for your support.

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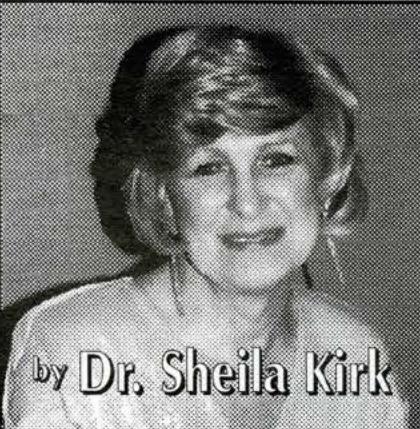
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Trans Health Matters



by Dr. Sheila Kirk

PUTTING YOUR BEST FACE FORWARD: THE FACIAL FEMINIZATION OF THE TRANSPERSON

This is the first of a 3 part series that will deal with discussion of the surgeries available to those who desire facial feminization. In December, Part 2 will deal with the bony remodeling and re-sculpturing surgical techniques available. January's column will provide insight into soft tissue revision and alterations.

The face and hair are the regions of the body that draw initial and long lasting attention. In the process of feminization, it can be more important for a considerable number of MTF individuals to give attention to these very revealing areas before they move on towards GRS.

The differences between genetic males and females in soft tissue and the bone structures beneath can be very striking. While just a few genetic males have some and even many of the special features known to be very characteristic of genetic females, most

do not. In fact, some features are so strikingly masculine, no amount of makeup and/or hair arrangement can disguise these areas. Hence it is in the interest of many to seek advice and consultation to change the facial appearance in the most effective ways possible.

Plastic and reconstructive surgeons are the most innovative and imaginative of all surgeons. They can visualize the changes that will benefit the most and then undertake to implement those changes. They literally take away, add bone, utilize implants and remodel skin and tissue beneath to bring about striking alterations. But two things have to be always kept in mind. The first is that a realistic attitude about what is possible and what will result in the surgery is essential. Helen of Troy's face is not possible for everyone - and surgeons can't always promise it. Nor should each prospective patient expect it! To be sure however, a great deal can be done. The second item to know and understand is that cosmetic surgery to the face

and scalp is costly and not covered by third party payers. This can be a real barrier and one has to plan and choose the surgical avenues possible over time.

But a beginning in those choices starts with the consultation visit - one designed to look at the potential for creating a female face, as nearly so as possible.

Keep in mind that when you ask for the evaluation, you want assurance that the plastic/reconstructive surgeon understands that the goal for you both is not to demasculinize your features but to feminize your face. This is a subtle but a vital point. You want not just a smaller or more or less prominent jaw and chin - you want it to approach that of a female as completely as possible and it's all to be discussed with this in mind.

Many times there is no need for x-ray studies although on occasion it can be of great importance. Once more: these evaluations can be costly. There is the need to know how they will add to the evaluation. It is tremendously important that the surgeon look at the overall effect of changing this feature or that one. Often to change one area of anatomy and not look to the effect of that change upon other features is a great mistake. Just as important is the consideration that to change too many things can be a failure to accomplish the very best.

"Cookie Cutter" approaches that offer you a standard list of surgical procedures with no regard to your

continued on page 20



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Making Sense of It All

by Lee Ann Etscovitz, Ed.D.

NO

One of the last things my father said to me as he lay dying thirty years ago was: "Just say 'Yes.'" Just say "Yes." He was referring specifically to the fact that I was scheduled to meet with my doctoral committee for an oral, as opposed to a written, examination as part of the process for the fulfillment of doctoral degree requirements. More broadly, however, he was referring to the fact that I was never one to agree readily to anything. I guess it was not easy being a father (or mother) to me.

Thirty years later I am finally seeing what a life of saying "no" has meant. I have actually celebrated my attitude, as if somehow saying "no" constitutes a rare achievement. Witness the poem I wrote some time ago called, of course, "No":

"No"
is my mountain.
my voyage into space,
where uncharted paths
stubbornly traversed
prove I own the trip
outright.

And then maybe,
just maybe,
like a spring thaw
in winter,
I will say,
"Yes."

It has taken me a lifetime to bring about the spring thaw, but that is the subject of another discussion. Right now I want to talk about the meaning of my saying "no" in terms of my life in general and my transgender experience in particular.

For as long as I can remember, which

means from the time I was two or three years old, I lived in a world which I perceived as a danger, not so much to my physical existence but rather to my sense of self. My perception was based on some fact. My mother was an extremely insecure person whose very presence told me to protect myself against disintegration. My father was outright abusive, both verbally and physically, which served to reinforce the message I received from my mother and added the physical element. So at a very early age I learned to protect myself against an unfriendly universe, where hugs and words of encouragement were rare at best. I saw people, my own parents even, as devaluators and destroyers of my life as a person.

In the face of this unfriendly universe, I became angrily stubborn and argumentative, and annoyingly independent, always fighting, more quietly than noisily, but nevertheless persistently, for the right to do things my way. Temper tantrums as a child gave way to the defiance of a teenager which was then replaced by the self-righteousness of an adult. The anger remained throughout. In the name of authenticity and being true to myself, I said "no" to life's simplest demands. Being on time, for example, has always been a big problem for me, because my inner clock wants to ignore the requirements of life's outer clock. Perhaps being late for the demands of that outer clock has been a way for me to express some measure of control over time and even people, especially people I perceive as a threat to my inner life.

That control, however, was really a lack of control, both in terms of self-understanding and in terms of my relationships with people. Ironically, I recreated the world into which I was born. Wherever I went and whatever I did, my "no" attitude only served to bring about more of the distress my parents represented. My insecurity, fearfulness, anger, and loneliness persisted, only within a larger life situation involving marriage, work, and social life. I am not suggesting that there is no place for self-protection, but when that stance becomes all-encompassing, then perhaps something is just not right.

My transgender feelings have added to my inner unhappiness, but at the same

time it has been my gender struggle which helped me at last to see the meaning of "no" in my life as a whole. Seen from a transgender perspective, my poem reflects a refusal to give up something which is as much a part of my very being as my life blood. I did try for years to bury my transgender feelings, though I did not really have a label for those feelings at the time. I was finally able to recognize what was bothering me, which was not so much the transgender feelings themselves but rather my denial of those feelings. There was no way in the world that I would participate in, that is, say "yes" to, a denial of my feelings. Saying "no" in that context has meant a lot to me.

The problem with my fighting for the right to be transgendered is that, until recently, I have been doing more fighting than enjoying. I am not saying that I have manned the barricades and been publicly and politically vocal on behalf of transgender rights, but within my inner life I have been more defensive about my gender change than proud of it. I am only beginning to experience a quiet but sure footed dignity rooted in self-acceptance and self-integration. Such dignity, at least for me, has been hard won. It has to be earned, patiently and persistently. Simply saying "no" to my detractors may give me a sense of self-justification, but it doesn't mean I really feel good about myself. Putting others down, even if justified, does not mean I am raising myself up.

For most of my life I have made a mountain out of my need for inner self-preservation. I have been scaling that mountain and, like Sisyphus, not really getting anywhere. Even if I can claim that I own the trip outright, at least in terms of my own life, it is only a partial claim, for I am left outside the daily life of this world. So now I am beginning to question the power, the usefulness, of living a life based on saying "no." Such a "no" seems to be divisive, separating me from people and events in the name of being "right." The "yes" that I am discovering, not just in words, but deep in my bones, is a basis for living that all the "no"-based victories in the world cannot equal. If there is one "no" I am increasingly saying, it is to those parts of me which keep me from and loving more fully.



DOJ To Use Gender Bias Laws To Pursue GLBT Cases

According to a story by Lou Chibbaro, Jr. in the November 20, 1998 *Washington Blade*, the United States Justice Department has announced that it will use "existing federal civil rights laws to take legal action against businesses and state and local governments that engage in employment discrimination against gay and transgender persons." What is unique about this approach is that it considers transgender discrimination to be a form of sex discrimination, rather than basing it on identity or orientation.

Lesbian activist Chai Feldblum said that "this reflects a significant response on the part of the Justice Department generally to seriously apply existing laws in ways that can remedy current injustices against Gay people and gender-non-conforming people." Feldblum heads a legislative clinic at Georgetown University Law School. According to Feldblum, the DoJ's decision was prompted by recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions, including

one case involving same-sex sexual harassment. "The actual impact of this change," Feldblum added, "will depend on the results we get in court."

Deputy Assistant Attorney General Helen Norton said this move would not protect people who are being discriminated against based solely on their sexual orientation. But, she added, if a person is discriminated against because of their gender non-conformity, it could be considered a form of sex discrimination, and the DoJ would be able to become involved.

According to Aaron Schuham, a DoJ official, the new policy announced on November 14 reflects "... a very serious commitment that has been directed by everyone from Janet Reno all the way down. We can really bring our resources to bear on this." The DoJ intends "to work on cases ... [where] an employer fails to hire you, promote you, or fires you or retaliates against you because" of "sex stereotyping."

According to the report, several groups, including GenderPAC, the ACLU and the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, have been working with the DoJ on the effort over the past year. They say the DoJ will be attempting to expand on decisions passed down by the Supreme Court in the 1997 *Oncale v. Sundowner* case and, more significantly, the 1989 decision in *Price Waterhouse vs. Hopins*. In the latter, the court ruled that a woman had been discriminated against because she did not conform to prescribed sexual stereotypes.

Persons with information about possible gay or transgender-related discrimination in the workplace may reach Schuham at (202) [REDACTED]. The entire article may be found on the *Washington Blade*'s website, and is expected to be archived at <<http://www.washblade.com/national/981120a.htm>>.



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Counseling for Individuals and Couples

Dr. Kirk...

individual facial assets are to be avoided. When you meet with your surgeon, planning should take into consideration the uniqueness of your certain anatomic features and their need to be augmented or reduced has to be the focus in that consultation. It is equally as important that your best features are accentuated and enhanced as well as feminized. Your surgeon must balance his knowledge and experience against what you bring to him to work with.

The very first features of your face to be evaluated by those meeting you for the first time and times thereafter, are your eyes. What shape are they? Are the lids clearly seen? Are there wrinkles and ridges and bulges around them? Is change really needed and if so will they "look" manufactured when the surgery is complete. Next, your nose and mouth are the focus for those around you. What shape and size is your nose? Does it command

undeserved attention because of how it appears in the middle third of your face. You lips may be too thin, hard and unappealing. What of your brows? Are they prominent and heavy? And consider the size and shape of the forehead and the distance you have between hairline and eyes. Do you have a proper hairline? Is there too much skin laxity or too much fat deposition in the neck and jowls? Will changing one feature enhance another properly or adversely? A host of questions should be asked of your surgeon and complete and informative answers should be available to you.

Facial cosmetic surgery often needs to be approached in stages. Surgical techniques can't always be lumped together. Many times the surgeon suggests that several areas are to be modified and then allowed to heal. The plan for more surgery may then be re-evaluated after the healing from the 1st and 2nd stage is complete. Maybe nothing more is necessary. You become a team: your surgeon and

you. You can suggest and request. He or she can evaluate and discuss with you what is possible and within limits of skill and natural healing.

Above all-don't become addicted to surgery. I'm acquainted with some who have had three nose operations and several face lifts and a tuck here and a revision there with surgery done just about every year for life. Bone and soft tissue have but a limited reserve to be rearranged and then to heal. Once again, realism is essential when you enter into this transformation process.

Is it then all worth it? The time, the cost, even the pain? It certainly will be for those with distinctly heavy masculine features. Softening, re-modeling, re-building all can benefit you remarkably. But become a good "consumer" and a sensible one. Plan it and save for it if need be. Remember your observed anatomy, your face, open and seen by all can be much more important to consider than any other part of your body.



Do you have something that you'd like to share? **News & Views** 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:
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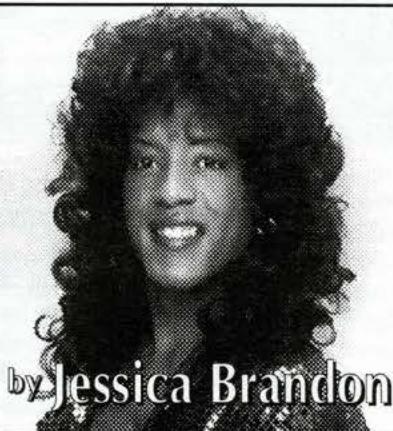
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Shopping With Jessica



Seasons Greetings, girlfriends! My, my, my! Where has 1998 gone? It seems like only yesterday I was breaking my air conditioner out of mothballs and watching the world go by from my front porch during those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer! Now I'm out shopping for long underwear and making sure I have plenty of rock salt on hand for when the snow arrives! Time sure does fly when you're having fun!

In this month's column, I'm gonna revisit a familiar theme of mine and "go by the book" as I let you in on some of the neat stuff I've recently found in mail order catalogs that make their way to my palatial manor. We start with the latest offering from **Sears** (1-800-944-3671). As you know, Sears stopped publishing the really big catalogs quite a few years ago and now do much smaller specialty books.

This catalog has lots of sharp looking clothes at very reasonable prices. Second only to Penney's, Sears has a considerable collection of tall sized clothing (a must for folks like me who are over six feet), jeans, pants, blazers, shirts, sweaters and a veritable boatload of suits, including 3-piece wardrobes with both pants and a skirt. Sears has really come to the forefront with terrific looking clothes.

Oh, if you like to wear leather, Sears can satisfy your needs with a good selection of leather pants, jackets, blazers and skirts in both long and short lengths, at prices that will leave you pleasantly surprised. The only drawback is that the pants don't come in tall lengths, but that's okay with me since I rarely wear pants when I'm

out anyway. To cover up my million dollar legs would be a crime!

Chadwick's of Boston (1-800-525-6650) is also a favorite of mine as they too have nice clothes at good prices. Their fall and winter edition contains lots of stylish fashions including plenty of fancy dresses and gowns for all those holiday parties you're itching to attend. And, just recently, Chadwick's began carrying pants and trousers in tall sizes, something I find to be more than welcome.

Fellow Renaissance member Jennie [REDACTED] submitted these next two catalogs for me to rap about. The first is from **Coward** (1-800-362-8400), a mail order outlet from Arizona that deals in large size shoes. Picking up on the theme from last month, you're not going to find any skyscraper stilettos here. I'm talking about pumps, boots, and loads of stylish flats and athletic shoes in a wide range of sizes that any of us can wear.

The second is from **Old Pueblo Traders** (same number as above), also from Arizona. This company carries clothing, lingerie, outwear and shoes at decent prices anyone can afford. Some of the shoes from Coward's are here as well. No fetish wear here either, although the style of clothes here is similar to what you might find in Lane Bryant, which concentrates on functionality, not flash.

The last catalog I'm mentioning will represent something of a departure as I want to discuss the holiday edition from **Frederick's of Hollywood** (1-800-323-9525). Now, for those of you who are regular readers of my column, you know I have

little love for Frederick's offerings, which are either too small or too slutish for the average Jane Q. Crossdresser to wear, but I saw something in here that caught my eye.

On page three of the catalog, Frederick's is touting their latest lingerie creation, the H20 bra. This thing has — get this — water filled pockets that claim to create a most natural addition to one's bustline. The catalog says that one's boobs float on a cushiony underwired shelf that warms to the wearer's body temperature and adds over a full cup size. When I saw this thing, I laughed out loud.

I mean, what would happen if, God forbid, you accidentally puncture one of the pockets? Still, something like that would come in handy when you get thirsty while out and about on a hot summer day! At \$36 bucks, it's a bit pricey for a bra, especially since you can buy a Wonderbra for close to ten bucks less. Also, the size range of the H20 is limited to 32-36 in A, B and C cup sizes. All things being equal, you can do better than this.

The rest of what you'll find in a Frederick's catalog is the standard flashy, skin tight clothing sized only for teenage girls along with ridiculous sky high heels and more lingerie than you can shake a bra at. However, there was one other item that also got a chuckle out of me: a marabou phone. That's right, ladies, I said PHONE! But even this has no practical use as it's a rotary, which went out with the 8-track!

Before I close shop for 1998, let me wish you and yours a safe and happy holiday season. And don't forget to treat yourself to something nice from the stores. As always, my electronic mailbox is open for your comments, tips and opinions at [REDACTED]@voicenet.com>, or by snail mail to the Renaissance National office. Until next year, 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/~listvrangler>

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TG Community Calendar

LOCAL RENAISSANCE CHAPTERS/AFFILIATES- DECEMBER

5: Lower Susquehanna Valley, New Jersey Support
12: Lehigh Valley, Delaware
19: Greater Phila. (Holiday Party)
26: 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 [REDACTED] of the Tiffany Club of New England. Space for only about 20 people is available. Contact: Diane Zahn, <damz@sprynet>, or Jennifer [REDACTED] [REDACTED]@concentric.net>.

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.

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: Beau Robinson, 1300 South 2nd Street, St, 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>



American Boyz True Spirit Conference

The American Boyz have announced that the Third Annual True Spirit Conference will be held at the Best Western Maryland Inn in Laurel, Maryland from February 26 - 28, 1999. The three day conference focuses on the social, physical, emotional, spiritual and relational health of all gender variant people on the FTM spectrum and their significant others, friends, families, and allies.

Workshops and panel presentations to be held during this third annual event address such topics as: health and transition issues, relationships, special needs populations, law, politics, employment, and spirituality. True Spirit 1999 is committed to offering inclusive programming for young people, people of color and elders. Special workshops and caucus opportunities will be available for service providers. Featured speakers include Jude Patton, long term FtM and health advocate, Kitten Gross,

family and transyouth advocate, and Dr. Michael L. Brownstein, M.D., FACS, FtM surgeon, as well and many others.

Trey Maurer, True Spirit 1999 media coordinator stated: "True Spirit offers many unique opportunities for participants that address a variety of the real life needs and concerns of people of transgender experience." One of those unique opportunities is making health screening available on site. Services provided will include breast exams, blood pressure checks and other health maintenance services. "Getting routine health checks can be an exceptional challenge for some trans people," continued Maurer, "so we try to remove one of the barriers to access by bringing the health care provider to the conference rather than sending people out to find a provider on their own."

Other events of note scheduled for True Spirit 1999 are: authors' readings and chat

sessions, information and merchandise exhibits, film festival, and the American Boys Award Ceremony. Conference registration fee ranges from \$60 - \$80, with work scholarship and housing assistance available on a first come, first served basis. Those registering before January 1, 1999 will enjoy a \$20 discount on their registration fee. Registration forms may be obtained at <www.netgsi.com/~listwrangler> or from The American Boyz/True Spirit 1999, PO Box 1118, Elkton, MD, 21922-1118.

The American Boyz is an organization for female to male gender variant people (FtMs) of any orientation, including but not limited to tomboys, butches, f2ms, transmen, drag kings, masculine females, cross-dressers, intersexuals, and those who support us, including our Significant Others, Friends, Families and Allies (SOFAs).

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